



**The Department Congratulates the Winner of the  
2024 Donald Beall Student Award for Engineering Accomplishment**

**Ms. Zhi Zhang**



As an international student from China, my journey began at UCLA, where I pursued my undergraduate education with a major in General Psychology and a minor in Film Studies. The diverse academic landscape provided me with a broad foundation, yet upon graduation, I found myself at a crossroads, uncertain about how to translate my knowledge into a fulfilling career path.

Fortunately, I discovered the Human Factors and Ergonomics (HFES) field, a multidisciplinary domain that blends cognition with visual design skills. This revelation opened new vistas of possibility, igniting my passion for exploring the intersection of human behavior and technology. Enrolling in the HFES program at SJSU was a pivotal decision. Over the course of two enriching years, I immersed myself in user experience design and research, delving into projects that held great meaning. Under the mentorship of Dr. Huang, I delved into real-world human factor studies, including investigations into smart home technology user acceptance and automated vehicle takeover warning signal display. These experiences honed my skills and deepened my understanding of how design impacts human interaction with technology. Presently, my focus lies on tactile display research within the context of automated vehicle operation. Through meticulous experimentation, I aimed to evaluate the efficacy of various designs on driver takeover performance. This work not only enhances user experience but also contributes to advancing driving safety in the automated vehicle industry, a mission I find profoundly rewarding. Beyond lab activities, I derive satisfaction from the creative process itself. From brainstorming ideas to conducting experiments, each stage brings a sense of fulfillment and drives my pursuit of excellence in the field of human factors.

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## Zhi Zhang, continued:

Collaboration has been instrumental in my journey. Through extracurricular projects such as the HFES mHealth mobile application interface design competition, I had the privilege of working alongside peers and mentor, Dr. Rosenberg. Together, we developed an app tailored for epilepsy patients and caregivers, leveraging our collective strengths to deliver impactful solutions. The built friendship and shared triumphs reinforced my belief in the power of teamwork and collective synergy.

In my leisure time, I enjoyed moments spent with friends from the HFES program, whether dining out or embarking on adventures. These bonds foster a sense of community and provide valuable support in both academic and personal spheres. Additionally, I indulge my passion for dance, frequenting studios for urban choreography and Chinese classical dance. I also snowboard twice a month at Tahoe, despite having experienced a concussion. Overall, I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at SJSU, appreciating the connections with my peers, the guidance from professors, and the personal growth I have experienced.



Zhi Zhang in the Behavior, Accessibility and Technology (BAT) Lab  
Driving Simulator