

Barrett, The Honors College (/)

# Scholarship helps honors student Edward Labeau with more than expenses

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March 15, 2016



(/files/edwardlebeaujpg)Edward Labeau, a junior in Barrett Honors College majoring in electrical engineering, is grateful for a scholarship he received to attend Arizona State University. But, the scholarship means more to him than financial support.

Since he was a freshman, Labeau has received the T.W. Lewis Foundation Scholarship at Barrett Honors College, which not only provides \$5,000 per year for a total of \$20,000, but also learning and networking opportunities, and extracurricular experiences.

According to the foundation, the T.W. Lewis Scholarship was created to provide high potential student leaders with self-awareness tools, career counseling, learning opportunities and financial aid so they can finish college and have a positive impact on the world. The foundation has awarded well over 100 scholarships to Maricopa County students since its inception in 2002.

The scholarship is named for Tom Lewis, founder of the T.W. Lewis company, which specializes in building high-end production homes. Tom Lewis and his wife Jan established the T.W. Lewis Foundation to help support causes they believe in, such as higher education.

"It's more than just a scholarship. Tom Lewis really wants scholars to succeed and find career paths and fulfillment in their lives," Labeau said.

T.W. Lewis Scholars are taught things that are not necessarily part of daily university coursework, such as life skills and critical thinking, he added.

"Yes, I will be an engineer, but I need to learn beyond that. The things I've learned as a T.W. Lewis scholar are things I don't learn in the classroom," he said.

While embracing opportunities the T.W. Lewis scholarship has afforded him, Labeau also has capitalized on programs available at ASU.

Through the Fulton Undergraduate Research Initiative at the ASU Fulton School of Engineering, Labeau acquired research lab experience. In his sophomore year he worked with the ASU Solar Power Lab on a project focused on changing the thickness of silicon wafers for solar panels using potassium hydroxide. The process aimed to make the wafers thinner and more flexible.

He also researched how to use copper instead of silver on solar panels. Silver is used to conduct energy through solar panels, but it is expensive. Copper may be a more cost effective alternative.

"The goal is to make solar panels more competitive in cost with other forms of energy, such as coal or nuclear energy," Labeau said.

In addition to research and his studies, Labeau is active in St. Paul's Outreach, a men's organization affiliated with the Catholic Newman Center at ASU.

"As you enter a university it can be hard to continue to practice your faith. St. Paul's provides an avenue to continue to practice and grow in your faith," he said. The organization also provides opportunities to socialize, including athletic events, dinners, and outdoor activities.

Being in Barrett also has expanded his learning and knowledge.

"The biggest influence it (Barrett) has had on me has come through the Human Event. Being in a class where diverse thoughts and opinions are studied and discussed with people of different views coming together to share them has been very interesting. I like the reading, but I love the discussion," he said.

Labeau said he is considering a 4+1 accelerated degree program that would allow him to complete both bachelor's and master's degrees in electrical engineering in five years. He is interested in specializing in mixed signal and circuit design and possibly working as a defense contractor.

"I'd like to look back on my work as an engineer and say lives have been saved and enhanced, and that I did something to make my country stronger."

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