

December 2019/January 2020 IMSE Student of the Month



Eric Joseph Kawanakoa Ward

Graduating Fall 2023

Olympia, WA

What are your hobbies?

Brazilian jiu jitsu, yoga, golf, welding art, DIY projects and anything that gets me outdoors.

What do you hope to do with IMSE after you graduate?

My plan is to take what I am learning in IMSE and apply it to multiple facets of my life. This knowledge will help me in many ways: everything from running my business more efficiently to better management of my time and energy in the pursuit of my life goals.

Why did you initially choose IMSE?

Initially, I didn't. I originally transferred to MSU's ME program, but after finding IMSE I knew I'd found the discipline that most aligned with how my mind operates.

What has been your favorite IMSE class so far? Why?

To answer this, I am going to quote Peter Drucker. When he was asked which of his 26 books at the time he was most proud of, he answered, "The next one!" I view every class as a chance to add something new to my notional toolbelt for life.

What has been your favorite application, story, or joke about IE?

I am sure most people have heard this one- but, my favorite engineering joke is: what's the difference between an extroverted engineer and an introverted engineer? They look at your shoes while talking to you instead of their own.

What advice would you give to freshman coming into the IMSE department?

IMSE is known for optimization- the definition of optimize is "to make the best of anything." With that, my advice would be to take the time to objectively understand how you individually come to learn something. If you can understand a system, you can make that system more efficient. When you efficiently manage your time you free yourself. Rather than wishing there were more hours in a day, free up more of that time by better managing the 24 you're dealt each day.

If you had one million dollars what would you do with it?

First, I'd take my parents, sisters and their families out to a nice dinner. With the remainder I'd fund the creation of a non-profit directed towards providing underrepresented groups and socioeconomically disadvantaged people with the opportunity, or also, foster the curiosity to pursue an education in STEM.