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macaulay profile:

# Kevin Vu ‘16

## City College

**Kevin Vu listened to the stories throughout his childhood: his parents’ lives before they arrived in the U.S. more than 20 years ago. This inspired Kevin, who is a civil engineering major at City College, to take his talents to international development—analyzing, creating and improving the quality of life throughout the world.**

“I always knew I wanted to help people, and coming from a Vietnamese background, listening to my parents’ stories...it stirred something in me to do more.”

Kevin had heard of Engineers Without Borders-USA (EWB) before arriving at City, and he joined its student chapter. The projects he worked on included the design of a 12,000 square foot community house on a South Dakota Indian reservation for large gatherings. He also worked with EWB in Tadzana, Nicaragua, to create water wells that will increase the area’s drinking water supply.

Closer to home, Kevin made sure that future City student chapter members of

EWB had their own gathering space; he and fellow members painted a room, installed overhanging shelves and scavenged for furniture to create the “home” for the chapter.

“There is still much work to be done, but I will leave knowing that that humble little office, two floors down in the engineering building, will help foster successful students and projects for years to come.”

Kevin’s classroom work has been stellar, as well. The Bronx HS of Science graduate conducted research on pharmaceutical contaminants in drinking water, which brought him runner-up status in the prestigious National Science Foundation

Graduate Research Fellowship Program. He has received an EPA GRO Fellowship for 2014-16. Next for Kevin is the Ph.D. program at the California Institute of Technology (Caltech) in the Environmental Science and Engineering program.

“At Macaulay, I’ve made a lot of friends—valuable friends. By going to school here, it enabled me to become truly financially independent and not rely on my parents. Macaulay has given me resources that I wouldn’t have had otherwise. I’m glad I attended a college that makes as much a commitment to me as I will for them.”