



Olumuyiwa Omotowa, a doctoral student at INL's Center for Advanced Energy Studies, is one of the few U.S. university students selected to attend the 2010 World Nuclear University Summer Institute.

CAES student selected as World Nuclear fellow

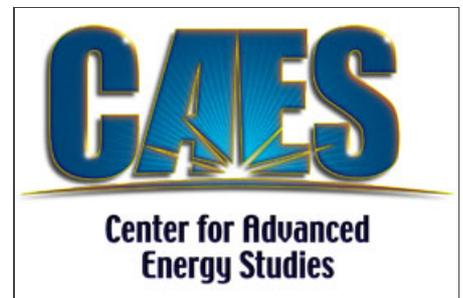
By [Ryan Weeks](#), *INL Communications and Governmental Affairs*

University of Idaho Professor Akira Tokuhiro leaped from his seat and rushed down the hall of Idaho National Laboratory's [Center for Advanced Energy Studies](#) to see Olumuyiwa Omotowa, one of his doctoral students.

He had just heard the news — Omotowa had been selected to attend the 2010 [World Nuclear University Summer Institute](#) at [Oxford University](#) in England.

Chances of attending the institute are slim, especially for U.S. university students. The six-week program accepts mainly young professionals who are working in the nuclear industry and U.S. national laboratories. Only a few university students are invited to attend.

"Olu had less than a 1 percent chance of being accepted," said Tokuhiro, Omotowa's thesis advisor. "This is a pretty prestigious event."



The Center for Advanced Energy Studies is a collaboration between INL, University of Idaho, Boise State University and Idaho State University.

Did you know?

Idaho National Laboratory has strong ties to the World Nuclear University's Summer Institute.

[The first summer institute in 2005](#) was held in Idaho Falls. INL helped host the summer event, which included tours of several laboratories and research buildings.

The event moved to Stockholm, Sweden, in 2006, to South Korea in 2007 and to Ottawa, Canada, in 2008.

England's Oxford University became the permanent home for the institute in 2009.

Michael Pope, an INL nuclear engineer, was selected as a [WNU-SI fellow in 2007](#).

Omotowa, a native of Nigeria, was equally shocked. He was one of 100 fellows asked to participate in this year's event.

"I was really excited," he said. "Surprised, but excited."

Omotowa is the first institute fellow from CAES and the [University of Idaho](#).

At Oxford, he will be immersed in the nuclear energy and technology fields for six weeks, learning and networking with some of the world's foremost leaders in science, engineering and the global environment.

Fellows also will tour various nuclear facilities in the United Kingdom and France, including a fast breeder reactor, an enrichment facility and fuel manufacturing and reprocessing plants.

"For me, this is a big deal," Omotowa said. "Attending the summer institute will further give me a drive toward some of the key things I'd like to achieve."

One of his goals is to bring nuclear power to Africa.

The continent has only two power reactors ([South Africa's Koeberg units 1 and 2](#)) and Omotowa believes more are needed to reduce its reliance on fossil fuels. Nigeria, he said, relies so heavily on fossil fuels that everyone graduates from school and thinks only of securing jobs in the oil industry.

At INL, Omotowa is working on two of Tokuhiro's projects that are funded by the U.S. Department of Energy's [Nuclear Energy University Programs](#) (NEUP). His research is focused on optimizing the safety of next-generation nuclear reactor designs. He hopes his work will someday help Africa embrace nuclear power.

"It will be very difficult to make that shift," he said. "Africa has no plans after the oil reserves are depleted."

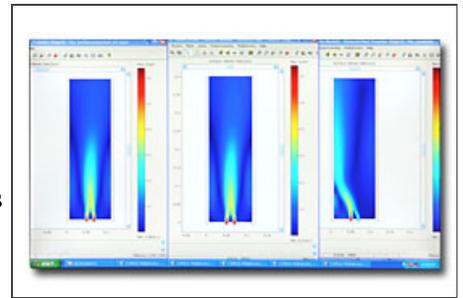
Originally from Abuja, Nigeria's capital city, Omotowa completed his master's degree in environmental and energy engineering at the [University of Sheffield](#) in England. Once he completes his doctorate at the University of Idaho, he will have a Pan-African-European-American perspective

on nuclear energy.

And while the summer institute seeks a "synergistic and internationally diverse" mix of top young professionals, Tokuhiro believes that Omotowa's multicontinental experience was a contributing factor to his selection as a fellow.

"The institute is really focused on building future leaders for the global nuclear community, and Olu's experience puts him in a pretty unique position," he said.

[Feature Archive](#)



Omotowa's research is helping optimize the safety of next-generation nuclear reactor designs.