For engineer turned explorer Albert Lin, it’s Big data for a bigger purpose

Albert Yu-Min Lin came to the University of California, San Diego to study engineering because he wanted to do “something hard.” Little did he know that would lead him to something much more difficult—trying to solve a centuries-old mystery. He swapped the title “engineer” for “explorer” by scouring the remote reaches of Mongolia for Genghis Khan’s lost tomb. Using data from ground-penetrating radar, remote sensors and satellite imagery, he searched underground without disturbing the natural environment or indigenous culture. “It’s not technology for technology’s sake,” Albert says. “It’s about putting data together to ask the right questions.”

Now an entrepreneur and a researcher at UC San Diego, he obliterates traditional scientific boundaries to probe how we use technology to answer those questions. He mobilizes a legion of citizen scientists to sift through mountains of data, and bring meaning to them. From chaos, he creates connections.

UC San Diego attracts and cultivates such risk-takers and innovators—explorers of our universe, our world and our humanity.

Learn more at ucsd.edu.