A close up of a screen

Description generated with high confidence

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Nomination for Excellence in Leadership Award

Dear EcoCAR Organizers:

UWAFT is pleased to write this recommendation to nominate Urban Pistek for the Excellence in Leadership Award. Urban is a first year Mechatronics engineering student and has been a key member of our EcoCAR team this past year. He joined the team because he was interested in automotive engineering and from the start, he was enthusiastic about the mission of EcoCAR and the team. Urban hit the ground running and was eager to learn as much as he could. He worked closely with team leads to seek out gaps in his knowledge to improve himself at every opportunity.

Urban often takes the initiative to engage and onboard new members of the team and help them navigate their way through sub team challenges[[1]](#footnote-2). He has excellent interpersonal skills and is well liked and respected by his peers. Urban’s high spirit and positive attitude towards solving challenging problems is invaluable and sets a high tone for those working with him.

Urban has been an author for almost every deliverable for Year 1 and has made considerable contributions to every sub team. During the past year, the leads have observed Urban grow and are impressed by his accomplishments thus far. He has a strong sense of direction and frequently shares his enthusiasm with his peer group. From developing electrical schematics to designing mechanical systems, Urban has never let the team down when given a task and he has proven himself to be an indispensable member of the team. His work has influenced the direction that the team has taken in it’s vehicle development and Urban frequently offers insight into vehicle design that stir discussion.

Urban is flexible and a true team player – in addition to technical projects, Urban also tackled non-technical projects such as the Target Market Study, to which he had a significant impact in its development and completion. He did so with the same unwavering commitment and vigor as his technical responsibilities. He is reliable and continues to be a role model for others on the team.

Urban is a true ambassador of the University of Waterloo and the EcoCAR program and we are lucky to have him. It is for these and other similar and compelling reasons that we recommend Urban Pistek for the honor of being recognized by EcoCAR organizers for the Excellence in Leadership Award.

**Testimonial 1**

In only his first year with the team, Urban Pistek has cemented himself as a core member of our team. It’s rare for a student, new to the team and the EcoCAR program overall, to become such a critical part of the team, however Urban quickly recognized the opportunity to demonstrate his value and has methodically elevated himself into a leadership position.

From his first days with the team, Urban stood out as an individual eager to learn as much as he possibly could, often questioning design decisions, finding potential issues that had yet to be identified, and committing to find suitable and effective solutions. Unbeknownst to me at the time, this was the platform in which he would build his technical expertise and later use to teach others.

It wouldn’t be far-fetched to state that Y1 is the most critical of all years in the competition. Pivotal decisions are made that will dictate the team’s strategy, workflow, and overall performance for years to come. Urban played a key role in UWAFT’s vehicle design process during throughout the year. Having significant contributions to many Year 1 deliverables, including the Target Market and Vehicle Technical Selection Report, Architecture Selection Report, and Final Technical Report. The team simply would not be in the position that it is today without his efforts.

What has impressed me the most about Urban is his unrelenting work ethic, effortlessly leading through example. Over a four-month period Urban committed 6-7 hours a day to the team while managing a fulltime internship, and various other activities. It wouldn’t be uncommon to see Urban diligently working away in the UWAFT office well past midnight. To him, this was just a “typical Tuesday”. During this time, he would lead electrical sub-team meetings, manage multiple projects, mentor new student volunteers, conduct component research activities, investigate emerging technologies, and continuously seek out ways to improve the team.

Urban exemplifies true leadership qualities.

It gives me great pleasure to nominate Urban Pistek for the Excellence in Leadership award.

Bade Akinsanya

UWAFT Project Manager

**Testimonial 2**

As a teammate who has seen Urban evolve from a team member to co-leading the electrical team within the time frame of only a school year, I can testify to his commitment and ability to grow. He not only has potential, but boasts a get-it-done attitude, that is only seconded by his rigorous work ethic and personal discipline. Urban during his internship for a research group on campus, would come to the office bay every day and spend time efficiently working with the electrical lead Ben Davies to take on electrical projects.

What sets Urban apart is his constant drive to contribute to the team’s vision. He is a thoughtful person who doesn’t hesitate to ask questions and makes sure he’s informed about the context before he asks. Urban didn’t stop at electrical projects alone; he also took a keen interest in the team’s target market/consumer research development. During submission of MaaS and Target Market studies, Urban led the sub-team under Ben Davies’ wing to fully vet factors that influenced the team’s choice of architecture. He not only led and wrote significant portions of the report but was instrumental is researching the market - a key quality that will help him in academic endeavours, and work at UWAFT.

Within the 10 months that Urban has been with UWAFT, Urban has also learned PCB design and is developing LV and HV schematics in electrical software such as Mentor Graphics VeSys. This demonstrates his ability to learn highly technical content under considerable time pressure. Urban will be travelling with the team to year 1 competition and will be presenting the electrical design and integration as part of the PSI presentation. Although Urban is young, I have seen Urban’s leadership skills in-person and I have full confidence that he will shine under the pressure.

I see Urban as an outstanding student with still much to offer. He has an ideology tempered in pragmatism that his team members and future students can learn from. His attitude is healthy and fosters a cohesive, nobody-left-behind culture within the team.

As a result, it is my pleasure to nominate Urban Pistek for the Excellence in Leadership Award.

Asad Bhatti,

UWAFT CAVs Lead

**Testimonial 3**

As his teammate, I believe that Urban is the perfect candidate for the Excellence in Leadership Award.

Why? Urban understands the big picture. In only one year of being a member, Urban has successfully led several projects on the electrical, mechanical, controls and CAV teams. Furthermore, he helped lead the target market analysis for our carsharing vehicle in Year 1. Urban’s success as a leader has come from being able to critically analyze and deconstruct each project. As a result, he can learn new material fast and delegate the proper tasks to each member.

At the beginning of Year 1, UWAFT’s electrical team only consisted of a few members. Urban was a big reason why the electrical team has grown to 15+ members. In only a few months, Urban began running weekly sub-team meetings and planning bi-weekly agile sprints. He mentored other team members and led tutorials for new team members to learn the VeSys electrical software. He has generated a new sense of direction and optimism in the electrical team for the new competition.

Urban has all the qualities of a great leader, making me very excited for the future of UWAFT over the next three years.

Ben Davies

UWAFT PSI Lead

**Testimonial 4**

Urban Pistek deserves to be recognized for his excellent leadership, work ethic and overall contributions to the team. Urban joined the team as a first-year undergraduate student, fresh out of high school. Immediately Urban set himself apart from other volunteers as he was not afraid to ask questions and was eager to learn from our team leads. He was quick to pick up skills and easily became a valuable member of our team. He has contributed significantly to Winter Workshop Pre-Submission, Architecture Selection Report and the Final Technical Report. Urban went out of his way to contribute to areas of engineering he was not necessarily familiar with. For example, Urban has strongest experience in developing his electrical skills and understanding; however, he was quick to volunteer to learn and contribute to the CAD Packaging Review by 3D modelling the complex high voltage wiring for each vehicle architecture candidate.

Additionally, Urban uses his newfound knowledge to teach newer members and aid them in their projects. His experience as a first-year member encourages other new undergraduate students. He helps them understand that the only prerequisites needed to become a core member of the team is dedication and a willingness to learn. Urban demonstrates leadership characteristics by consistently using his friendly nature to ease nervous students and encourage critical thinking. For example, UWAFT previously held a youth outreach event with the Scouts. During the STEM activity Urban encouraged young students to think “outside the box” and express their creativity and engineering prowess. Urban also possesses amazing work ethic, as during his coop term his weekday consisted of going to work, going to UWAFT, eating a packed home-cooked dinner while working on deliverables, then hitting the gym. Urban Pistek is a leader in the making and we as a team are lucky to have him.

Jerica

UWAFT PSI Lead

**Testimonial 5**

This past term, Urban has helped out tremendously with almost every single deliverable, coming into the bay almost every day after school to help out. Urban has made a significant impact on UWAFT by taking initiative to complete various tasks on all sub teams and worked with his mentors closely to prepare himself for a future leadership role within UWAFT. In addition, he took the time to learn about all the different systems present on the vehicle and did not restrict himself to a single sub-team. From staying long nights learning how to CAD, to spending hours helping the Electrical team with vehicle schematics, Urban has developed greatly over the past year and is on his way to becoming a great leader. He sets a great example for others to follow and demonstrates the qualities of a leader in-the-making. Urban always takes initiative no matter the difficulty and always guides other members that need assistance.

Dinil

UWAFT PSI Team Member

**Testimonial 6**

As a second year member of UWAFT, I clearly remember the difficulties of becoming a confident team contributor when I first joined. Urban makes this look easy, having only joined this year and already helping in almost every aspect of the team. It is clear from working with Urban that his efforts are made with the intention of being a better member and to help the team, as he truly takes pride in his work.

Despite being heavily involved in other subteams, Urban shows a passion for ensuring the success of the controls team. I’ve seen him pick up projects such as the CAN override box with little guidance, in order to make future controls testing much easier to manipulate. In the multiple reports and the leadership meetings he takes part in, Urban communicates his ideas and experience with precision. In areas where he lacks experience he studies until he’s gained a full understanding. This is essential as leadership positions demand a broad understanding of the team’s progress. Being in first year, he is a model individual for all new members and makes me optimistic for our future progress.

Cole Tofflemire

UWAFT CSMS Lead

**Testimonial 7**

Over this last academic year, I have personally worked with Urban Pistek countless times on various mechanical projects. At the beginning of this academic year, Urban joined UWAFT with very limited knowledge about CAD. He took initiative to learned Siemen’s NX by attending multiple workshops held by UWAFT and taking on individual projects which were completed with excellent results. His largest contributions to the Mechanical Sub-Team were on the Pre-Winter Workshop Submission and the Architecture Selection Report. The skills he developed during the past few months were directly used to create CAD for several components in our various architecture candidates. He designed the mounts for the invertor, HVJB and designed the routing for the HV wiring. Urban has had a profound impact on the Mechanical Team by learning complex CAD software in a short time frame and passing on any useful knowledge he learned onto other members. While working on any CAD for the vehicle, he made sure to tell all new mechanical members to shadow him. His initiative taught a lot of young members about how to work on vehicle CAD and he provided a great learning opportunity for them. He has also done this while working on various electrical deliverables and his initiative has vastly increased the number of trained members we have. His determination to learn has made him one of the most technically capable members on UWAFT and his leadership has allowed other members to learn the complex skills quickly.

Vaibhav Patel

UWAFT PSI Lead

1. UWAFT administers sub-team challenges for new students to teach students fundamental engineering skills (e.g. MATLAB, CAD Modelling, Soldering, etc) as quickly as possible in an organized and regimented manner. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)