***Engineering is inherently collaborative. What does collaboration mean to you? What strengths do you bring to the collaborative process? 200 words***

Engine+, an auto repair shop filled with tweakable engines, has always been my second family since I was small. Despite the shop being filled with intimidating-looking mechanics, they were actually very friendly.

Every year, these mechanics would develop a race car for an annual race event. Teamwork from six different divisions, including me from the engine division, all play an equally important role. With our limited budget, we maximized how we can develop a winning race car. Most of the parts are bespoke and require frequent communication between divisions.

“The chassis wasn’t stiff enough, and the engine had the wrong air-to-fuel ratio”

“Let’s fix and run it again”

As time passed by, some of them slacked off and small arguments led to big arguments. Being the youngest on the team, I continued working despite the dire situation. Turns out, my hard work inspired them. They made me the mascot of the team for helping to motivate them.

We encountered many obstacles in the process of developing the race car, and new things are learned every day. Every time a component is revised and fixed, other components from different divisions have to be re-tuned again.

Just like a car that needs every part to work together, a team needs every member to work together in order to move forward.

***Diversity in all definitional forms is intrinsic to excellence in engineering. Indeed, devising the best-engineered solutions to complex problems is often achieved by drawing from the diverse ingenuity of people from broadly different backgrounds, lived experiences, and identities. How do you see yourself contributing to the diversity and inclusion of the Cornell Engineering community? What is the unique voice you would bring to the Cornell Engineering community? 200 words***

To me, fun means trying to fix home appliances and read their manual books. As my fix-rate improved, so did the number of fix orders from my mom's friends. Consequently, my confidence grew and I challenged myself to "build".

With the recurring blackout in my area during the pandemic, I noticed two problems: limited electricity and limited activity. So, I decided to build a pedal-powered bicycle generator. Building, however, is entirely different from fixing: I needed to procure the parts that fit my specs and had to perform countless iterations to achieve a working prototype. Eager to share my prototype, I arranged instructional workshops for my neighbors so they can build their own bicycle generator. A year later, I still see my neighbors using my modified bikes, staying fit and storing electricity during the lockdown.

As an aspiring engineer, I always try to become a builder of devices that solves the problems surrounding me. In Cornell, I will become this builder that can make an impact, no matter how small, to my surroundings. In Cornell, I will build better human-powered generators that can push my peers to stay healthy and store energy for a sustainable future on and off campus.

Hi Melvin,

1st prompt:

You answer the question with the right idea, but I feel you need to answer the question more obviously. I would say to write what collaboration means to you at the end of the essay if you would like. Also, add more of your strengths and actions when you inspired your team – that is the focus of the essay so add more there and cut more in the other parts. These would improve your essay, though everything is well written.

2nd Prompt:

You answer the contribution part to the community and tie these things back to Cornell and how you will make an impact on them. I’d like to see more about what the community is that you identified with and contributed to and how they have had an influence on you to aspire to be a builder. This will help show more of you!

Let me or your mentor know if you have any problems!

– Anushka