



# PRESCHIO CONSULTING, LLC

P.O. Box 10722, Casa Grande, Arizona 85130

January 31, 2017

To whom it may concern,

Zarni Htet has requested of me to provide him a letter of recommendation for the Data Science for Public Good program offered by the Social and Decision Analytics Laboratory at Virginia Tech. I have known Zarni since October 2013 while we were both employed at Prescio Consulting. Zarni reported to me from January 2014 till August 2015 during this time. He worked with me on numerous projects, both as an analyst and in managing others. During this time, Zarni was industrious, hardworking, honest, conscientious, creative, and punctual with deadlines. Zarni has perhaps the highest potential of all of the people that I have supervised and/or worked with in my professional career. Without reservations I recommend him strongly.

Zarni spent the bulk of his time assisting me in the construction of a Bitcoin website, news aggregate, wallet, and exchange for Prescio Consulting. Zarni was involved in this project from its inception, providing valuable creative input on its design and implementation. During the initial stages, Zarni conducted market research identifying niches within the Bitcoin ecosystem in which we could deploy our website. Zarni investigated the various platforms where we could host our website, pricing out the cost and the capabilities of both a cloud solution and installing our own servers. Zarni helped design our first web application and led the team in India which developed and deployed the application. During the deployment, Zarni was in charge of developing metrics both for the progress of the team in meetings its milestones, and in the uptake of the website by the general public. Zarni's industriousness was key to the successful development and deployment of the first application.

Subsequent to the deployment of this first application, Zarni continued to be involved in the ongoing maintenance of the website, the development of new applications for the site, and two redesigns of the site. During this process, Zarni continued to manage team members in India, while reporting to me on their progress. Zarni continued to investigate new applications which we could deploy on our site, learning new technologies and assessing whether these technologies would be appropriate for our company. These activities exemplify one of Zarni's greatest strength, an unburdened curiosity to learn and to apply this newfound knowledge in a useful fashion.

Zarni's passion for discovering new knowledge and learning new technology was not limited to professional assignments. During Zarni's time at Prescio, he would seek out extracurricular opportunities to investigate new opportunities, from seminars on latest trends in science, engineering and IT, to Meetup groups on Hadoop, Big Data and analytics, and cloud computing, to boot camps and weekend scrums on various programming languages, to workshops on marketing and entrepreneurship. Zarni would regularly bring these opportunities to the office and bring fellow employees with him to these meetings. Zarni also gave informal hour long seminars in the office exposing his coworkers to cloud computing and big data. All of these



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activities were Zarni's inspiration, and done on his own time without compensation from Prescio.

Subsequent to his departure from Prescio in 2015, Zarni moved to the East Coast, first attending data science bootcamps, then attending Columbia University as an unclassified graduate student, and finally enrolling in a Masters of Applied Statistics at New York University. During this period, Zarni and I periodically communicated and he kept me abreast of his activities, and his experiences with each program. From afar, I continued to note his progression as a student and professional. In particular, his exposure to advanced programs as well as his immersion in a competitive peer group appears to have paid dividends, with his continued growth in intellect and character.

Zarni's passion for knowledge is untampered, often leading him to pursue multiple projects simultaneously. The dispersion of this search sometimes interferes with a productive outcome, as does his still developing skill at discriminating the most productive areas to apply his efforts. Zarni would greatly benefit by developing further discipline in his intellectual pursuits, as well as broadening his breadth of knowledge to discern the most fruitful paths. Further training would be most beneficial, particularly from either an elite university or a top-notch institute with a strong supervisor and personal mentorship to help Zarni reach his potential.

Another tremendous asset Zarni possesses is a wonderful personality, amenable to both junior positions and leadership roles. Throughout my time working with Zarni, he regularly served multiple masters, doing the bidding of several senior staff members, meeting all of our requirements punctually and with good cheer. Zarni also led several team members in India. This leadership role was long distance, conducted by e-mail and Skype. Zarni was exemplary in this role, taking the time to ensure his communications were clear and following up to ensure that they were understood and acted upon. Zarni implemented a new management system for the folk in India, helping them become more productive and delivery oriented. Of all the people who I have worked with at Prescio, Zarni was likely the most successful manager of our team members in India. This was accomplished by dedication, tireless effort, and a great nature.

Within the office at Prescio, Zarni was a joy to be with. He was helpful at all, and knowledgeable in many aspects. Zarni unofficially mentored an older employee at Prescio for several months, an unusual state of affair given their respective ages. Zarni managed this with his humble approach and his optimistic outlook, helping the older employee improve his work performance and output.

Zarni was a tremendous asset at Prescio and we were very sorry to see him leave. However, given Zarni's intellect, his exceptional set of talent, his outgoing personality and optimistic outlook, his incessant desire to learn and apply his knowledge, and his willingness to go the extra mile to see that tasks are accomplished on time and to specification, I strongly believe that Zarni will be successful at whatever he endeavors to do. I strongly recommend Zarni for the Data Science for Public Good program offered by the Social and Decision Analytics



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Laboratory at Virginia Tech. He is well suited for your program with a strong interest in IT, computing, data, and its application. He would be a wonderful addition to your program bringing enthusiasm, knowledge, and a willingness to share. Should you require any further information please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Kosta Vasilakos, PhD

Director of Research

Prescio Consulting

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