

To the Fisher College of Business Pace Setters Selection Committee:

I'm writing in strong support of Peter Koland's nomination for the Pace Setters Award. I coached Pete for several years in youth basketball and AAU, and I've watched him develop from a talented kid with heart into the kind of leader that organizations build around.

Pete was one of the best shooters I've ever coached. He was undersized, but that never stopped him from putting in the work. From a young age, Pete dedicated himself to skill development on his own time, building a foundation that would serve him well beyond basketball.

One season stands out. We had an opportunity to play one of the best AAU teams in the state — maybe even the region or country. I asked the team if they wanted to take the challenge. Every player said no. Except Pete. He wanted to compete. We played them and lost badly, but Pete and the team gave everything they had. For him, it wasn't about the score. It was about testing himself against the best and getting better in the process. That's leadership — being willing to step into difficulty when everyone else wants to retreat.

Pete ran point guard for some of my favorite teams. Our practices were intense, competitive, and purposeful. Whatever challenge I set — shooting drills, defensive rotations, game situations — Pete found a way to exceed it. He has a habit of making expectations look modest, another defining quality that has paid impressive dividends in his academic and life pursuits.

His senior year of high school tested his character in a different way. Despite being a starter and co-captain, his playing time waned as the season progressed. There was no good reason for it, and it would have been easy to become bitter. Pete didn't. He loved his teammates, handled an unfair situation with maturity, and kept showing up. That's the kind of leadership you expect from someone 10 years older, not a teenager facing one of his most disappointing seasons.

Pete doesn't just meet standards. He redefines them. Academically, athletically, and personally, he consistently performs at a level that surprises people who thought they knew his ceiling.

The Pace Setters Award recognizes students who excel in academics, leadership, and service while exemplifying purpose and passion. Pete embodies all of that. And just when you think you've seen everything he can do, he'll surprise you again.

I give Pete my strongest endorsement for this recognition.

Respectfully,

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