Thaddeus Voss is the UC College of Engineering and Applied Science Engineer of the Month for November. Thaddeus maintains a 3.75 GPA in his junior year in the electrical engineering program while working toward a Bachelor of Science degree in electrical engineering.

Thaddeus says that his love for the STEM disciplines and his desire to make a lasting impact in the world is what led him to study electrical engineering at the University of Cincinnati. “I want to use my talents and my college education to make the world a better place to live. I immediately saw that in engineering,” he said. “I really believe that the purpose of a college education is to use your talents to better everyone else the best you can – and engineering at UC is allowing me to do this.”

Thaddeus says what he loves most about electrical engineering is “The fact that it deals with abstract things you cannot see – voltage and current signals – that are actually floating all around us and govern how we interact with the world. These basics are what electronics are built upon, what the radio and cell phones are built upon, and how we have adapted them to make the world more efficient.”

He says that he chose UC for several reasons. “I came to UC because of the environment of Cincinnati, both academically and socially. The fact that UC is so fluid with the surrounding Cincinnati community, and students and professionals are constantly working together, is really integral to UC’s success and its appeal,” he said. “Additionally, I love the city of Cincinnati. It’s exciting and very dynamic and I have thoroughly enjoyed living in and around downtown for the past four years.”

Thaddeus says that for him Cincinnati is academically intriguing. “UC excels in so many different areas, and as someone who is interested in every kind of academic endeavor, I knew that I would be able to get a very versatile education at UC.”
According to Thaddaeus, it has turned out to be just that. “I have been able to mold my college education into exactly what I want through my involvement in the honors program and the Peer Leader program and I’ve been able to live in San Francisco for eight months through the co-op program.”

Thaddaeus has participated in co-op assignments through research conducted here at UC in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Computing Systems, and at Infinera, a network solutions company, located in the Silicon Valley of California.

Thaddaeus says his co-op experiences have provided him with a perspective that he doesn’t believe he would have gotten at another university. “When I’m on co-op, I can really remove myself from the ‘college lifestyle’ and evaluate what my role is in the world at large and how I can make that role exactly what I want it to be when I graduate,” he explains. “If I was in a traditional college program, I would just go through classes every day of every year, be surrounded by people doing the same old college things every day of every year, and be in a similar routine every day of every year. With the co-op program, I get to really connect with professionals in my field, meet new college students, be a ‘real adult’ in the ‘real world,’ and take a much needed break from college. By getting this perspective, I’ve become a much more aware and responsible college student.”

According to Thaddaeus, his most notable achievements lie outside of school work. “I think I’ve made the most impact and am most proud of my work in extracurricular activities. These clubs and organizations are the most important part of my education to me,” he said. “I’ve been able to improve the living conditions for Appalachian people living in Eastern Kentucky, really change the nature of organizations I have held executive positions in for years, as well as conduct healthy discussion on the social and political climate in Cincinnati through these student organizations, and mentor students through the Peer Leader program – these are the things that will stick with me forever.”

Thaddaeus currently serves as the vice president of the College of Engineering and Applied Science Ambassadors, the IEEE secretary and the vice president of Eta Kappa Nu. Additionally he has served as a teaching assistant for Engineering Foundations, and a Learning Community
peer leader, and has participated in several organizations including the Honors Program, Honors Ambassadors, Major Ambassadors, UC Alliance, and GenderBloc.

When asked what advice he’d give to fellow students he said, “Recognize the differences between you and the person next to you, and celebrate those differences. Do not reject people because they look, act, or have different ideas and opinions than you. The difference between you and the person next to you are the reason that the world is such an exciting place to live in. If you live by this, you will have a much more harmonious, effective, happy, successful, and fulfilling life.”