Construction Management Student Building Solid Future

By: Desiré Bennett

Peter Strawman is the UC College of Engineering and Applied Science Engineer of the Month for December. Peter maintains a 3.75 GPA in his senior year in the Construction Management program.

Peter says that even though Construction Management programs are offered in his hometown of Akron, OH, his decision to attend the University of Cincinnati was a no-brainer. “I still liked UC better,” he said. “I chose to come to UC because it has one of the best Construction Management programs in the nation.”

Peter says that he has always been interested in engineering and he chose to study construction management because of the array of opportunities the field opens for him. “My future career is one that is always evolving and changing and allows me to make contacts with people from all over and from all walks of life,” he said.

And like many other students in the College of Engineering and Applied Science, Peter says that it was UC’s strong co-op program that ultimately stood out to him. “What I like most about my major is the number of co-op opportunities we get that allow us to work early in our careers to start making contact and get real-world experience.”

Peter has held co-op positions at Habitat for Humanity, Kalkreuth Roofing and Sheet Metal, and HGC Construction. He believes that through these field experiences he gained invaluable lessons as well as real-world networking opportunities. “My co-ops have allowed me to make contacts in my industry prior to graduation to allow for an easier transition to a full time job as well as referrals from past employers and contacts.”

In addition to his co-op positions, and maintaining a rigorous course load, Peter participates in several extra-curricular activities, demonstrating exceptional leadership through various competitions and service. He serves or has served as treasurer of the Construction Student Association (CSA), president of the Construction Competition Club (CCC), secretary of the American Concrete Institute (ACI), team captain of the Associated Schools of Construction Regional Design Build Team (ASC DB), president of the Design Build Institute of America (DBIA), and president of construction management’s honor society Sigma Lambda Chi (SLC).
Most recently he served as estimator and team captain of the American Builders and Contractors National Team (ABC Team), where he used his knowledge in designing, estimating, scheduling, planning and presenting on real-life constructions projects, and helped his team to secure a first place win at the 2013 ABC’s Construction Management Competition in Las Vegas, NV.

Peter says that one of the biggest challenges he has faced has been maintaining balance between work, school, and participation in several student groups and volunteer events. His solution is a focused work-hard, play-hard philosophy. “Work hard to get things done to allow for time to relax – and never take your eyes off the prize.”

It is Peter’s work ethic and dedication to service that has been the key to his success thus far. He believes that involvement beyond the classroom is key. “Don't be afraid to get involved. No matter if you lead a group or go volunteer for one day, go out, meet people, and get involved,” he said. “You'll never regret it.”