

## PLC TESTIMONIAL: ELLIOTT HEDMAN, PLC Class of 2004

“In PLC I've been asked many times, ‘If I could do anything, what would I do?’ When thinking about an internship this summer I took that PLC challenge and highlighted my dream job.

Wizards of the Coast, an offset of Hasbro Inc., was creating a new game, and I knew with my problem solving and innovation skills, this would be an ideal opportunity for me. Finally, I would be able to do something that lets me achieve my potential and at the same time do something I am passionate about.

That said, there were no internships available at this company. If there is one thing PLC has taught me, it's how to inspire change, which, this time, I did using the PLC memo format. I have written over a dozen PLC memos. Memos are one-page persuasive papers that have to get across a point with key details - strengths, opportunities, weaknesses, and threats. This is exactly what I needed since I really had no inside contacts at Wizards; I had to catch my potential employer's attention quickly and get the company to want me just as quickly.

After I wrote my one page memo, I emailed it to various employees of Wizards of the Coast. A week later I actually got a response back from the Vice President of the division I wanted to work for, and he was interested and wanted more details. He then told me that he would like to interview me later. Time passed and I did not receive any emails back from him. So what did I do? I wrote another memo! In this second memo I came up with 4 key strategies that the company would have to follow in order to make sure its game was a success. As soon as I sent that email, I got an instant response from the Vice President and he set up an interview time then and there.

So here I am now working at my dream internship. I still have many more obstacles to overcome, as leaders always do, but PLC has been crucial for getting me where I am now, and I have no doubt that it will continue to be crucial in my career building within engineering.”

## CU & PLC TESTIMONIAL: ELLIOTT HEDMAN, PLC Class of 2004

“Choosing the right school for me was about academic opportunity. Before I chose to attend CU, I struggled with where to go – the University of Colorado or the more renowned Stanford. When I chose CU my friends would give me this blank stare- “You chose CU of all schools?” Little did they realize that that choice would get me into the top Computer Science graduate Program in the world, MIT.

The fact is, CU actually offered me a beyond comparable academic opportunity. I was offered research opportunities before school even began. Every faculty I have talked to has offered me a research position. The way CU is set up, not only do I get to participate in world renowned research (for me that was building wireless robots), I am paid above average salary. When it comes to applying to graduate school, your GPA, is interesting but the research you did is the deciding factor, and because the competition is “less fierce” at CU, you have the opportunity to push yourself, way, way beyond in academics.

Further more, between my PLC Academic Director Dr. Ty Tashiro and my other professors, I received first class advice on how to ready my career. At CU, the professor's office hours are almost always open, so I often times would sit with my teachers for an hour a week and ask them their perspective on academics and future careers. When you are the “big fish” here, the dedication and investment your professors give you is incomparable.

The most deciding factor on my resume was the internships that only PLC was able to connect me with. Because I had research under my belt as a freshman, I asked Tiffany Wiley to connect me with PLC Alumni at IBM. Not only did I get to work as an intern in an industry giant- PLC stuck me working under the Vice President of the entire division. Being able to casually say, I

learned the importance of matrix oriented management by working with the top-leadership at IBM, has a certain selling point for those future opportunities.

This semester I interviewed with top tier grad schools in Artificial Intelligence (my passion that PLC helped me solidify). I had a three and a half hour interview with MIT. The thing is, the questions were not about what undergrad school I went to. They didn't ask me, "Who was your world renowned professor for calculus 1?" They asked me questions like: "If we were to implement facial recognition software on the internet what would be the ethical considerations?" "What is the biggest change you want to make in the world?"--Questions PLC made me think about many times before I ever set foot in the interview.

Finally, and most importantly, the peers around me challenged me. I was that kid in high school who was never challenged and aced anything thrown at me. Two weeks into PLC I met 50 people who could teach me something and push me to strive for more. I met smarter people. I met more driven people. I met more self-aware people. These PLC students became my best friends, and pushed me to go for that gold, to get into MIT to earn my doctorate degree.

I'm guessing at this point you aren't actually thinking about graduate school. But ironically you are. When you are considering the difference between Yale or Stanford or some big name school and CU, you are looking at future opportunity. By attending CU and PLC, I was not only given the best opportunity to pursue academic challenge, I became a leader within that field.