



The HOT team is proud to nominate Gary Zahn for the 2012 Dean's List Award. Gary has been a member of the HOT team's mechanical build group for two years. During this time, Gary has taken full advantage of the unique mentoring relationship advocated by FIRST, learning advanced technical skills from his mentors. Gary has become our best student machinist, creating precision parts on the mill and lathe. This year, Gary has been working with our rookie machinists. Gary patiently helps them develop their machining techniques and the attention to detail required to build a quality robot. He also provides his workmates a narrative of random yet interesting facts about life, the universe and everything.

During the competition season, Gary is instrumental in the HOT team's scouting efforts. Gary's attention to detail allows him to create match strategies based on the strengths of our alliance partners and the weaknesses of our opponents. Gary's observations also greatly influence the selection of our alliance partners. Our scouting mentor has often commented on the quality of Gary's data and analysis. Gary greatly contributes to on the field success, both through his efforts during the build season and during the competition season.

Before joining the HOT team, Gary was a member of the accomplished Dark Matter FLL team. Gary's Nano Quest team earned a perfect score of 400. As a part of this team, Gary developed an excellent understanding of the engineering design process from concept to implementation. This has aided him in FRC.

Gary's scientific pursuits extend beyond FIRST. Gary has participated in Robofest, a local autonomous robotics competition. He also enjoys tinkering on mechanical systems at home. He and his dad are always working on some new project. They are constantly working on their car. Other projects are more exotic. The other week, Gary brought his model steam engine to school. Gary's classmates have tapped into his mechanical talent, recruiting him to design and build the mechanical systems for their homecoming float.

Gary was not a member of the HOT team his Freshman year because he was busy filming a PBS science series for teenagers called "Think Squad." In this series, a diverse group of teens solve the science-based riddles that plague them. The group works together to solve the mystery using the scientific method, by first establishing the problem (the Leader), observing data in the field (the Observer), encouraging their client to develop a hypothesis in the "Think Tank", and testing it in the lab (the Lab Rat). It is very suiting that Gary played the Lab Rat. The series was met with much acclaim, winning an Emmy award for excellence. How many FIRST participants have an Emmy award? Gary is a truly unique individual.

After high school, Gary would like to attend college in Michigan to pursue a degree in engineering. Gary has a strong desire to stay in Michigan after he graduates. Michigan is lucky that students like Gary have a strong desire to contribute to building industry in the state. As Gary says, "I want to leave something behind for the future."

