

January 21, 2010

To My Fellow Alumni:

I first met Joe Asch in a history class my sophomore summer (1996) and my first thought was: who is this old guy? You just don't see an ordinary person, who is in their late thirties auditing a history class. But Joe is not an ordinary person. For starters, Joe not only participated in class, but he brought out the best Dartmouth has to offer in that course: engaging discussions which led to meals he hosted with the professor and other students. Joe's love of learning and his love of Dartmouth were evident from the beginning. What is truly unique about Joe is that not only he gets what makes Dartmouth so great, but he has personally dedicated himself making sure that other Dartmouth students can have the same wonderful experience that so many of us had. That is why I believe that Joe Asch would make the best trustee that we have had in generations.

Here are the facts about Joe. He is a self-made man who sees solutions where others see problems. He founded what has become an international medical supply business that allows Joe the luxury to live anywhere in the world. He chose Hanover, where he regularly takes courses. When he learned that there were many students who needed additional help learning to write and that the college was not providing the right form of assistance, he worked with the College, founding (and paying for) a writing teacher to work help students. When problems emerge at the College, Joe talks about them – witness his 30+ articles in The Daily Dartmouth and his blogging at Dartblog.com, where you can see his clearly articulated ideas and suggested solutions.

I am listing these facts to explain to you what I have come to learn about Joe through my decade plus friendship with him: Joe is a doer, a problem solver. He is a pragmatic person with not only an incredibly intellect, but a unique ability to translate ideas and visions into reality. He does that by identifying problems and clear solutions. He is not an ideologue or someone who has a preconceived notion of what any problem nor does he claim to have a panacea of a solution which he can apply to any problem. Joe is a team player, who identifies problems, builds consensus and most importantly, can take concrete actions to make things better. I say this because I not only know Joe, but through my personal experience, working for years in Congress and now having the opportunity to serve in the Obama Administration, I have seen a few people who share this skill set.

We, as members of the Dartmouth Community, are fortunate that Joe has decided to dedicate himself to making the College a better place. I can think of no better way that I can improve life at Dartmouth than by voting for Joe Asch as a Trustee and I sincerely ask you to do the same.

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