

Why I Support Joe Asch for Trustee

January 27, 2010

I first met Joe Asch my sophomore summer, when I was acting as an interim-editor for *The Dartmouth Review*. Joe, who has his finger on the College's pulse, kept up with my articles in *The Review* and e-mailed me out of the blue one day to set up a meeting. When he invited me to his house in Hanover for dinner, I wasn't really sure what to expect—why did this successful Dartmouth alum, who had gone to Yale Law School, worked for Bain in London, and spent the greater part of the last twenty years starting a business in France, want to talk to me?

After he introduced me to his lovely wife and two adorable children and welcomed me to sit at the kitchen table, I quickly found out the answer to that question. Joe wanted to know about my Dartmouth experience—which classes I liked, which ones I didn't, what my sorority was like, who were my favorite professors and so on (as it turns out, the professor I was and still am closest to is a close friend of Joe's). He wanted to make sure that I was receiving the incredible experience he had had when he graduated thirty years ago.

That's the thing about Joe—unlike some of the other trustees, who are undoubtedly concerned about the state of academics and social life at Dartmouth—Joe is not only concerned, but he's involved. Joe is auditing classes with students. He is meeting with professors, students, and administrators. He is writing op-eds and running a blog. He is researching class enrollment patterns, he is analyzing the College's budget, he is establishing writing programs at the College—in other words, he is doing everything he can to make Dartmouth a better place. I don't think any of the current-sitting trustees are doing as much for Dartmouth as Joe is. And given what he's already done, just imagine the amazing things he'll do when he's on the Board.

In my two remaining years at Dartmouth, following my initial dinner with Joe and his family, I regularly ran into Joe with his children down at the swimming dock along the Connecticut River, at Occom Pond, or I would meet with him somewhere along Main Street for lunch to talk about all things Dartmouth. Though Joe listened as I mostly talked, it was and has always been clear to me that he wants, for the College, what alumni and undergraduates have always wanted out of their Dartmouth experience: a robust liberal arts education and a vibrant social scene, a financially sound and bureaucratically limited place of learning and fun.

For being so in touch with the College, and with—both as alumni and students—our concerns I enthusiastically support Joe Asch's nomination to the Board of Trustees.

Emily Esfahani Smith '09