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Susannah Heschel
Eli Black Professor of Jewish Studies

Dear Friends,

I am writing in support of Joseph Asch, who is running as a petition candidate for the Dartmouth Board of Trustees. I have known Joe and his lovely wife, Elizabeth, for several years as neighbors in Hanover and as people who are deeply committed to the College and to the Hanover community.

Joe audited a seminar that I taught a few years ago, on the Historiography of the Holocaust, and made wonderful contributions to class discussions. He is a serious student of history, particularly of the Third Reich and the Holocaust, and his thoughtfulness helped to make the seminar a serious engagement with difficult material.

A 1979 graduate of the College and a 1983 graduate of Yale Law School, Joe has become an entrepreneur whose local business, the River Valley Club, attracts a wide membership. Despite his business interests, he has maintained a strong involvement in College life, often inviting students and faculty to his home for dinner and conversation. I know of no other alumnus who is as interested as Joe in the current social and academic challenges of Dartmouth. I find Joe to be very sympathetic to both students and faculty, and above all to maintaining the high quality of Dartmouth College for both groups.

Joe's numerous columns in "The D" about the foibles and successes of the College administration have attracted wide attention and debate. His suggestions for improving aspects of Dartmouth life are often excellent and often controversial. Yet it is clear to all of his readers that his concern for the quality of the Dartmouth undergraduate education is genuine. As a beneficiary of the wonderful Departmental Editing Program that he funded in the Department of Religion, where I teach (as well as the Departments of Art History and Math), I can attest first-hand to the excellence of that initiative. Students in my senior seminar and students writing senior theses under my direction received extraordinary time and careful attention from the writing editor – a very talented, patient, and helpful teacher. She guided the students in sentence structure, grammar, organization of research material, and each one, under her guidance, learned how to write at a much more sophisticated level than they had ever previously achieved.

Certainly, Joe's knowledge of the College and concern for it would make him a superb asset to the Board of Trustees.

Sincerely yours,

Susannah Heschel