

Tamara Norman Smith '94, MA '96 • Moscow, Russia

March 14, 2010

Dear Fellow Alumni,

When I think back to my time at Dartmouth, certain memories shine through... Invigorating debate with professors and classmates that spilled over from the classroom to the dinner table... Passion for learning that often left both professor and students with goosebumps... Unique opportunities available in a college that celebrated liberal arts students... Many of us have such feelings for Dartmouth, and we generally assume that those after us—and those still to come—will have an equally rich undergraduate experience. Not Joe Asch '79, and that's why I'm writing to give him my full support as a petition Trustee Candidate.

Joe never *assumes* anything. He acutely observes and questions everything around him, be it in the classes he audits, in the successful businesses he runs, or in his place as a citizen of the world and as a proud and thankful alumnus of Dartmouth.

When he sees something that deserves praise and support, he leads the cheering. Look at the many professors whose work he has personally supported! It's equally true that when he sees policies and situations that he thinks need fixing, he rolls up his sleeves and digs in, seeking solutions. He feels a responsibility to do so, and he takes action. The Departmental Editing Program he founded and funded helped countless students. His many articles in *The Dartmouth* and on *Dartblog* also attest to his dedication to preserving and improving the College.

That's the Joe I've known since first meeting him in July 1992. I was Joe's Spanish TA during ALPs back then, and he has been a supportive friend ever since. Joe's presence in those Spanish classes, and later as a fellow Italian TA, was infectious. There was no mistaking how much he relished being back in the Dartmouth classroom. His love of learning—and of Dartmouth—brought out the best in everyone in our groups, strongly contributing to the overall success of the programs. Most of all, though? What really made an impression on this college sophomore? Joe cared about *me*, about my own personal Dartmouth experience. His interest and support during my remaining time in Hanover enriched my education. Read the other letters in support of Joe, and you'll see how he has reached out to countless students over the years.

Joe's detractors tend to focus on his writings in which he has publicly criticized College policies... I wonder, though, just how many of those critics have carefully read his full articles, all meticulously researched. Can he be controversial? Absolutely! Joe and I have personally disagreed about a variety of issues...and I'm glad! Rigorous debates at dinner made me a better student "for life." No matter the situation, I greatly respect how thoroughly he examines all sides of a question before suggesting a solution. He has also always been open to debate! He doesn't seek to "win" any argument; rather, he seeks to uncover truths and delights in the process.

Who does Joe want to "win"? Dartmouth. And all those who love her. What better man to become our Trustee?

Sincerely,

Tamara Norman Smith '94, MA '96