



P: (805) 756-2568
F: (805) 756-2299
www.mate.calpoly.edu
San Luis Obispo, CA 93407

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To Whom It May Concern:

It is not very often that I ask colleagues if they would allow me to write a letter of support for their promotion. In the case of Pete Schwartz, I requested to write a letter of support because I have admired the way in which he is generous with his professional expertise and makes a sincere effort to live a life that is congruent with the things he espouses in his teaching. Often these things are a great service to those outside one's immediate organizational home, but they can be quite invisible because they take place beyond the boundaries of the department. So I offer here my experience of how Pete has served a professional role model for ingenuity and transformation.

I have known Pete since 2000. Our paths have crossed several times, as we had similar interests in the general domain of nanotechnology and associated characterization tools. Every now and again, I shared some of our department lab equipment so that he could create some needed specimen. His skill at getting things done in the laboratory has been absolutely remarkable to me.

Somehow, we both went through a kind of conversion and redefining of our whole careers toward science in support of a sustainable global future. This shift was consistent with the overwhelming findings in the scientific community, pointing toward the need for a realignment of scientific priorities. In Pete's case, he not only created courses on related topics, but converted his very life to reflect his espoused values.

From 2010 to 2015, he and I were part of a larger group of individuals on the faculty at Cal Poly and in the larger San Luis Obispo community who created a new, community-engaged "learn by doing" effort that we called SUSTAIN around broad themes of sustainability. He was directly involved in the conceptual ideas for a proposal in 2009 (declined by DOE). While he has not been directly involved in authoring three funded proposals, his consistent contributions as team member and thought partner are the foundation of the learning initiative which is the subject of the funded research (National Science Foundation ~\$1M).

His tireless advocacy comes in the form of guest lectures in the courses of others, guest lecturing at community events such as the Bioneers Conference, and speaking at public local governmental meetings. He even created a learning program in Guatemala with 15 students that ran in the summers of 2011 and 2012. These are appropriate and valuable ways for a scientist to serve the larger community.

I also mention that in recent years, Pete has undergone a kind of transformation in a rather public and exemplary way. He openly acknowledges the challenges he encounters with new viewpoints. His transformation has included inviting me in to his PHYS141 course as kind of a co-teacher in AY2012-13. This was a challenging experience for the both of us. I feel that someone less dedicated to learning would have abandoned our partnership within weeks, but Pete, in true scientific fashion, allowed the experiment to run its course, despite our mutual hardships. He has been beautifully open to trying new approaches, with a genuine desire for more effective learning. Even recently, he and I co-authored a chapter on the process of adopting open education resources with a group of six others from different disciplines.

Dr. Schwartz occurs to me as one who is profoundly demonstrating what it means to be a life-long learner, to continually seek to have one's life reflect their responsibility to society. He is an inspiration to students who know him and an asset to Cal Poly.

Sincerely,

Linda Vanasupa, Ph.D.
Professor, Department of Materials
Associate Director, Center for Sustainability in Engineering