

October 25, 2013

Officer Selection Board

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Zachary Wasuta, who is applying to the Air Force Officer Training Program. I have known Zachary for a number of years and, from the day we met, he has always found new ways to impress me.

The word that comes to mind when I attempt to describe Zachary is "exceptional." He comes from what we New Englanders call "good stock," growing up in a hardworking family from rural New Hampshire. As a young man he was the one who took the initiative to stop on his way to school to help a woman who was stranded on the highway. He was able to repair her car so that she could continue, which made him late for school but in his mind, it wasn't even a choice as to whether or not to help this woman; it's what he does. This random act of kindness was, and is, typical of how he conducts himself in other aspects of his life. He's able to quickly identify problems and issues and then act upon them in a positive fashion. In school he successfully participated in team sports and was a junior member of the Civil Air Patrol.

After high school, Zachary took a year off to contemplate what he wanted to do in life. Many in his position might have taken time to travel the world but he was more interested in working as a carpenter building houses and earning much needed money for school, all the while trying to "figure things out." It didn't take long for him to decide that aviation was his inspiration and his passion. It's somewhat in his blood, as his grandfather worked as an engineer in the Air Corps during World War II and was associated with the team who carried the atomic bomb to Japan. After the war, Zachary's grandfather continued his work with aircrafts at TWA, where he stayed until he retired.

Once Zachary made the decision on his career path he became even more amazing to watch. Not only did he complete the four-year program early, but he did so while making the Faculty List, the President's List (twice), the Dean's List throughout, and upon completion, graduated magna cum laude. He was also awarded the "Casey Jones Award in Aviation" for having the highest GPA in his major. It must be noted that he accomplished all of this while working multiple jobs in order to make ends meet.

I myself have been an owner of a mid-size construction company for over 27 years and during that time I've hired and managed hundreds of employees. I pride myself in being able to quickly assess the qualities and work ethic of applicants. After watching Zachary "in action" I have no doubt he would be on my very "short list" of those I would want to work for me in a leadership position.

I also have the pleasure of serving as Vermont's Lieutenant Governor, and while I have not served in the military personally, I have worked closely with military leaders in my role as chair of the Governor's Homeland Security Council. I have a great amount of respect and appreciation for those who defend us. Among those I consider to be friends are General Michael Dubie and his brother Colonel Brian Dubie (my predecessor as Lt. Governor), who are both former F-16 pilots. In my current role I also have to assess those who I believe have the potential of being in leadership positions, people I can trust and rely on. If Zachary lived in Vermont and had an interest in politics or construction, I would ask him to be a part of my team in some capacity.

The bottom line is that I believe Zachary Wasuta possesses the interpersonal skills and leadership potential needed in order to qualify him for this program. I can think of no better candidate for this position and look forward to all of the ways he will continue to amaze me in the future. If I can be of further assistance please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best regards,

Lt. Governor Phil Scott