

**FOUNDATION FOR
FREE
ENTERPRISE
EDUCATION**

excellence in learning

proud presenter of

Pennsylvania Free Enterprise Week

3078 West 12th Street • Erie, Pennsylvania 16505-3857

Phone 814/833-9576

Fax 814/833-9850

Email info@pfew.org

Web www.pfew.org

January 16, 2020

To Whom It May Concern,

It gives me great pleasure to offer this letter of recommendation for Mr. Jeff Yalden, a perennial speaker at the flagship program operated by the Foundation for Free Enterprise Education.

To better understand the context of my recommendation, I should first provide you with some background on the program at which Jeff speaks five times each summer, Pennsylvania Free Enterprise Week. Internationally-acclaimed for excellence, we now host five week-long sessions each summer for students from all across Pennsylvania. During our seven-day, residential program, our students explore the world of business and private enterprise in an intensive, hands-on journey into the world of business where they play the roles of senior managers operating imaginary corporations. Augmented by world-class speakers (five or six daily) our schedule mandates fourteen to sixteen hour days for the participants and we are known as one of the most intensive academic summer programs in the country. If you have not heard of us, you might visit our website at www.pfew.org.

I have been privileged of working for our organization for twenty-years, taking over as President & CEO two years ago. We are blessed with some of Pennsylvania's, indeed the nation's, most highly touted speakers and youth speakers specifically. Additionally, we have had some of the most high-profile adult speakers imaginable including former Governor Tom Ridge, Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert and the CEOs of corporations like AstraZeneca, Tasty Baking, PPG Industries, Alcoa International, Merck, Highmark, Saturn, 84 Lumber, Erie Insurance etc., etc., just to name a few.

The reason I give you that background is that, quite simply, Jeff is the best I have ever seen, and I've seen hundreds. His style and his message transcend geographic or cultural boundaries and he has an innate ability to touch a young person's heart and mind like no one I have ever seen. His message is one of celebrating what is truly important in life – family, personal integrity and making right choices. Why he is so different from other speakers was best captured by one lady who told me, "Jeff talked to us, not at us."

I hope you have found this description of Jeff and his extraordinary talents helpful. If you would like some additional specific information about Jeff's style and talk, please feel free to contact me at your convenience.

Sincerely,

Karen Musante

Karen M. Musante

President & CEO



1987 National Award for Excellence in Economic Education
Freedom's Foundation Valley Forge

Sponsored By:

The Pennsylvania Manufacturers' Association

In Cooperation With:

The Pennsylvania Secretary of Education
Lycoming College & Pennsylvania College of Technology
Williamsport, PA

January 21, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

In September 2019, Jeff Yalden was hired by the Clearfield-Jefferson Suicide Prevention Team (CJSPT), to speak to four school districts on teen mental health and suicide prevention. Mr. Yalden brought to these school districts a strong background as a motivational speaker, specifically with youth mental health, advocacy and suicide prevention. His presentations were engaging, interactive and real. It didn't take long into these presentations that he gained the trust of not only the students but the faculty as well.

As a member of the CJSPT, and lead organizer to bring Jeff to our 2 county area, I was fortunate enough to spend 5 solid days with Jeff. Jeff was the keynote speaker at our annual walk fundraiser. We originally had scheduled him for four days at four school districts but requested his time to come a day early and speak to families that have experienced suicide loss. His message was heartfelt and well received. He did not have to attend this extra day, but he did. Because he cares.

Jeff and I then went on tour to the four school districts. I only mention my involvement because I was there to witness every presentation and the majority of each interaction with the students. Jeff arrived early every day, well prepared and equipped. He gave his presentation and then spent the rest of the day speaking to students, individually or with the support of their friends. He walked around the school giving administration suggestions on safety issues and getting a feel for this environment. Jeff's ability to spread his message is absolutely unique, appreciated and necessary. He was heard. I watched kids put their phones down and listen. Engaged! I spent four days listening to students come speak to Jeff after his presentation. Were all their problems serious? No. Did Jeff take just as much time to hear them? Yes. Why is that important? Because being a teenager is hard and confusing, you long to be heard. Were there hard issues? Yes. Did Jeff handle them well? Absolutely. Would I recommend Jeff without question? Without a doubt!

Our Suicide Prevention Team heard no complaints after the five days of presentations and consider him to be an asset to our continued efforts in reducing suicide. The stigma surrounding suicide is a huge barrier to discussions that are necessary to saving lives. If you think for one second that ignoring suicide will make it stop, you are sadly mistaken. Mentioning suicide does not put the idea of suicide in a teenager's head. It does work like that. Sometimes in life we have to have those uncomfortable conversations because it saves lives. IT SAVES LIVES!

We're all in this together and we were blessed to have Jeff on our team, advocating for these teens that often go unheard, misunderstood and ignored.

Thank you, Jeff. I appreciate the work you do and know how truly valuable someone like you is.

Laina Jackson

Volunteer, Advocate, Mother, Friend, Someone Who Cares

#1istoomany

Reference Letter from Troy Akers, High School Principal, Warsaw High School, IN

To whom it may concern:

#1 Tiger Lane Warsaw, IN 46580

Good day to you! As the principal of Warsaw Community High School, I'm taking a few moments to provide you with my full endorsement of Mr. Jeff Yalden as our Nation's #1 Teen Motivational Speaker. What you see is what you get! This gentleman can simply connect with **ALL** students. I know this to be true through the evidence received from my student body of 2,160 students in grades 9-12. The evidence was provided through news breakouts, casual classroom conversations, newspaper reports, and most notably, social media outlets such as Twitter and Facebook. Our students love Jeff Yalden!

Why would we need a motivational speaker? We were recently named an Indiana Department of Education "A" school. We have facilities better than anyone could imagine. Warsaw Community High School has a curriculum that is deep and rich. We excel in the Fine Arts and Performing Arts. We are also very proud of our service clubs and organizations. Across the state, everyone knows of our outstanding Tiger athletics tradition. However, something appeared to be missing.

You see, our students, staff, and the greater Warsaw community, has been rocked by a number of suicides in recent weeks. Four victims were teens and one of the four was an outstanding young man from our senior class. The unthinkable and unexplainable took place when he took his life two days after Christmas. As the building leader, I knew our student body needed some sort of intervention or process for healing to begin.

As mentioned, our neighboring school districts had issues of their own. Our happy-go lucky, beautiful county, known as the "Orthopedic Capital of the World" was being turned upside down. All of the sudden Warsaw and Kosciusko County had become an area filled with unexpected, unprovoked darkness. Something had to be done. We needed something that would promote healthy thoughts from our young people. Our students needed someone other than parents, teachers, counselors, administrators, or friends to make a profound statement to them that "it will be alright!"

Needless to say, I was researching to find the right guest speaker to address our student body. It was then that my colleague at a neighboring district called me. He had unfortunately lost two students to suicide within the last six weeks. He indicated that he knew of a speaker that could come in and restore

hope into both communities. At that time, I made a request to my Superintendent to allow us to partner with my colleague to bring Jeff Yalden in to speak.

Jeff's message, "**Take Time to Think,**" is not a message on teen suicide. However, it is a message about life as a teenager and the struggles and choices our young people have each day. Jeff gets down to the students level. He doesn't speak at them. He speaks with them. His talks inspire students of low ability, high ability, and those in between. Likewise, he speaks to students from all levels of socioeconomic status and those of diversity.

Many things occurred within the three days Jeff and his assistant, Kaylene, spent in our community. Hearts were opened, wounds exposed, and hearts were healed. I cannot say enough about the impact

that Jeff Yalden made on our student body and the community. Twitter and Facebook pages are still exploding with positive remarks and comments about Jeff Yalden's visit. Jeff is also quick to point out that there are people here, within our high school, equipped with handling the emotional needs of any student.

Jeff is very supportive of our teachers and the public education system. He challenges students to make good decisions and to always stick to accomplishing the objective at hand rather than getting caught up with unachievable expectations and the disappointment that come with it.

If you are considering someone who can speak the language of today's youth, then Jeff is your man. If you want someone who is a "suit and tie guy" telling kids "don't do this" or "don't do that," then that's a different speaker, and some other convo. Jeff's a no nonsense guy with a powerful PG13 message. Yes, some of his illustrations were a bit edgy; however that's the beauty of the connection. That's what makes Jeff Yalden a "real guy" with a "real message."

In conclusion, many of my students have said that Jeff Yalden has made a permanent impression on their heart. My friends, if that is so, there isn't much more for me to say. If one young person leaves a convocation feeling this way, then you can find the time, you can find the resources and you can make a difference for your students. In my twenty seven years in education, I have never witnessed such a strong, positive student reaction to any convocation speaker's message. Jeff Yalden is the best!

"Take Time to Think"

With gratitude, Troy W. Akers



Mathews County Public Schools

Post Office Box 369
63 Church Street
Mathews, Virginia 23109

Phone: (804) 725-3909
Fax: (804) 725-3951
www.mathews.k12.va.us

Nancy B. Welch, Ed.S.
Division Superintendent

Lesley R. Hunley, M.Ed.
Assistant Superintendent

May 18, 2018

To Whom It May Concern:

Mathews County is a small rural community located in eastern Virginia situated on the Chesapeake Bay. It is a close-knit community where the schools are the hub of local activity. Mathews County Public Schools has three schools serving approximately 1,175 students: Lee-Jackson Elementary (PK-4), Thomas Hunter Middle (5-8), and Mathews High (9-12).

As with any school division, we are faced with growing concerns of adolescent self-harming behaviors and general self-esteem. These concerns include sexting, substance abuse, bullying, mental health, suicide prevention and self-respect, specifically, in our middle and high schools. When our school division was faced with a significant increase in negative behaviors that involved local law enforcement, it became apparent that a third party would be needed to work with our students, parents, staff and community as a whole.

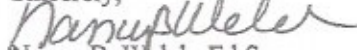
A local law enforcement investigator conducted a nation-wide search for a program that would "fit" our local values and core beliefs. The investigator approached the local School Board to ask for support in bringing Jeff Yalden to our schools to work with the student population. The response from the School Board and the community was overwhelming.

Jeff mingled with our students in grades 7-12, throughout the day, beginning with an assembly-style interactive appearance followed by small group and individual conversations. Within five minutes of Jeff beginning the conversations, you could have heard a pin drop. The usual adolescent banter and chatter completely ceased. Every student, teacher, staff member and administrator (including myself) was glued to Jeff's message: Value yourself and the people in it. Do the work and be grateful for the little things. Choose a positive behavior and the attitude to go with it. Make positive choices.

As the day progressed, Jeff partnered with our guidance department to lend support to small groups and individual students. Some of these students were not on our 'concern radar', but came forward because of Jeff's message: Suicide is a permanent solution to a temporary problem. It's OK to have crazy emotions and feelings AND it's OK to go talk to a trusted adult.

It is without reservation that I recommend schools, youth organizations, school boards, anyone who has a vested interest in youth to engage Jeff Yalden in your community. He has a natural ability to capture their attention and engage in difficult conversations for the betterment of their lives.

Sincerely,


Nancy B. Welch, Ed.S.
Division Superintendent



YOUR LIFE MATTERS

**5K Run/Walk
Plus 1 Mile Kids Run/Walk**

To Whom It May Concern:

In 2017, we spearheaded a community action project called Your Life Matters with a group of like-minded friends and family. Our vision was to sponsor a local 5K walk/run to bring awareness and financial support for suicide prevention in our small town. Our primary intent is to fund speakers for our middle and high school students. Our town has suffered an alarming increase in the number of young people attempting and taking their own life. In 2000, I suffered the loss of my 17-year old brother, Justin, to suicide. My family and I are driven to make sure no other family suffers this unending pain.

We brought in a local speaker in 2018, but we wanted someone bigger and more impactful. In 2019, we worked to bring Jeff Yalden to our community. We based our decision not only on the research I had done but also on the testimonial from the family member (and a licensed therapist) of our most recent suicide victim - a popular and well-loved young man from a distinguished and loving family.

Jeff Yalden does not appeal to everyone in the crowd. We knew that based upon our research. However, we also knew that Jeff reaches young people that are in tough mental situations and contemplating rash/radical measures. Those are the kids we want to reach. The Justins. We recognized that kids and adults that aren't contemplating or don't understand the emotional position someone must be in to consider harming themselves or others may not connect with Jeff. That's okay. That wasn't our target audience for this selection.

Our school district's superintendent brought to light negative reviews she had uncovered. We called the school who posted the negative reviews only to find out that the superintendent of that district had not actually seen Jeff's presentation. That school district also seemed quite reluctant to discuss the reviews in any depth. Apparently, that is only done on the internet. We also called two districts who had positive experiences with Jeff. Both were forthcoming about how Jeff shook their students in a positive and lasting way after their districts had suffered losses. One district stated they had him back after the subsequent loss of a teacher because he has such a unique ability to address grief head-on and promote healing.

In the end, we are blessed that Jeff came to our community, and I recommend anyone with questions contact me directly. The kids and families that he reached are worth way more to us than the negative reviews of strangers that refused to engage in real conversation with us.

Your Life Matters Committee:

Scott Karr

Barbara Bacon

Michaela Bigaouette


Mardell DeJong

Bobbi Karr

Eric Karr

Nicole Rodgers

Heather Ussery



Tippecanoe Valley School Corporation

8343 South State Road 19

Akron, IN 46910

Phone: 574.353.7741

Fax: 574.353.7743

Mr. Brett R. Boggs, Ed.S.
Superintendent

Mr. Blaine Conley, Ed.S.
Assistant Superintendent

March 5, 2015

To Whom It May Concern,

It is with great pleasure I write this letter of recommendation for life coach and youth motivational speaker, Jeff Yalden. Jeff came to our community in mid-February following our third student suicide of the current school year. He spent two days with our high school and middle school students and staff, providing assemblies, training small groups, and meeting with individuals. Our students, staff, and the community were hurting when he arrived. Jeff's visit helped our community heal. He shared his heart and touched the hearts of many.

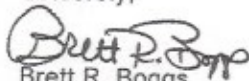
The evening of the second day Jeff made an evening presentation to parents/guardians and members of the community. We were pleasantly surprised at the size of the crowd, estimated at 1,000 people. Using his high energy, "tell it like it is" style he shared a message that needed to be heard. Hearts and attitudes were forever changed.

Jeff Yalden's legacy will live on for years in our community. Because of his time here, we are better people and are able to move forward with courage and enthusiasm.

Would I recommend bringing Jeff Yalden to your school or community? Absolutely! Bringing Jeff Yalden to Tippecanoe Valley was one of the best things to happen to our community in quite some time.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can be of additional assistance.

Sincerely,



Brett R. Boggs
Superintendent

Office: 574-353-7741, ext. 1006

Cell: 574-551-9933

Email: boggsb@tvsc.k12.in.us

Committed to Student Success Through the Development of Character, Leadership, and Literacy



Platte County

HOME OF THE PIRATES

Tradition. Pride. Vision.

December 5, 2017

To Whom It May Concern,

It is my pleasure to present this letter of recommendation for Jeff Yalden. He is an outstanding facilitator, speaker, storyteller and trainer.

Jeff completely captivated and engaged an audience of 1,200 students and 100 staff members in an all school assembly last week. What a great informative way to follow up with our student body in regards to our school wide mental health awareness campaign and our Signs of Suicide training. As I looked around the gym, I saw students nodding in agreement, laughing at his jokes and soaking in every word of his message. Jeff presented very straightforward information in a very unique way. His message was both reflective and actionable and he included humor into each topic. Our students and staff left invigorated with Jeff's infectious positive attitude and tools to help give their lives direction and purpose.

I plan to utilize Jeff's talent's again in the future and recommend you do as well.

Should you have any questions or need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 816-858-2822, extension 1238 or at sporesj@platteco.k12.mo.us.

Sincerely,

Jerri Spores
Marketing Education/DECA Advisor
Platte County High School

OREGON-DAVIS SCHOOL CORPORATION

"A Culture of Excellence"

5998 North 750 East

Hamlet, IN 46532

574-867-2111

FAX 574-867-8191

www.odschools.org

October 30, 2017

Jeff -

I want to thank you for visiting our corporation on October 25, 2017 and speaking to our students and staff. Your passion for life was evident as you spoke from your heart. Our students and staff continue to mention your visit and message.....BOOM!

I have known you for over 20 years and have had you speak at five different school corporations. I have and will continue to recommend you to other school corporation to make arrangements for you to speak at their schools! Your message impacts our youth as well as adults!

Take care!

Don



Dr. Donald E. Harman
Superintendent



Keystone Central School District Central Mountain Middle School

200 Ben Avenue, Mill Hall, PA 17751

Telephone: 570-726-3141 Fax: 570-726-7227

Jeff Yalden

40 Deacon Lane

Sagamore Beach, MA 02562

To Whom It May Concern,

Jeff had a profound effect to our students and faculty. The faculty members stated that Jeff was the best speaker they have ever heard. The students had this to say, he was honest, funny and down to earth. Also, he connected with the kids, he related to our lives and we could see him over and over. Great Job Jeff!!!

Gene Bennett, Teacher &

SADD Chapter Advisor,

Keystone Central School District

SUFFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

1060 Sheldon Street, Suffield, Connecticut 06078
TELEPHONE 860-668-3810
FAX 860-668-3037

Steven Moccio, Principal
Brendan Canny, Assistant Principal
Gina Olearczyk, Assistant Principal



December 19, 2017

RE: Jeff Yalden Presentation

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great pleasure to write this letter of recommendation for Jeff Yalden, youth motivational speaker. Jeff came to our community on December 7, 2017. He spoke to our full student body during the day and then to our parents in the evening. In between the two performances he met with our school counselors and school psychologists for a workshop session. Jeff's visit helped to send a direct message about the realities of mental health and challenges students face that was much needed.

Jeff was able to adapt his presentation content based on the current climate in Suffield. Through his presentations, he spoke about mental illness, suicide, self-confidence, attitude and choices. In just an hour and half, Jeff was able to reach more than 800 students with his messages. His reliability and his authenticity engaged the students throughout the presentation resulting in numerous students wanting to speak with him individually after the assembly. Through conversations with faculty and staff, students expressed their feelings of validation regarding the variety of topics Jeff's presentation provided, furthering reinforcing his ability to reach all kids. The variety of feedback shared with faculty and staff shows Jeff's ability to address the wide range of current challenges students face each day.

The evening presentation focused more on students being always connected, but never on. The impact of social media, peer and academic pressure, and family dynamics directly correlates with teen suicide rates. Jeff provided real, honest, and direct examples from his life and experiences which parents and community members. Parent feedback was positive about the message and the need for parents to face the realities regardless of how scary they may be at times.

We would highly recommend Jeff Yalden to any school looking to motivate and reach students, faculty, parents and community members. If we can be of any further assistance, please feel free to reach out to either one of us.

Sincerely,

Gina D. Olearczyk
Gina Olearczyk
Assistant Principal
Suffield High School
golearczyk@suffield.org

Nikki E. Lengyel
Nikki Lengyel
Youth Services Coordinator
Town of Suffield
nlengyel@suffieldct.gov



Monroe City R-1 School District
401 Hwy 24 & 36 East
Monroe City, Missouri 63456
Phone: (573) 735-4626
Fax: (573) 735-2413



Home of the Panthers

Dr. Tracy Bottoms- Superintendent
Mr. Ryan Watson- High School Principal

Mr. Roy Patterson- Middle School Principal
Mrs. Kim Shinn- Elementary School Principal

Letter of Recommendation for Jeff Yalden

It is a complete honor for me to write a letter on behalf of Jeff Yalden. I first listened to Jeff speak in Hannibal, Missouri in the spring of 2017. Upon hearing him present, it was a personal goal of mine to get him to speak to the students in our school and to our community members. Jeff exudes positive energy and is motivating when he is speaking to parents, students, teachers and community members about some very real and difficult topics.

Earlier this school year we were lucky to have Jeff come and speak here in Monroe City. He started the morning off by spending two and a half hours with our middle school students, grades 5 - 8. During lunch he spoke to a group of fifteen middle and high school students about some of his personal struggles in life, and related back to the students about how difficult their lives can be with the many things they have going on. His biggest message to them was, "don't give up", and "ask for help when you need it". At the end of the day, Jeff spoke with our high school students, grades 9-12. This was another phenomenal moment.

During Jeff's time with us there was a definite change in the student's demeanor. During lunch, there was a group of middle school students who decided that they should apologize to their peers for treating them badly over the last couple of years. There were students in tears because they couldn't believe how they had made others feel. On the other hand, there were students in tears because they couldn't believe some of their peers were touched so much that they felt inclined to give a genuine apology to those they had reportedly mistreated.

Jeff delivers a message of hope. He really focuses on self care and making the right choices for you. He talks to the students about respect and being caring and kind to one another because you never know what someone else is going through. When you have the chance to speak to Jeff, you can automatically recognize how genuine he is and that he is especially compassionate about his job and those that he encounters.

While waiting for the evening presentation to begin, Jeff took it upon himself to go and watch our Junior Varsity Football Team and Varsity Softball Team compete. He had the opportunity to meet and greet community members that were unable to attend his community portion of the presentation due to extra curricular activities their students were involved in.

Students raved about Jeff's presence in our building. They want him back next year, or as soon as we can get him here. Jeff is certainly someone I would welcome back into our school and our community for the love and support he showed us. Getting the chance to meet Jeff and spend the day with him completely changed my outlook on how I can reach the students in our community; they were really feeling what he had to say that day. I highly recommend Jeff for any speaking engagement in your school or community. If you have any interest in having him join your school and/or community, please feel free contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Kayla Murphy
High School Counselor



**Howard-Winneshiek Community School District
Crestwood Secondary School**

Opportunity · Challenge · Success

1000 Schroder Drive · Cresco, Iowa 52136 · (563) 547-2764

October 2017

To Whom It May Concern:

It is an honor for me to write this letter on behalf of Mr. Jeff Yalden. We had the opportunity to bring Jeff to Crestwood Secondary School where he addressed our 7th-12th grade students. For two hours, Mr. Yalden addressed our student body of approximately 600 students while maintaining their full attention and cooperation.

Before he arrived he communicated by phone and email to "learn our community" and tailored his message to meet the needs of our students. Jeff is able to gain trust and respect immediately by being "real" and demonstrating the depth of his knowledge on issues facing today's teens. Like I stated, Jeff is real, he shares his personal struggles with the audience. It is not a "Do as I say" speech. It is filled with practical application all can use to better themselves. He does this while mixing in humor and directly speaking about real-life issues that range from death, goal setting, relationships, self respect, student drama, and responsibility... just to name a few. His message has something for everybody to relate with and grow from.

You could have heard a pin drop at any point during the student assembly. Moreover, their response to Jeff was unprecedented. Even our "hardest" kids lined up to give Jeff a hug or handshake and hang around to chat with him. Jeff also took time to be with our students in the classroom, hallways, and at our football game that evening.

I believe that the reason he has such an impact on all that he presents to is that he is clearly genuine in every regard. Young people, even more so than adults, have the ability to see through hypocrisy. When you hear Jeff speak and get to know him as a person, you fully realize that there is nothing artificial about him – it truly comes from his heart, and his desire to make a positive difference in the lives of all he connects with.

On the evening of the school assembly, Jeff came in one more time to meet with our parents and community members. Jeff used his "tell it like it is" style to share a message that needed to be heard.

It is with only the highest regards that I recommend Jeff for any speaking engagement, and I wish him only the very best as he spreads a message encouraging personal responsibility and positive change.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you might have.

Sincerely,

Chris Rogne
7-12 Principal

Our **vision** is to discover, develop and expand passions, creativity, and strengths.

Our **mission** is to prepare and empower our students to think creatively, serve, contribute and succeed locally and globally.



Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Office of

District Attorney Joseph D. Early, Jr.

Worcester Trial Court
225 Main Street, G301 Worcester, MA 01608
www.worcesterda.com

Worcester County
Middle District
508-755-8601

March 18, 2015

RE: Jeffrey Yalden

To Whom It May Concern:

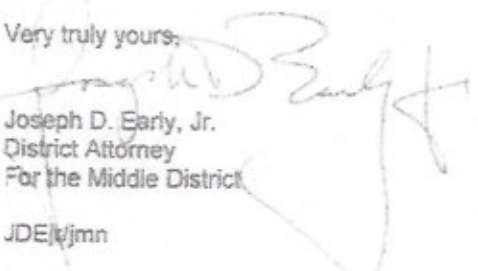
I am writing this letter on behalf of Jeff Yalden who recently appeared at our Spring Wellness Program for high school students in Worcester County, Massachusetts. This is not the first time Jeff has appeared with us. We have brought him back because the message he brings is vital to having a successful wellness program.

He talks to the young people about respect, adversity, truthfulness, the Golden Rule, and dignity among other things. He lets the students know that life is not easy; that you are going to get knocked down, you will have to pick yourself up. Through a message of tough love, he brings hope to all of them. He has the students' complete attention during his talks. When he pauses, you can hear a pin drop. When he finishes, many kids relay to Jeff stories of pain, hope, perseverance that can be heartbreaking.

We will continue to use Jeff in future seminars because of his message and ability to reach kids. We deal in crime and bad choices every day. Having someone like Jeff Yalden work with us is a natural fit. To have a student say, he contemplated skipping school just so he could hear him again, is quite a tribute, especially when the student goes on to say he hates those things, but loves Jeff.

I would highly recommend Jeff Yalden for any program dealing with the special problems our youth face. He is a forceful and dynamic speaker, and truly an inspiration to all of those who hear his message.

Very truly yours,


Joseph D. Early, Jr.
District Attorney
For the Middle District

JDE/vjmn

Poughkeepsie High School

70 Forbus Street, Poughkeepsie, NY 12603-2799 (845) 451-4850 Fax (845) 451-4807

Edgar Glascott, Principal

Salvador Contes, Jr. Assistant Principal	Joseph J. Mazzetti Assistant Principal	Mary Ann Mayone Assistant Principal	Rick Pardy Assistant Principal	Felicia Schinella Assistant Principal
---	---	--	-----------------------------------	--

January 10, 2012

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of recommendation for Jeff Yalden. Jeff is a phenomenal motivational speaker – definitely not your textbook type! He has such a contagious amount of energy that the student's were immediately captivated and his ability to customize the content of his program to the needs of the school only enhanced the experience for all audience members. After his assembly at our school, Jeff was interacting with the students during their lunch period. Even at their young age, they were able to relate some of his experiences to their own.

Once Jeff left the building and the regular school day commenced, students could be heard talking about the assembly in the hallways and classrooms. I believe his words to them won't be forgotten; for some I'm sure it was life changing.

Jeff came, he gave a dynamic speech and he connected. We are looking forward to his return to Poughkeepsie High School on January 18, 2012. I recommend him to you without reservation!

Sincerely,

Edgar Glascott
Principal

NEWFIELD HIGH SCHOOL

145 Marshall Drive
Selden, NY 11784
(631) 285-8300

Theodore Fulton, Ed. D., Principal
Scott Graviano, Assistant Principal
Jennifer Harrison, Assistant Principal
Brett MacMonigle, Assistant Principal

Middle Country Central School District
Roberta A. Gerold, Ed.D., Superintendent
Eight Forty-Third Street
Centereach, NY 11720

January 5, 2012

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Toni Ingarra, I am the former advisor for the Renaissance program at Newfield High School. As an advisor I feel it is very important to provide motivational speakers that could relate to the entire student body. Mr. Yalden did just that. I have never attended an assembly where not one student lost interest in what was being presented. Mr. Yalden had the full attention of approximately 600 students with their full cooperation.

He has a way of relating to the students that's second to none. He understands the wide range of family dynamics students are being raised in from the most functional to the most dysfunctional of families. Jeff finds a way to reach every student he's presenting to regardless of color or creed. He's an inspiration to students and staff and has the ability to captivate the attention of any generation.

I would offer my highest recommendation to any school looking to motivate and reach students. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at Newfield High School, (631) 285-8300.

Respectfully,
Toni Ingarra

Taylor Dean
310 Sunset Road
Mountain Top, PA 18707
20 July 2012

Mr. Jeff Yalden
Youth Motivational Speaker
Jeff Yalden International
40 Deacons Lane
Sagamore Beach, MA 12562

Dear Mr. Yalden,

On Friday of week one at PFEW, we were told to choose a speaker and write to them. We couldn't write to the same speaker that somebody else had chosen in our company, so it was basically first come, first serve. Well, I wasn't able to choose you. Instead, I wrote to Frank Kennedy. I'm writing to you now because you were that much of an inspiration to me.

I don't just write letters. I hate writing letters. I'd rather just talk to the person face to face instead of taking the time to write out a letter. But anyways, that is how much your speech meant to me.

I'm sorry I wasn't able to go up and talk to you. There were already so many people in line to see you and get a picture and such. But I bought a bracelet. It's great. I haven't taken it off since.

Anyways, your speech moved me to tears and laughter. Honestly, I used to be the worst person. I was so judgmental and if I didn't like you, you'd know it up front. I was a bully, even to my own friends. But you changed that. And I want to thank you.

You opened up my eyes. You've told me that everyone is special and why should you judge who they are? You also told me that life is short and you need to seize the day, but also be aware of any consequences of your choices, so "take time to think" about what you're going to do. You've basically opened up your heart to all of the kids at PFEW, and I'm pretty sure everyone there was crying. It was amazing. But I don't think anyone was as moved as me.

You see, before I came to PFEW, I was trying to change my ways, but I was finding it really hard. You and a few other speakers helped me out. But your speech changed everything. You are an amazing person. Don't ever forget that.

There used to be someone like you in my life when I was younger. He was my figure skating coach's boyfriend and he was rough and tough, just like you. But he went through a lot, and he was amazing. He was nice to everyone and he was also so hilarious. He especially took a liking to my sister and always gave her gifts every time he saw her. It was so nice of him. I still have a goofy pen that he gave me one day, just because he wanted to see me smile. He died from diabetes a few years ago.

When you finished speaking I realized that you reminded me of him, and how amazing he was and how amazing you are. I wish I had gotten the chance to speak with you in person for a few minutes, but I guess this works as well.

There are no words for how thankful I am for you. Without you speaking at PFEW, I would probably still pretty mean to people. Even when my mom came to pick me up Saturday morning at Lycoming College, she said she knew something was different about me, and that it was good.

I feel terrible about putting down the people I have put down in the past. I wish I could change that. I know how it feels to be bullied, and I guess I just had to take it out on others. I feel absolutely terrible. Nothing could ever make up the words I have said to these people.

The next time I see them, I am going to be much friendlier. I might even give them a hug, and say sorry.

You have seriously inspired me so much that I really want to go out into the world and do some good for once. I think it's time I start helping instead of hurting. Also, I'm going to try and have you speak at my school. I am going to talk to the superintendent and ask for you to visit. You changed my life, and you could probably change the lives of many students at my school.

Again, thank you for speaking at PFEW and thank you for changing my life forever. You'll never be forgotten. Ever.

Sincerely,
Taylor Dean
Crestwood High School
Mountain Top, PA

"Veteran staff members indicated that you were the best assembly program that they had witnessed in their careers. Students told me that they were going to use your thoughts in their college essays. Others wanted you as our graduation speaker. I personally was moved by your thoughts."

- *J. Okulski, Principal, Garden City HS, Garden City, NY*

"Your presentation today, in the words of our students, 'awesome'! In the fifteen years of bringing speakers to Warwick High School, this was the first time anyone has received a standing ovation from the students."

- *C. Schmitt, Guidance, Warwick HS, Warwick, NY*

"Students, teachers, and counselors were impressed with your enthusiasm sincerity, and quality message. The response was nothing short of phenomenal."

- *M. Dzatczak, Asst. Principal, Troy School District, Troy, MI*

"Our guidance counselor state 'Next time you get a speaker who's that powerful, that inspiration, please let us know and we'll block out some time to meet with the students.' Indeed, Mr. Yalden's presentation was the best that I have seen in many years. Students were still talking about him for weeks after the assembly."

- *I. Duggins, Asst. Principal, E. Stroudsburg HS, E. Stroudsburg, PA*

"You poured your heart into every assembly and leadership workshop. You live by strong moral principles and the integrity of your life gives validation to the message of your presentation."

- *Jason Nail, Coordinator, CCEESC, Springfield, OH*

"What an assembly! Captivating, dynamic, fantastic, motivating, and inspiring are some adjectives that come to mind when I reflect on your presentation to our student body."

- *T. Fragasse, Guidance Counselor, Dover HS, Dover, OH*

"When Jeff arrived in Aberdeen, South Dakota no one in the community knew him. Following Jeff's three-day stay in Aberdeen, everyone who had been in contact with Jeff came away enlightened because of his positive attitude and enthusiasm for bettering our lives. I got to spend almost every waking moment with him. Whether it was the movies, golf, dinner, shopping, or the tour of the farm, Jeff was not only an international celebrity speaker, but he was a normal guy who became our friend. He was personal and real. He spent time with us. What was so meaningful to me was when Jeff wanted to see the site of my sister's grave with me."

- *Emily Sippel, University of South Dakota*

"In my twenty-five years of education, I have witnessed a number of speakers

and program for both student and staff. However, in that time, never have I experienced an individual who had such a positive impact of both groups. Very simply stated, Jeff took Manchester Middle School by storm."

- *K. Burger, Asst. Superintendent, Manchester Township, Lakehurst, NJ*

"As student hung on every word, as students later called this a turning point experience, as some cried, as all stood in final ovation, it was evident that a very talented presenter had made a difference!"

- *P. Caron, Principal, Elm Street Junior High School, Nashua, NH*

"The entire group, right down to the most passive and the rowdiest, listened to his every word. They cried; they laughed. More importantly, they understood what Jeff said. They identified with his personal struggles – academic, self-esteem, and family relationships. His message was "Attitude Matters." He had the right mix of levity with the sober. He clearly demonstrated it's all in the attitude. He had everyone's absolute attention. The best endorsement I can give Jeff is simply this: the kids are still talking about what he said."

- *Susan A. Valentine, Principal, Northern Potter School District, Ulysses, PA*

"People have stated that your energetic, emotional speech was the best assembly program ever at our school. They cheered, cried, clapped, and ultimately honored you with a standing ovation. We have never had such a positive response for a speaker before."

- *L. Sund, Teacher, Longwood Central Schools, Middle Island, NY*

"As I listened to you speak, I surveyed the room to see the reaction on the student's faces. Their reactions ranged from laughter to complete amazement. You certainly have a grasp of human behavior and a way of expressing deeper meanings behind such behavior."

- *M. Wingate, Asst. Principal, Keystone Heights HS, Keystone Heights, FL*

"Mr. Jeff Yalden delivered the most powerful, influential, motivating, and emotional address to our approximate 800 high school students I have witnessed in my eight years of high school teaching. If Jeff paused for a moment, you could hear the sound of silence as everyone was all ears to hear what was next. At the end of his presentation kids were giving him handshakes and hugs with both tears and smiles!"

- *T. Kessler, Teacher, S. Burlington HS, S. Burlington, VT*

"The Jeff Yalden energy is inexhaustible!"

- *M. Wilchek, Principal, Mapleton HS, Ashland, OH*

"It was worth more than four years of college!"

- *T. O'Rourke, Former Principal, Bishop Nuemann High School, Williamsport,*

"One aspect that sets Jeff apart from other speakers is that this isn't just a job for him, it's his life."

- Shannon McNaul, Exec. Director, Galaxy Youth Center, Grinnell, IA

"No keynote speaker has ever been as amazing as you! . . . You could go from the funniest thing ever, making people laugh uncontrollably, to the most serious, sad, and emotion story I've ever heard, all in an instant and at the exact right moment . . . It was simply amazing."

- Megan, Student Leader, PA SADD

"His talk was the most important thing I have ever learned while in high school."

- Kyle, Student, Pennsylvania

"It was so refreshing to hear someone who actually understand what's going on in high schools."

- Student, Ripley, OH

"Jeff says what our parents would say if they only knew how. He speaks with us, not at us."

- High School Senior

"It is rare to find a speaker who knows the teenage soul as well as Jeff does. His stories really hit home with the students. Jeff inspired our student to consider their greatest potential."

- Stacey Reilly, SADD Sponsor, Northwest High School, Germantown, MD

"Jeff goes beyond talking and truly connects with young people."

- Kathy Paxton, Dir. of Prevention, West Virginia

"The adults were as riveted as the students."

- Mike Clark, Administration, Twinfield Union Schools, Vermont

"His message is clear and the students get it!"

- Jennifer Simpson, STUCO Advisor, Clarion-Limestone High School, PA

"Jeff reinforced concepts that are not only important to educators but students as well. I can honestly say that Jeff's presentation was unlike any other that I have attended."

- Scott Pyy, Asst. Principal, Wareham High School, MA

"You were hilarious and inspiration all in one!"

- Michelle Hamilton, GASP Coalition Coordinator, CT

"Jeff had the students at Enid High hurting with laughter, but when he paused you could hear a pin drop."

- Randy McClendon, STUCO Advisor, Enid High School, Oklahoma

"We still have students and parents talking about your message."

- Keith Marshall, Principal, South Central Jr. / Sr. High School, Indiana

"Your message has been the first that is able to make me laugh, cry, and want to change the world."

- A. Dunn, Student Leader, South Carolina Student Council

"This was the best school assembly our school has ever had, says staff and students."

- Margaret Kristufek, PTSA, Conrady Junior High School, Illinois

"Talk about making a huge impression!"

- Marcia Zakin, Middle School Parent, PA

"The halls were literally buzzing with positive feedback from the students."

- Michael Williams, Principal, Hancock Jr. / Sr. High School, NY

"You are able to effectively engage a large number of students, allow us to experience sadness, happiness, and laughter all in teaching us about being great leaders and most of all, good people."

S. Weston, Student Leader, Farmington High School, CT

"The month following Jeff's visit, the amount of disciplinary problems fell by 44%."

- A. Almansberger, Former Principal, Keshequa High School, Nunda, NY

"Our students were totally immersed in his presentation. His unique style allowed him to be immediately accepted. . . . Everyone has told me that he is the best youth speaker we have ever had."

- Doug Dodge, Principal, North Harrison Central School, IN

"No keynote speaker has ever been as amazing as you! I can't explain it in words how incredible you were! You made such a huge impact and difference on my life."

- Megan Walkovich, PA SADD Student Leader, Seven Springs Resort Youth Conference

"Our students are known for not being able to handle assemblies. They have a short attention span . . . I have never seen an individual obtain the type of respect



Jacob's SWAG Foundation Inc.
Support With Awareness & Giving



C/O Kurt and Teri Ellefson

2222 6th Street, Monroe Wisconsin 53566 Phone: 608-328-2418

Facebook: Jacob's SWAG Foundation Inc.

Employer ID # 38-3909330

Website: Jacobsswag.org

Mission:

The Jacob's SWAG Foundation Inc. was created to raise funds to help provide educational programs in the schools and community youth programs. These programs will SWAG in the areas of bullying, suicide prevention and making good life choices.

To Whom It May Concern:

Our foundation co-hosted Jeff Yalden in Monroe Wisconsin, February 25-27, 2015. Jeff spoke to a total of 8 school districts, middle and high school level, 3200 students and a night presentation to local community members and parents. The minute Jeff took the stage, he grasped the attention of every student in the audience. Jeff kept their attention for over 1 hour with kids not even moving in their seat. After each program, Jeff met and interacted with students. Many students wanted to just say hello, but a few individuals came to Jeff and said "WE NEED HELP" These students felt after listening to Jeff, safe enough to open themselves and take that first and most important step. And for myself, a parent that has lost a child to suicide at the age of 14, this was an amazing leap of faith for these kids.

Now 1 month after Jeff's presentations, students and staff are still talking about his message, his energy, and the connection he has in their lives. I believe that his spoken words will not be forgotten, not today and not in the future. As I sat and listened to all 7 different presentations, I was memorized by his path, his courage to share his story and his "tell it like it is" attitude. Jeff shared his real life stories, about making good life choices, bullying, suicide prevention/awareness and mental health.

There are no words to describe the true, positive influence Jeff had in our community, it may be years before we will ever know. Our community will forever be changed after meeting Jeff. I personally can't wait until I have the opportunity to hear Jeff speak again.

Sincerely,

Teri Ellefson

Founder and Director of Jacob's SWAG Foundation Inc.

that Mr. Yalden commands.”

- *High School Administrator, PA*

“I have never seen students brought to tears and then leave the assembly cheering. They were cheering their own lives.”

- *K. Burger, Dir. of Student & Administrative Services, Manchester Township Schools, New Jersey*

“It was undoubtedly one of the most stirring messages ever delivered to our graduating seniors.”

- *B. Gillis, Executive Assistant, Milton Hershey School, Pennsylvania*

“It is quite clear that you know your audience, and you care about our youth.”

- *John Williams, Principal, Forestdale School, Massachusetts*

“The student feedback was so incredibly positive. They just loved you.”

- *Courtney Landheer, Leadership Advisor, Farmington High School, Connecticut*

“Jeff has the ability to reach the very heart of his audience by relating experiences to their lives, and also by giving them direction and hope for their futures.”

- *Danene Guglielmana, Activities Director, Martin Luther King Jr. Middle School, California*

“Not only is he a dynamic speaker, at New England College we found him to be a pleasure to meet and do business with.”

- *Sarah Punderson, Special Events Coordinator, New England College, New Hampshire*

“You impressed us with your ability to be flexible and willingness to take lead and facilitate some exciting and eye-opening breakout sessions! I cannot speak highly enough of your professionalism.”

- *Amy Meier, Community Organizer, Positive Pressure Community Anti-Drug Coalition and Family Resource Council, Nebraska*