

Joel Morgan

Regional Director - Workforce & Career Development

o: 661.433.4371

f: 323.539.2151

jmorgan@goodwillsocial.org



To: Whom it may concern

Date: 11/14/2017

Re: Letter of Support

It is my pleasure to draft this letter as support of our wonderful relationship with the Antelope Valley High School District and the Knight High School Digital Design and Engineering Academy. The South Valley America's Job Center of California and Goodwill of Southern California have both been working in partnership with the Knight Academy and AVHSD for several years now. The unique and focused vision of James Stockdale and his leadership team, have created an engaging learning model for the youth that reside in the Antelope Valley. AVHSD is a strong supporter / partner of our workforce training and employment efforts in the local community. We have partnered together in creating career pathways for the youth in areas like: manufacturing, aerospace technologies, the local trade unions, etc.

In specific, we have been collaborating with the Knight High School Digital Design and Engineering Academy, to provide training opportunities in the Manufacturing and Aerospace sectors. Representatives from Northrop Grumman, General Atomics and Lockheed have all participated with our organization in speaking with and preparing the youth in this program, for internships and long term employment, upon graduation. The Knight Academy has successfully placed over 20 students into a pilot aircraft training program at Antelope Valley College and all of those graduates are now gainfully employed in field. James Stockdale and the teachers who represent this program are advocates in the local community. James Stockdale and his leadership team are members of our local employment / training partnership called, The Antelope Valley Career Pathways Initiative. This initiative was recently recognized by CA Forward, by bestowing one of our programs (Aircraft Fabrication and Assembly Training Program), with their 2017 PIE award as a program leading the way for stable employment in the region. AVHSD is a huge part of that award and process. We work with James and his leadership team to connect with the students in the academy, training opportunities for employment in our region. LA County has given their full support to AVHSD as they continue to be on the cutting edge in creating pathway opportunities in the region.

It is my honor to work with the Knight Academy and with the school district. They are truly committed to the work that they do and are a huge benefit to those that they are tasked with serving. I offer this letter of support, for them and the programs that they run, as they are truly visionary leaders in the world of education. Our youth have access to cutting edge career opportunities because of the leadership and vision of James Stockdale and his team and I will continue to look towards these partners for guidance and vision on what is needed in the coming years, in the region.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me directly to discuss this further.

Thanks

Joel Morgan

Regional Director of Workforce and Career Development
LA County Jobs Centers and Goodwill of Southern California



DEPARTMENT OF THE AIR FORCE
AIR FORCE RESEARCH LABORATORY
EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE CALIFORNIA



14 November 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

FROM: AFRL/RQR
5 Pollux Drive
Edwards AFB, CA 93524-7002

SUBJECT: Support for Antelope Valley Union High School District.

1. The Rocket Propulsion Division of the Air Force Research Laboratory (AFRL/RQR) supports the Excellence in Action Award Proposal being submitted by the Antelope Valley Union High School District.
2. The Excellence in Action Award is an ideal opportunity to leverage the existing 12 year relationship through the Education Partnership Agreement #14-EPQ-RQ-08 that AFRL and Antelope Valley Union High School District have united together in since 2004. This partnership, where AFRL provides funding and mentoring to improve the quality and breadth of STEM education in the Antelope Valley Union High School District and where the school district also has committed to providing STEM education to help develop a “home-grown” work force that forms a pipeline of valuable future employees for our region. Since the inception of the Education Partnership Agreement, the AFRL has funded the Antelope Valley Union High School District with nearly \$200,000 to buy STEM equipment and supplies and AFRL will continue to support future STEM initiatives. As a result, AFRL and the Antelope Valley Union High School District have together committed substantial resources and effort to develop career and college-ready pathways that will enhance the technology labor pool for our local and regional employers.
3. Traditionally, the Antelope Valley has been closely connected to the aerospace industry which continues to this day. As a major part of the aerospace industry, the AFRL has a keen interest in assisting the Antelope Valley Union High School District to tailor their education infrastructure to provide a STEM work force for future technicians, engineers and scientists. The combination of the AFRL’s funding, technical, and mentoring support and the resources obtainable through an Excellence in Action Award will ensure a sustained pathway for technology-inclined students who hopefully will augment not only the AFRL’s workforce, but also the broader local/regional workforce in the future.

KRISS C. VANDERHYDE
Education Outreach Manager,
Rocket Propulsion Division



November 10th 2017

2920NE Charlois Court
Hillsboro, Oregon 97124

To Whom It May Concern:

As Deputy State Superintendent at the Oregon Department of Education I supported our leadership team running the agency. I lead and supported 12 direct reports. For ten years we worked with some of the best people in under the most difficult circumstances. We had some of the most talented educators in Oregon on our team. The leadership of the Knight HS Digital Design & Engineering Academy would have fit right in with that leadership team.

The Academy operates as a school-within-a-high school. The high quality staff and low income student body take advantage of a learning community featuring rigorous integrated academics in the most high-quality career-technical education environment I have ever seen. Students are offered a full engineering pathway and an advanced makerspace. Going well beyond facilities and curriculum the leadership team offers an integrated system of student supports, and a full continuum of work-based learning experiences.

Staff at the school focus on students' ability to demonstrate a clear progression of knowledge and skills to succeed during transitions in secondary and postsecondary opportunities. Students are supported and encouraged to gain college credit for both engineering and general education/core academic courses while still in high school through articulation agreements and Advanced Placement. Digital Design & Engineering students create integrated projects as part of their cohort class offerings, and are encouraged to participate in a wide range of extra-curricular activities including athletics, social gatherings, clubs, career-technical student organization, robotics, electric car, and an internationally-ranked autonomous drone team, among others.

Many educators and VIPs come to visit Digital Design & Engineering (DD&E) because of the outcomes students from low income and diverse populations have achieved. This is a site where they are getting the good work done. We feel it is important to remind amazed visitors that it takes time to recruit and build a team of dedicated educators and create this kind of culture they have here. I have seen this school multiple times and I know the staff feel supported, because they know that leadership will get them what they need to serve the students. Educators at the school (and many other schools) know that over time this team has figured it out.

Over the past seven years the Digital Design & Engineering has created a community of students all preparing to be successful in career or college. Through a focus on inquiry based critical thinking skills the team at DD&E are changing lives. The skills for successful college graduates or successful employees are similar: digital literacy, inventiveness, communication skills, and the ability to produce results with real-world application.

DD&E opened in 2010 to serve grades 9 to 12 as a California Partnership Academy; Knight HS, where it is housed, has over 2,975 students. All academy students participate in CTE pathways with a STEM focus. When they started the school and district leadership worked hard to ensure community stakeholders were at the table. The community was invested in better education, a stronger economy and a brighter future with DD&E as a new partner. Among the partners are Northrop Grumman, offering internships, classroom speakers, and hosting the High School



Innovation Challenge. Lockheed Martin also partners by providing mentors, speakers, and supplying funding for the program. The Air Force Research Lab has been a partner from the start, particularly as related to unmanned aerial vehicles and Summer Gateway Academies for younger students.

Since its opening DD&E has been a diverse student body economically and culturally. The school has several indicators showing impressive student achievement, greater engagement, reduced dropout and increased college-going rates compared to similar populations. I am far from the only one to recognize the work they are doing. The California School Boards Association gave them the Golden Bell award for delivering superior Career Technical/STEM education to students since 2010.

The program implementation, talented staff and partners have created a great school. This track record is why community partners are deeply engaged in the schools success. The team are inspiring students inside the classroom and outside the classroom with multiple opportunities like this one seen in this video: <http://abc7.com/society/cool-kids-edward-aimee-mentor-students-in-digital-design/1669536/>

DD&E students are our future; we already have an older than average workforce and peak retirement in the near future. Since 2010 99% of the new family wage jobs created required post-secondary training. Not every student chooses college but they all need real-world skills that they are gaining from the CTE programs. Entrepreneurship is a requirement at DD&E. Students in the Engineering pathways have a curricular objective to innovate or invent.

Industry partners recognize the quality of DD&E teaching and how students respond in the classroom. DD&E classrooms intentionally cultivate a sense of wonder, the excitement of discovery, and the satisfaction of trying hard. The self-direction and self-discipline required, as well as the learned skill of team work and trust, are sought after abilities in the work-place and have allowed his students access to internships previously only open to students in college.

DD&E is a strong school worthy of recognition because they are doing everything they can to prepare the students in the community for a prosperous future.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ed Dennis