



THE MONTGOMERY ACADEMY

Recommendation for Emily Vickery

I am honored to write this peer recommendation for my colleague Emily Vickery. I worked with Emily for five years at The Montgomery Academy, and, during that time, I found Emily's enthusiasm for technology to be inspirational and her support of her fellow faculty members to be profound. She is a visionary educator, and she possesses a keen understanding of the direction that education is going in the 21st century. I know that she would be a valuable asset to your institution.

Emily loves to explore new tools for teachers to use in their classrooms. I appreciate the fact that Emily doesn't merely love technology as an end in and of itself. Rather, she is always focused on how the tools available in the field of technology can enhance teaching and learning. Furthermore, I appreciate the fact that Emily stays abreast of the latest trends in technology and education. She is well-connected in the world of technology, and she has played an instrumental role in introducing the MA faculty to the vast array of Web 2.0 tools. Tools such as Twitter, Diigo, Nings, UStream, Skype, VoiceThread, iWeb, iLife, GarageBand, Second Life, Wikis were simply unheard of at the Academy until Emily introduced us to them all. Literally, Emily had a major role in transforming the way that technology is used by teachers and students. I think that our entire school community is better prepared for the 21st century because of the work that Emily has done at The Montgomery Academy.

Let me share with you two specific examples about how Emily's work directly affected my classroom. In the spring of 2008, Emily took some time to explain the concept of a Ning to me. I was intrigued by this idea, and, in the summer of 2008, I decided to experiment and create one for an English seminar I teach called Fact or Fiction. I used this private Ning to create a digital space where students could share their comments on the texts that we were reading in class. It proved to be a powerful tool, and I liked it so much that I decided to create another one for my Cold War seminar. Throughout the process, Emily was there providing feedback on how I could best employ this tool with my students.

Emily also exposed me to the educational use of UStream. Along with several electives, I also teach AP United States History. In the final weeks before the AP exam, I conduct a series of review sessions with my students. The problem that I run into is that oftentimes the students cannot attend at the time when I have the session. UStream has allowed me to have live, streaming review sessions at night when most kids can attend, and, furthermore, I can record the sessions for archival purposes. Moreover, the chat feature allows the session to be interactive and more student-centered. Once again, I simply would have never known about this powerful tool if it hadn't been for Emily's willingness to support her colleagues with her knowledge of ways to integrate technology into the classroom.

Along with the two specific examples that I provided, I must admit that there are several other technological tools that I wouldn't have been introduced to if it hadn't been for Emily. I use: Second Life to network with other instructors, iWeb to design my course websites, Diigo for social bookmarking (many of my bookmarks were originally found by Emily) and I now use Twitter -- all because of Emily's influence. It is my hope that you will recognize the positive influence that Emily Vickery might have on your institution. Please do not hesitate to contact me at The Montgomery Academy if you have any questions.

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