



Department of Residence Life
University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

June 28, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

The purpose of this letter is to serve as a positive reference letter for Dan Beck. Dan started working for the MIO his freshman year (2001). He was hired because he had had prior web development experience as the Webmaster of his high school. During the interview he demonstrated experience and skills students his age didn't have. He walked in with a portfolio of his work and a CD-ROM full of his graphic and multimedia work. I wanted it to hire him right there on the spot. This decision impacted the campus for years to come.

His first job was to create a new campus tour. He had to recreate and update the online campus tour using development tools and programming techniques new to MIO and himself. This may be perceived as an exaggeration, but after a few months of hard work, he completed the most sophisticated interface and campus tour this university has ever had. His campus tour served our University for two years. It was only until last year, when a student web developer under Dan's supervision redesigned and published the current campus tour. Dan's second project was the development of the department's website. The previous student assigned to that project had taken over a year to complete it. He took the project without fear and completed the most sophisticated and attractive website Residence life had ever had in a matter of weeks. Since then, his projects have been many.

Here is a quick list of his most important projects:

ResNet: Dan developed the ResNet registration and management system. This system provides authentication and access to 3000 Residential Network Users. He created a system that supports the registration, bandwidth management and help desk support aspects of the third largest network of its kind in the state of Wisconsin. Other schools buy software to support these systems. Dan wrote a great management tool for the department saving the University thousands of dollars in procurement costs.

The Department's Website: The department's website is the largest website in the University. It provides services for 3200 students in the halls, 270 residence life staff, a year round conference center, etc. He is responsible for maintaining the integrity and quality of the information provided

on the department's websites and web servers. Making a website is not only a technical effort, but also an artistic and logistical challenge. Getting accurate information in an organized manner requires the cooperation of many offices and employees under the umbrella of Residence Life. For the last 4 years, Dan's people, artistic and technical skills have fostered the creation of absolute works of art and design.

The Department's Portal System: A few years ago, the MIO, the Advance Titan and key people in student affairs and information technology started a conversation about the feasibility of a campus portal. A campus portal where students and staff could find customized and database driven information services about UW Oshkosh. This required a joint venture between departments, student government, and technology facilitators such as MIO, the library and Academic Computing. It required that "someone" with a strong understanding of database design, web development, interface design and coding skills develop a plan. A plan requiring thousands of hours of development time slowly started taking shape into what the MIO calls: "portal implementation through collaboration, rapid development and wishful thinking". ☺ Dan Beck single handedly created a student portal, which is now used by 1000+ students already in the residence halls and ALL residence life staff. This portal provides news information about the MIO, Residence Life, Campus Wide Events, Reeve Union, USRH, OSA, and the Gruenhagen Conference Center. It provides rapid access to weather information, technical services, bandwidth management, maintenance requests, disciplinary tracking, housing capacity reports, online forums, email, library services etc. There are currently more than 50 applications (modules) available within this portal. The complexity of the system created by Dan Beck is beyond the comprehension of most non-technical people. There are only three other schools in the state with a campus portal. All of them managed and supported by teams of FTE at a cost beyond what is available at Oshkosh until now. As recently stated by Ken Splittgerber from Administrative Computing, "*The idea of a student portal created and managed by students attending UW Oshkosh will be a source of great pride to us*". This site was officially launched in the fall of 2005, and it is available right now at: portal.mio.uwosh.edu

The Oshkosh Placement Exchange Registration Website: The OPE is an annual conference organized by Residence Life. Its purpose is to provide a place for interviewing, meeting, networking and placement for Housing Employers and recent graduates seeking positions within student affairs. This year, the OPE hosted 190 schools and 582 candidates. The website includes a database driven environment where employers and candidates can search available positions throughout the US, connect, interview, hire and be hired. The website and registration system is one of very few of its kind in the US (within the context of student affairs). Dan Beck created this system last summer allowing the successful execution of this conference. Without his effort, the

conference would lose its ability to connect people in a seamless and automated way. The conference generates an average of \$89,000 in revenue each year.

Other Accomplishments and Strengths

Here is an excerpt from a recent performance appraisal:

<p>Accomplishments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The portal continues to be one of our biggest sources of pride and innovation for MIO and Residence Life. The “evolution” created by this portal is exciting...• The list of projects is endless. His ability to take on projects and turn them around is unmatched.• The development of the WIRES website sets the standard for this working group.• The development and implementation of the ResNet registration and database was successful despite the challenges presented by short lead times.• I counted 28 projects completed by Dan in one year. This is great for MIO, but it sets a record hard to beat and sustain by coworkers. When Dan departs in a few years, we will need to divest his responsibilities among several programmers and graphic artists.• He has become an asset and liability of equal proportion. Replacement and training of others to take on the portal, ResNet registration, website, OPE, should be an important mission of the lead group.
<p>Management Strengths:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• His productivity level, speed, skill and talent• His incredible capacity to code and develop database driven websites on command and with little lead-time.• His willingness to take on more supervisory challenges by expanding the web team.• His willingness to work and collaborate with our database manager.

Dan has been one of the most productive employees at the Department. He takes on responsibilities within and outside his job description. Aside from his programming, supervisory and web server management responsibilities, Dan is also the Department’s official photographer. He has learned to use professional camera equipment to document all the department’s events, staffing evolutions and facilities. His gallery is available on the department’s website.

On January of 2006, Dan was transferred to the Graphic Design Team of the Department of Residence Life. As a Graphic Designer, he worked an average of 20+ hours a week during the academic year and 40 hour weeks during the academic breaks.

Dan has been responsible for 60+ comprehensive graphic design projects from January 2006 until today. The quality of his work has been impressive despite a very heavy workload level. Dan is responsible for the most comprehensive website at UW Oshkosh as well. In addition to his graphic work he has maintained some of his responsibilities as web designer and technical manager for our database driven web presence.

He was responsible for various photographic and printed media aspects of the recent Oshkosh Placement Exchange Conference. His contribution to the success of this conference was greatly

appreciated by the upper management team at Residence Life. In collaboration with the Leadership Development Specialist Team, he has been responsible for the creation of various material, several complex brochures, postcards and posters. His effort has been truly remarkable.

During his tenure at the Graphic Artist Team, Dan demonstrated a higher degree of professional commitment for our department. His willingness to design and create high quality printed and electronic media, photography, communication skills and work ethic have taken his position and our department to a new level of quality and performance.

Dan Beck as other former Residence Life employees belongs to a different breed of students; students that work, not for the money or the resume material, but because they believed in giving back to the University through their work and dedication. Dan has had the ability to impact the University as a whole through his daily duties and responsibilities. The future of the student portal will demonstrate the value and uniqueness of his contribution for years to come.

I have had the pleasure to work closely with Dan on various projects for the last 5 years, thus I feel he deserves this positive employment reference. Feel free to contact me for further information or clarification.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. Alatorre', with a stylized flourish underneath.

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