

**Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School**

4301 East West Highway Bethesda, MD 20814 (240) 497-6300



December 20, 2010

Dear Sir or Madam:

I had the pleasure of having Mr. Michael Despines as a guest speaker for my chemistry classes at Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School. Mr. Despines was engaging, thought-provoking, and extremely knowledgeable.

The goal of Michael Despines' presentation is to get students to think about the directions in which both the Earth and society are moving. It begins with a description of his experiences, then into the progression of population growth, consumption, and resource availability throughout human existence. Mr. Despines explains how the Earth can't possibly sustain the current rate of development. The presentation presents an excellent argument for the need to change the way that Americans live.

Overwhelmingly, my students were moved by what Michael Despines had to say. The students had many questions, comments, and perspectives to share after the presentation. They even continued to bring it up for the next several days. Though it has been over a month since his talk, students still mention Mr. Despines from time to time.

I was very impressed with the way that Mr. Despines was able to relate to my students. He gave his presentation to four different classes. These classes are very different groups, and Mr. Despines adjusted effectively. Rather than giving the same presentation to my AP Chemistry and On-Level Chemistry classes, he adapted the content and delivery to his audience. For my AP Chemistry class, he focused on data analysis and mathematics. For my On-Level Chemistry class, his presentation was geared towards the big, thought-provoking concepts, rather than the details.

Mr. Michael Despines is an excellent speaker who is well-read and knowledgeable about his topic. I recommend him with enthusiasm.

Sincerely,

Robert C. McDonald  
Chemistry Teacher, Bethesda-Chevy Chase High School