

Dear H.O.B.Y. Ambassadors,

My name is Chase Petroelje. I attend a small town school in northern Michigan. Our school takes a lot of pride in what they have accomplished. However, they also realize that there is much more to be accomplished. There is always something that a school can do to help each and every student.

I had heard a speaker who had changed my life for the better about 3 years ago. It was my every intention to bring this speaker up to our school to speak and show his magic here. His name is Jim Tuman. After a couple of successful connections and phone calls, we could finally see him walk through the doors of Boyne City High School.

Every school has, most likely, had its share of motivational speakers. They might catch the attention of a select few students, and maybe make a statement that may last a week. However, there is a huge difference with Jim Tuman. He has such an amazing amount of passion and understanding for today's youth. It is incredible how much he puts his heart and soul into everything that he says. Not only did he speak to our school, but he also hosted a community meeting and a parent meeting to spread his word to those groups as well. He gave us high amounts of feedback on what we can do to improve our school and community. However, he didn't want to stop. He had such a passion, that he wanted to make very sure that we were going to continue our thoughts at these meetings and initiate plans to change.

There has been an immediate change in our school environment starting the day of the assembly. After the lesson of love came into play, every student showed more compassion and understanding for each other than ever before. There were several students who were deeply touched by the assembly. It was amazing to see a man, who none of the students knew, hugging and loving students at our high school. That, alone, presents everyone with an example of how to live and motivation to change.

There is something different about Jim Tuman. I haven't quite grasped how he can have such an amazing amount of compassion and love for youth. It was such an awesome feeling for 400 students to realize that there is someone out there who loves them, and who is on their side. Teens have to battle so much at their age, and having that extra boost is what gives them hope. I would recommend to any school or group to have Jim Tuman come to present to you. Him and his message are like nothing else in this world. You just have to see him to find out why!!

Dear Ambassadors,

I think it is great that so many of you have signed up to have Jim Tuman come and speak at your schools! I was honored to have him come and speak at my school my senior year and it was an amazing experience for everyone, students and faculty included. Once I signed up to have Jim come and speak at my school I printed out the information provided on his website www.jimtuman.com and took it to my principal and talked with him about Jim coming to my high school. We were able to pick out a date and plan for Jim to come. The school as well as some local clubs were able to come together and provide the funds necessary for Jim making his trip to my high school and speaking. He spoke to the 6th-12th grade students and made a huge impression on everyone. All of you have heard Jim speak and know how amazing he is, don't pass up the opportunity to have him come and speak at your school. I had many different students and faculty members tell me how impressed they were with Jim and how glad they were he was able to speak at our school. Being part of having Jim come and speak at my high school was one of my most memorable high school experiences! If any of you have any questions about Jim speaking at my high school please feel free to give me a call anytime 989-464-1616. I hope all of you are able to have him come and speak at your high school, it is a great experience for everyone involved!

Respectfully,
Dustin Peltz
Rogers City High School Graduate

School District of Royal Oak
Royal Oak High School
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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in behalf of Jim Tuman. I met Jim a year ago at a planning meeting with some community leaders in the City of Royal Oak. The goal of the meeting was to develop a plan to work at addressing the drug and alcohol issues with our youth in our city. We brought Jim in as a leader to help formulate our thoughts on how to approach this large task.

The task at hand was not an easy one. Some of the members of this group included the fire chief, police chief, mayor, educators, and school board members – all with various agendas. The goal was the same – what could we do to help our kids and keep them safer. Jim took on the leadership of the group and steered the ship. Although there were many different ideas and philosophies, Jim continued to challenge the group to stay focused and stay kid-centered. He recommended our group dividing into various groups which had different themes at hand, and also, recommended we organize a Town Hall meeting to inform the community of the severity of the issues and enlist their support and involvement. The Town Hall meeting was a huge success and we held another one a few weeks ago. Jim also did an all-school assembly at our school, which was very powerful, and our students were very moved by his message and presentation.

Jim's passion for his work is profound. He is passionate for what he does and cares tremendously for kids. He met a few kids from our high school after an assembly he did for us earlier in the year, and the kids really felt supported by him. Jim made time to meet with them and involve them in some of the outreach community service work he does.

Jim is an amazing person. I feel so fortunate to know him and know that there are individuals like him out there doing amazing work with kids. Making their lives better. Creating change and offering hope is what he is about. Jim is one of a kind and second to none. I have the highest regard for Jim and would recommend him in any activity with youth.

Kathleen Knapp

ROGERS CITY HIGH/MIDDLE SCHOOL
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Jamie Huber, Principal

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To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to write this letter of reference for Jim Tuman. As 6-12 Principal within the Rogers City Area School, I had the honor of hosting Jim in April 2008, as a part of our career day. Our entire 6th through 12th grade student body, along with a neighboring district, listened to Jim's intense message regarding the importance of personal relationships over the drive or need for material things.

Jim, to say the least, is a very passionate speaker who was clearly able to reach our students. His energy, passion, and insight were palpable throughout the 90-minute presentation. I was most impressed in the reaction of our middle school student body. Afterward, many of these students surrounded Jim and conveyed their own personal stories to him as a result of his powerful message.

After personally hearing Jim's message, I believe it has helped the students of Rogers City area schools further understand the importance of personal relationships and the value that every individual holds within our educational community. It is my belief that any school district can benefit from his wisdom and presentation.

I would be happy to discuss Jim's visit and its positive message with anyone considering having him come into his or her district. Please feel free to contact me at 989-734-9170.

Sincerely,

Mr. Jamie R. Huber
6-12 Principal
Rogers City MS/HS

Zeeland West High School, 3390 100th Ave., Zeeland, MI 49646
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To Whom It May Concern:

It is my distinct honor and privilege to write to you on behalf of Jim Tuman. Jim is an energetic and tireless advocate for youth, families, schools and communities. I have seen him work with students individually, in small groups and in middle school and high school presentations with hundreds of participants. I have also seen Jim work cross generationally in assemblies for youth and their parents. Jim is a highly capable and masterful communicator in all these settings.

Jim's energy, passion and commitment ethic set the professional standard for excellence. The Zeeland Action Coalition has consulted with Jim Tuman for many years. During one of these consultations, Jim lived in our community for three months and designed community interventions with our coalition.

Jim does not only walk the walk, he lives it. His practical understanding of the preciousness of life is seen in his capacity to connect with all kinds of people.

Jim has been an advocate for youth for over three decades. His passion for his life's work is unmatched. Jim understands the rhythms of life. Developmentally Jim is at a point in his own life that his collective experience and wisdom is at full stride.

In Zeeland, we affectionately refer to Jim's visits and presentations as being "Tumanized". Individually, young and old alike, should experience Jim Tuman at work, at play, at life. Jim changes individuals, families, schools and communities through a direct and thoughtful approach to change. Jim is an action oriented and goal driven individual.

I have known Jim for more than ten years. His work in this area is unsurpassed. However, Jim's current energy, focus and message have gone to the next level. If you have never experienced Tuman or it's been awhile since you have had him in your community, now is the time! Through Jim's capacity to empathize with young people and his understanding of their needs to be safe, valued and loved, Jim is able to create a powerful opportunity for healing within today's culture.

Jim has always been the best, but he is even better today!

It is with the highest personal and professional regard that I recommend Jim Tuman to your youth, families, schools or community.

May life gift you with all the best!

Sincerely,

Todd A. Kamstra, M.S.W.
Chair Zeeland Action Coalition
Social Worker
Zeeland Public Schools

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To Whom It May Concern:

I introduce Jim Tuman to you as a resource for school and community members who wish to bring a message of caring and hope to young people. We were fortunate to have Jim with us for three days during winter, 2007.

I recommend the format Jim encouraged as an ideal model for creating momentum within a school and community. Our time together began with a forum intended to provide thoughtful and involved adults and opportunity to share their concerns and hopes for young people in our area. We focused first on the positive aspects of life in our community, especially those things that affect students. Jim urged us to begin our work from a position of strength, highlighting and publicizing the “good stuff” that happens in Mancelona. We will soon be hoisting a banner proclaiming that our community loves, supports, and values its young people. Jim urged us to make that bold statement, publicly, in the heart of our little downtown.

Subsequent sessions with Jim placed him face to face with students. First, he conducted a school assembly for middle and high schoolers. Jim’s speech was intense; he drew from his long and rich experiences as a worldwide advocate for youth at risk. Students responded favorably to Jim’s message, including his compelling invitation to counter inhumane behaviors with kindness and compassion. An evening session for parents and students followed the afternoon assembly. That session provided opportunities for parents and students to role-play, with Jim giving participants a glimpse of the dynamics that often characterize adult/adolescent relationships. I am not sure I know who gained the most from that exchange – the students or the adults.

Our final hours with Jim gave students, school folks, parents, and community members time to reflect collectively on the theme of Jim’s work – helping every young person here connect in a meaningful way to another caring person. Jim’s passion was apparent in every phone call we exchanged prior to his visit to Mancelona, and his enthusiasm never waned while he was here. In the months since his visit, a group of people continues to engage with youth – often one at a time – to care for the kids who so desperately need our very best efforts. If you are looking for someone to help mobilize such an effort in your school community, please consider Jim Tuman

Cordially,

Laura Powers, Counselor

To Whom It May Concern:

I had the experience of seeing Jim's program at Plainview-Old Bethpage HS, NY where I currently teach. Jim's program and message is invaluable and imperative for all people to hear. This is a time period in history where society has seen a decrease in morals, integrity, family, health, love, kindness, role models and the importance of relationships. It seems these essential values have been replaced by some for wealth, ego, pride, status, popularity and superficial relationships. Jim's message is that time is not guaranteed on this earth and we need to refocus our priorities to align them with daily actions that will produce generosity, caring for others and caring for ourselves. Building personal character is one of the most important things a human can do. It sets the framework for honesty, hard work, self-respect and kindness. Through Jim's program, he educated the students on the importance of sacrifice and delaying gratification in reaching goals. His positive message and teachings will help all people become better human beings and I hope he continues to spread this message.

Sincerely,

Daniel P. Gallagher
Teacher

Walkerville Public Schools

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in reference to Jim Tuman. Walkerville Middle/High School had the pleasure of having Jim in our building on March 22, 2007. He spoke at an assembly to our student body and staff about personal fulfillment and offered guidance in making our community a better place.

Jim has a way of touching everyone in a room. His presentation is highly energetic, impacting, insightful, and his emotions are real. His message is clear, bold, and unavoidable for any post adolescent age group.

He is personally the most moving speaker I have ever heard. Every institution should fully consider having Jim visit the people in their facility. He is truly an unforgettable person.

Please do not hesitate to call me at my office, 231-873-3652 x2250 or at my personal phone number, 616-889-4887, with further inquiries concerning Jim

Sincerely,

Jeff Forner
Principal
Walkerville Public Schools

Royal Oak High School
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Mr. Jim Tuman
139 Amelia
Royal Oak, Mi 48073

Dear Jim:

On behalf of the community of Mancelona, Mancelona Public Schools, and Communities In Schools of Mancelona, please accept our deep appreciation and profound thanks for your commitment of time and energy. Your three-day (plus) visit to our school and community has profoundly effected, and forever changed our understanding of our children, youth and families. We have no doubt that you have also deeply touched the individual lives of many of our students.

Words cannot adequately express the importance of your powerful and personal message to young people. In these times of ever-dwindling resources, and ever-escalating societal stress placed on our children and youth, your message is both vital and empowering.

We are determined to use your visit as a catalyst in order to follow through with the vision you instilled in us all, the vision of a community that believes “that every child should feel safe, valued, and loved”. This will be our rallying cry and our mantra from this point forward.

Thank you again for all that you do. We sill keep you informed of our progress, and fully intend to ask you back so that you can share in the rewards, and the fruit of your labor of love.

Sincerely,

Garry Knapp

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James Murray, Principal
Thomas Sena, Associate Principal
Paul J. Dallara, Assistant Principal
Glen Zakian, Assistant Principal

Jim Tuman was a pleasure to work with and watch. I first saw Jim speak when I was in tenth grade at a program unrelated to my high school, and made it my goal to invite him to my school before I would graduate. A year and a half later, I e-mailed Jim and received a response the next day; the planning process from then rolled quickly and easily.

The majority of the work to get Jim to my school was done by me. Though it was a lot of hard work and required frequent correspondence between all involved, the administration and my teachers put full faith in me: They not only trusted me to coordinate the entire event, but they also valued my judgment of Jim's speech and were willing to invite him based solely on my recommendation. This and Jim's amiability and responsiveness made my job relatively easy and even enjoyable. When he finally came to the school, Jim was well received and easily captivated 450 students for a full hour. At the end of his program, students crowded around him for a chance to shake his hand and hug him. Teachers and students I had never met came up to me for several days after the assembly and thanked me for organizing the event; many asked for his contact information.

Jim should be invited to any school with an administration open to listening and conveying respect to all of its students, faculty, and staff alike. After having seen this first presentation, everyone involved (students, teachers, administrators) is excited about bringing Jim back annually, and I am now beginning the process of planning this out!

Thank you very much.

Michal Shilor
On behalf of Plainview-Old Bethpage J.F.K. High School