



SCIENCE OLYMPIAD  
Two TransAm Plaza Drive  
Suite 415  
Oakbrook Terrace, IL 60181

(630) 792-1251 voice  
(630) 792-1287 fax

[www.soinc.org](http://www.soinc.org)

February 18, 2008

Commander  
Washington Area Communications Command  
2743 Defense Blvd., SW  
Anacostia Annex, DC 20373

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter on behalf of SSgt. Ryan Michela, an outstanding Science Olympiad volunteer, mentor and role model.

Currently, Ryan is a member of the 2008 Science Olympiad National Tournament Planning Committee for The George Washington University, overseeing the technology events. Our national tournaments are intense two-day affairs that take years to plan. It takes a detail-oriented person like Ryan to pull off what's necessary to make such a large event successful. In January, Ryan helped run the 2008 Science Olympiad Invitational Tournament for 33 teams from across the nation at The George Washington University. Nearly 1,000 people participated in or observed the 46 events held at venues all around campus.

Ryan has acted as an event supervisor in Alabama and Virginia, and was in charge of two events, Junkyard Challenge and Mission Possible, at the 2007 Science Olympiad National Tournament at Wichita State University in Kansas, which drew over 1,500 students and nearly 2,500 parents, teachers, volunteers and administrators. Ryan was instrumental in the development and writing of the Junkyard Challenge event, running trials and evaluating the success of the event at several tournaments. At the 2007 Indiana University Science Olympiad Summer Fun Camp, Ryan also taught Robots and Electric Vehicle to more than 200 motivated science students.

From 1997 to 2002, Ryan was a Science Olympiad competitor himself, so he knows both sides of the organization. That might be why he's so in tune with working on events -- because he really knows what it's like to be a student participant. By applying all the leadership skills he has learned in the military to Science Olympiad, he's become one of our best event supervisors. Ryan is great with students and peers alike, sharing his love of all things engineered as he displays his trademark positive attitude.

We can't thank him enough for all he's done -- and all he'll continue to do -- for Science Olympiad. He's an amazing and selfless community volunteer.

Regards,

Dr. Gerard Putz  
President  
Science Olympiad

Cc: Ryan Michela

**Executive Board**

**Dr. Gerard Putz**  
*President & Co-Director*  
Illinois

**Jack Cairns**  
*Co-Director*  
Delaware

**Sharon Putz**  
*Executive Administrator*  
Illinois

**Richard Smith**  
*National Science Consultant*  
Pennsylvania

**James Woodland**  
*State Science Supervisor*  
Nebraska

**Jennifer Kopach**  
*Marketing Director*  
Illinois

**Advisory Committee**

**Steve Betza**  
*Lockheed Martin*  
New York

**Phyllis Buchanan**  
*DuPont Corporation*  
Delaware

**Azania Heyward-James**  
*Centers for Disease Control*  
Georgia

**Philip Dail**  
*State Director*  
North Carolina State Univ.

**Tina Gilliland**  
*2006 Tournament Director*  
Indiana University

**Michael Kobe**  
*Science Consultant*  
Indiana

**Peter Lu**  
*Science Olympiad Alumna*  
Harvard University

**Harold Miller**  
*State Director*  
New York

**Greg Novacek**  
*2007 Tournament Director*  
Wichita State University

**Michael Osborne**  
*Manager, Science Education*  
Texas Instruments

**Kathy Melvin**  
*2008 Tournament Director*  
The George Washington  
University

**Tim Taylor**  
*Roseville MS Educator*  
Ohio

**Peggy Vavalla**  
*DuPont Corporation*  
Delaware