



OEF Award Nomination Form
 for the following OEF Award (check one):
 Distinguished Alumni Award

Okemos Education Foundation
 4406 Okemos Rd.
 Okemos, MI 48864

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 517-512-5821

Date of Nomination: June 9, 2017

Person Being Nominated		Nominator	
Name	Joel Peterson	Name	Rod Ellis, Pres. Okemos Alumni Association
Position/School or Department	Okemos High School Alumni	How do you know the Nominee?	Former Classmate (1965) at Okemos High School
Home Address		Home Address	1630 Foxcroft Rd., East Lansing, MI 48823
Email		Email	rodellis1000@aol.com
Phone		Phone	616-437-3706

APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Include the following with this cover sheet:

1. Your nomination statement. Why should this person receive an OEF award? Please explain the nominee's accomplishments about the established criteria.

I would like to nominate Joel Peterson, Okemos High School class of 1966, for the Okemos Education Foundation's Distinguished Alumni Award. In the years following his time at OHS, Joel has gone above and beyond in his personal and professional life to "demonstrates exceptional dedication, achievement, and humanitarian contribution."

Following graduation from Okemos High School as a "Top Ten" graduate, Joel began his college years at Michigan State University, transferring to Brigham Young University, where he was named valedictorian of his class in the College of Social Science.

He went on to earn a Master's in Business Administration from Harvard Business School. He began working for Trammell Crow Corporation. Those early years of his life were spent gaining skills, learning to lead and speak publicly, gaining confidence, and building relationships. Joel's formative years laid the foundation for the life he leads today.

Joel divides his time between his home in Salt Lake City where he works as the Founding Partner and Chairman of Peterson Partners; he also holds the position of Chairman of the sixth-biggest airline carrier in the US, jetBlue Airlines, based in New York City; and Joel also manages to teach two semesters every year at Stanford University in Palo Alto, California.

Joel's life represents a virtuous cycle of giving back to help other people's lives.

Joel contributes his jetBlue and his Stanford University salary to each entity's employees' fund which are both set up to support employees in need of assistance.

Joel's years with Trammell Crow led him up the ladder to become CEO, which led him to the San Jose, California, area. After he joined the board of Stanford University, he was asked to teach a class on real estate. He became such a popular teacher – focusing on leadership and entrepreneurship over the past 25 years – that he has earned the Visiting Professor title, which is the highest designation for a non-Ph.D., non-tenure track professor at Stanford.

His teaching style is terrific example of his well-rounded approach to dedication, achievement, and helping others. His innovate format is to invite guests, who in the past have ranged from a four-star general to SF 49ers quarterback Steve Young to women entrepreneurs who've founded make-up companies, to his Graduate School of Business classes so his students can interact with a living, breathing leaders and/or entrepreneurs to supplement their textbook, case-study learning. Afterwards, he holds gatherings in during which the students reflect on the type of leader they envision themselves to be in the context of their guests. Students lead the discussion and help develop their own as well as their classmates' understanding of personal leadership.

Joel develops such deep bonds with his students beyond simply keeping touch: Joel is available beyond the semester for advice, and has invested in his former students' companies and served on their boards. The relationships are personal as well: he receives holiday cards, birth announcements, and just recently attended a former student's wedding.

While it may seem that giving back his salary to the employees of two corporations demonstrates a huge humanitarian contribution, Joel goes above and beyond.

He and his wife have supported several large and small nonprofit organizations throughout their 45-year union. They began supporting Orphans in Nepal in 1999. When that organization was folded into Choice Humanitarian, a Utah-based organization that helps people in seven countries around the world lift themselves out of extreme poverty. They support local charities in Salt Lake City including the Allianza Academy (a charter school), the Gifted Music School, and Lincoln Center Education in New York City.

Joel's long-term involvement at Stanford University led to his role as chairman of the board of overseers at the Hoover Institution, which is celebrating 100 years, and which was founded by Herbert Hoover as a public policy research center.

I'm nominating Joel because he is the personification of an Okemos alumni who has dedicated his life first and foremost to his own integrity. Then secondly to spreading his gifts to others, whether a 20-something graduate student of business, a jetBlue employee, or a person struggling in Nepal.

I feel honored to know Joel Peterson, and would be thrilled if the Okemos Education Foundation would consider bestowing him with the Distinguished Alumni Award, recognizing excellence in our district.

Rodney Ellis '65