



To: My Fellow Faculty Members
From: Dr. Rusty Towell, NEXT Lab Director, Professor of Engineering & Physics
Date: July 27, 2020
Re: Letter of Recommendation for Dr. James (Jim) Drachenberg

I unequivocally endorse Dr. Jim Drachenberg to you as an ideal ACU professor deserving of tenure, promotion, and awards. Jim is an excellent and dedicated teacher, a leader of a world-class international research collaboration, a model servant leader, and a friend to all of his co-workers. Often, faculty members overcome some shortcomings by strengths in other areas, but Jim excels in all areas of consideration for tenure and promotion.

As a teacher Jim has experience and a proven track record of success at other universities before coming to ACU. At ACU he has taught whatever courses needed to be taught including overloads, to help meet the needs of the department and our students. Jim has reworked the freshman lab content and implemented measures in both the lecture and lab to simultaneously improve the rigor of the courses while improving student retention.

As a scholar Jim is in the top 1% as demonstrated by his international peer group. The international high energy nuclear physics collaboration at Brookhaven National Laboratory named STAR is composed of 55 institutions from 12 countries, with a total of 609 collaborators. They selected Jim to be their deputy spokesman. Jim also helps lead the ACU nuclear physics research group and they have received multiple new grants since he has joined the group. Another metric used by scholars is the h index published by Hirsch. Hirsch suggests that “an h index of 20 is good, 40 is outstanding, and 60 is truly exceptional.” Jim’s h-index is 84 confirming that Jim is well above truly exceptional.

Much more than just teaching and scholarship, Jim is a Christian servant leader and friend. Jim serves in the department, across campus, in his profession, in the community, and at church. Jim is always willing to discuss matters, cover a class, serve on a committee, or teach a bible lesson. Jim mentors students in his research, brain storms ideas with colleagues, prays with those hurting, and sets an example for us all.

In 2004 when Jim was applying to graduate schools I wrote:

Jim is a bright student, an excellent worker, and will certainly be an asset to whichever graduate school he attends. Jim has been in several of my classes including Modern Physics and Nuclear Physics. In each of these challenging courses, he clearly had the highest grade in the class. Jim is very bright, but he also works extremely hard. I expect Jim will continue this level of performance in graduate school.

Jim’s has clearly met and exceeded my high expectations for him. I’m honored to call him my colleague, my friend, and my brother in Christ. ACU should do everything possible to keep, promote, and honor Jim.

Grace and Peace,

Rusty Towell

Rusty Towell, Ph.D.