



GREEN MOUNTAIN COLLEGE

Office of the President

July 29, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

The new Stone Valley Community Market is an innovative partnership between Green Mountain College and the town of Poultney that promotes locally grown foods and enhances the social and economic sustainability of the region. The project was initiated by students who saw a need for a local food cooperative, but it soon became a town project. The town manager, Mr. Jonas Rosenthal, secured a U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development grant to fund part of the start up. To speed the implementation of the project, my wife Marsha and I purchased the property for the market as private citizens of the town, not in my capacity as president.

The Stone Valley Community Market venture provided an opportunity for students to not just volunteer time in an established organization, but to get involved in construction, marketing, and managerial aspects of a new, community-based enterprise. The Green Mountain College Student Senate also awarded the co-op a \$10,000 loan to serve as collateral for a larger business loan from the Cooperative Fund of New England (CFNE), a community development financial institution (CDFI) that serves as a bridge between socially responsible investors and cooperatives. Students in Prof. Lucas Brown's Design & Build class completed a floor plan of the building. Residents of SAGE Hall volunteered their time to work in the market on renovation. A faculty member and staff member of GMC were elected to serve on the board of directors for the market.

The result is a thriving food cooperative in Poultney which provides access to healthy food in a rural area and a market outlet for local producers. I highly recommend this project for the Innovation Credit; it is a visible symbol of the deep connections between the pursuit of sustainability at the College and in the town.

Sincerely

Paul J. Fonteyn  
President