



*School of Engineering  
Department of Materials Science and NanoEngineering*

**Robert Vajtai**  
Senior Faculty Fellow

September 12, 2014

**Re: Request for a recommendation letter for Rhodes scholarship**

**To whom it may concern**

I would like to recommend Matthew Feldman as a candidate for the Rhodes scholarship, as I can attest to his strength of character both inside and outside of the research lab.

I became know Matt when he was a summer visiting student in our lab at Rice University. We are a relatively large and successful materials science group with ~20 graduate students, several postdocs and many visitors, as well as good number of undergrad students are working in the lab. Matt was assigned to learn and afterward investigate the growth process of various carbon nanotube systems and their applications in energy storage devices. He was a conscientious, dedicated, and responsible member of the lab.

Matthew's enthusiasm and intrinsic drive is very easy to notice. When he was not actively doing research, he was probing the other graduate students and post-docs for information about what they were working on or seeking out resources to learn more about his own work and interests. He was always very careful to ensure that all of his work was thorough and complete, whether it was optimizing a chemical process or preparing a presentation, which is a result of his deep interest in STEM. He was very adept when it came to solving problems such as separating graphene from substrates, as he was capable of thinking outside of the box and knowing where to look to develop answers. He worked very cooperatively with the international community in the laboratory.

Matthew's personal integrity and perseverance carried outside of the lab, however. While working at Rice University, he managed to find the time to not only train for and set a Guinness World Record, but also use it as a way to raise support for a tsunami-struck village in Japan. In the lab, he was fully dedicated to his work, while outside of the lab, he was 100% driven by this non-academic goal. He never once exhibited doubt about his ability to achieve, even when obstacles got in his way.

Matthew is a highly motivated and works very hard, I truly believe he will be a great asset in the scientific environment he works. I highly recommend Matthew for the Rhodes fellowship and would be happy to answer any questions you may have..

Sincerely,

Robert Vajtai