



H.C. Wilcox Technical High School  
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January 27, 2022

Dear Principal Dellapiano,

I had the pleasure of officiating the Stratford versus Masuk wrestling match last evening. It was a lively and enjoyable match between both teams.

When the varsity match concluded, several sub-varsity matches were wrestled. It is one of these matches I would like to share with you and bring to your attention.

There was a wrestler from Masuk with visible challenges associated with Down Syndrome. He was scheduled to wrestle a young man from your school, Freshman Guiseppe Amat-Paredes. If anyone in your school has a video of this match, I would strongly encourage you to watch.

As the two wrestlers began competing, the skill differential was apparent. However, Guiseppe encouraged the young man throughout the match. Inaudible to very few spectators, but certainly heard by me, were incredibly encouraging and compassionate prompts from Guiseppe.

When the young man from Masuk became frustrated and exclaimed, "I can't!", Guiseppe quietly said, "keep going, just do your best." These types of comments continued throughout the match. I am most certain that Guiseppe could have won the match in the first 30 seconds of the first period.

However, the match lasted all 6 minutes, with the young man from Masuk prevailing 12-10. Both teams, all spectators and certainly all personnel within the gymnasium understood the gift Guiseppe shared with this young man last night.

I could write about this match for the next 3 pages, but I believe you will be able to deduce the power of Guiseppe's compassion, humility and graciousness. These incredible qualities are not as prominent throughout society as they should be. I am grateful and honored to have been a part of this truly special experience.

If there is any award within your school, please consider Guiseppe as a worthy recipient. Furthermore, as President of the CT Chapter of the National Wrestling Hall of Fame, I would like to invite Guiseppe to our banquet on April 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022, at Foxwoods Casino. I will be asking the chapter committee to absorb the cost of this invite, but if they don't, I will use the fee I am being paid for last night's match to cover the cost of Guiseppe's invitation.

Please share my observations with Guiseppe, your coaching staff and wrestlers. Your team created a magical experience for a young man. You should be extremely proud of the way your wrestling team represents Stratford HS.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

With Great Respect and Appreciation,

Ted Oczkowski  
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