



FOCUS LEARNING

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To Whom It May Concern

I am Shelly Zheng, Director of Focus Learning in Toronto. I am writing to give my full endorsement of Ryan Petroff as a creative and inspired candidate for Arduino Innovator in Residence.

In just a few months after Ryan joined Focus Learning in September, 2014, Ryan had facilitated a curriculum of programming, robotics, game design, and a hands-on 3D printing workshop. Ryan's programs quickly became well-attended due to his patient and friendly attitude towards students and parents, and exceptional demonstrated empathy with ESL and special needs students. It became clear to me that Ryan truly loves to help others learn and is himself driven to create and share innovative tools.

In Ryan's classes, a focus was always placed on teaching the fundamentals of the open source and free software movements: user liberation, open collaboration, and community service. This empowerment-focused teaching style made it easy for students to achieve a lot of 'first's' with us: making their first websites, first video games, first robots, and first published contributions to the open source community. Parents were always so proud when playing with their children's early creations, like games coded in Scratch and Duinobot Theremins: these projects showed their children to be refreshingly engaged and motivated to learn.

Ryan taught classes using Arduino-powered and Kickstarter-backed projects, including the Bukito 3D printer, the Multiplo+Duinobot robotics system, and Fritz the robotic puppet. Ryan was always bringing in new research to the kids and new techniques from the community, and encouraging them to 'give back' through collaboration and community engagement. I saw Ryan further demonstrate his dedication to community service when I told him that my daughter's school had a lunchtime Arduino club. This led him to begin teaching a class at King Edward Public School, which my daughter and her friends continue to enjoy!

I can think of no better candidate for Arduino Innovator in Residence, and I look forward to seeing what Ryan will accomplish.

Sincerely,

Shelly Zheng

Director of Focus Learning (S.E.J. Education Inc.)



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