



Talcott Mountain

SCIENCE CENTER & ACADEMY

November 15, 2021

Dear Madame Chair and members of the Board of Trustees,

I write this letter with a flurry of emotions and reflections. I began working at Talcott Mountain Science Center in 1979 with a degree in Biology and a passion for teaching. After 42 years, with the last 14 as Executive Director, I have decided to turn over the reins of the Center to a new generation and retire at the end of 2022. I have had the pleasure to work with tens of thousands of teachers, and touched the lives of many more thousands of children. The rewards have been immense.

The Science Center and Academy have been making a difference in children's lives for more than fifty years and, with the support of our alumni and friends, will do so for many years to come. We have strived to be an institution like no other, leading in science and technology education, by leveraging state-of-the-art facilities that include, Connecticut's largest teaching planetarium, multiple astronomical observatories, greenhouses, and computer labs all on a mountaintop. However, our most important asset has always been our dedicated, passionate, and creative teachers, who know how to bring out the best in their students. It has been my pleasure to work beside these individuals who constantly encourage young people to question, to learn through process, and to reach beyond and embrace our mission of "Inspiring Today's Children to Invent Tomorrow".

With its origins as a decommissioned military radar site, Talcott has transitioned to become a premier educational institution. Under the leadership and tutelage of founder Dr. Donald LaSalle, we were given the opportunity to create new learning methodology and content for science education. I couldn't have imagined a better place to work. I have had the opportunity to meet dozens of astronauts, world explorers, and premier scientists that have presented to our Talcott community. I have collaborated with leaders in education across the state and throughout the country to improve science education. I have led numerous workshops and trained teachers in 17 states as well as several foreign countries.

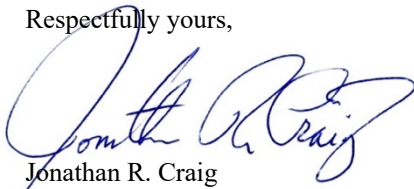
Today we face a new set of challenges that include a pandemic, climate change and world hunger to name a few. However, Talcott has been and will continue to prepare young minds with problem solving and the creative ability to address these challenges and make a positive difference in the world. I know our future rests in good hands.

This has been a remarkable experience and I appreciate all of you who have supported me, especially my devoted wife Dotty, married to me for 45 years. I couldn't have done it without her. It has been a wonderful, fulfilling career. I must thank my esteemed colleagues and our dedicated Board of Trustees, but most of all the children, with their spontaneity and enthusiasm that inspire those of us that teach.

I look forward to spending more time to appreciate my grandchildren and family, as well as to travel with my wife. I intend to support and assist in a smooth executive search and transition. I officially will spend another full year as Executive Director and will remain at the helm until a suitable candidate is found and is secure in their new role.

The Science Center and Academy has been an inspirational place to work, and I am proud to have led it successfully through these last 14 years, and to have devoted 42 years of my life to its ongoing mission. I have enjoyed being a part of this rich and wonderful community and will miss this, but most I will miss the eager young minds that are the essence of what makes Talcott special.

Respectfully yours,



Jonathan R. Craig
Executive Director