

Monday
Sept. 8, 2003

To the Secondary TEP Faculty:

A few things you should know about Thompson Herman: He has drive, energy, talent, smarts, compassion, patience, curiosity, discipline, a ferocious work ethic and a consistently sanguine nature – in other words all the hallmarks of a superb “teacher in training.”

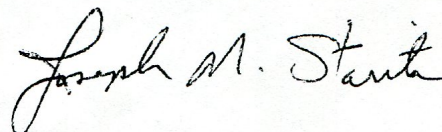
I feel qualified to trot out this constellation of telling adjectives because I had the pleasure of observing Thompson up close and personal in my Beginning Newswriting and Reporting class, a 16-week bootcamp some students have described by saying, “If you can’t actually see the Gates of Hell, you can at least feel the heat.”

Of the 16 students in this rigorous, demanding semester-long class, Thompson was the only one to emerge with an A. And there’s a reason for that: What he couldn’t accomplish with just plain smarts (of which he has plenty), he made up for in elbow grease. He is one of the most disciplined and hardest-working students I have ever had.

Like most teachers, I weight effort and hard work highly. Thompson not only met my threshold, but exceeded it. From everything I could observe, he is not only a first-class student, but also a first-class citizen: polite, courteous, self-effacing and a true team player.

In sum, Thompson is one of those rare blends of talent and commitment who sees the world far beyond himself and his own interests. He is a “keeper” in every sense of the word. My one regret is that he chose to leave journalism for another career – our loss, your gain.

Sincerely,



Joseph M. Starita