



COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING  
**CIVIL & ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING**  
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

Nancy G. Love, Ph.D., P.E., BCEE, F.WEF, F.IWA, F.AEESP  
Borchardt and Glysson Collegiate Professor  
1351 Beal Ave ■ 183 EWRE ■ Ann Arbor Michigan 48109-2125  
PH: 734-763-9664 ■ FAX: 734-764-4292 ■ [nglove@umich.edu](mailto:nglove@umich.edu)

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Stephanie Murphy, Investigator  
Bureau of Professional Licensing  
Investigations and Inspections Division  
State of Michigan  
[Murphys1@michigan.gov](mailto:Murphys1@michigan.gov)

Dear Ms. Murphy:

I am writing you about a complaint that you are investigating against Dr. Shawn McElmurry. I have elected to write this letter on my own to share my personal views. I have included my institutional affiliation for informational purposes only.

I will focus most of my letter on Shawn – how I met him and my experience working with him. I have known him since we first met at a conference in 2014 when he approached me to introduce himself. I meet a lot of people at meetings, and frankly I don't remember many of them, but Shawn was memorable because he was so enthusiastic, positive and nice. In the last two years I have worked closely with Shawn once he invited me to participate as a member of the Flint Area Community Health and Environment Partnership (FACHEP), which he co-founded and lead. Our collaboration was initiated by writing a coordinated pair of successful RAPID grants to the National Science Foundation (NSF), with the permission of our NSF program manager. The grants focused on understanding the performance and maintenance needs of point-of-use (PoU) filters deployed in Flint in response to the water crisis, and were heavily informed by work done on these filter units at U-M starting a few years before the Flint Water Crisis. Today, the City of Flint routinely asks for our guidance on filter-related topics as questions come up (e.g., last week when they had a transmission main break in the city), as do others in the community (Flint Action Coordinating Committee, Genesee Health System, Genesee County Medical Society are among the examples), and Shawn has been actively engaged with helping where he can. This work is currently *pro bono*, and reflective of the commitment that Shawn and other members of FACHEP maintain with providing service to the City of Flint.

Through my work with Shawn, I have come to see firsthand that my initial impressions of him from 2014 were accurate. In addition to being a person of outstanding character, I've known him to be an honest person with high ethical standards. I can think of multiple, day-to-day experiences that highlight why I think this, and can share a few. I have known Shawn to always act in accordance with the fundamental canons of ethics (NSPE) – which have come up frequently in our discussions within FACHEP and so he was always mindful of acting in accordance with them. He routinely behaves in a way that considers the safety, health and welfare of the residents of whatever community he is working in (Canon #1). I have two examples of this, among many. Example #1: Upon receiving a *Legionella* positive result on a Friday afternoon, he informed the affected resident immediately according to established and approved protocols, worked with non-profits to help get the resident's hot water tank removed and replaced over the weekend, returned to the resident over the weekend to make sure everything was working and to see if the resident had any further questions. His actions were always in service to and care for the residents. Example #2: The on-the-ground monitoring and sample processing team for FACHEP Legionella study was composed of and managed by Flint residents hired onto the FACHEP project. Some of the Flint residents hired included individuals in a program that Shawn connected with who worked to move those with long-term unemployment or formerly incarcerated into sustained jobs (termed "returning citizens"), and this project gave them a chance to "resume build." Two months ago, Shawn and I were invited to

speak at the FLINT CARES summit about some ongoing *pro bono* work we are doing. Two people, formerly employed on the sample processing FACHEP team, came up to Shawn and personally thanked him. They were very proud and gainfully employed in sustained jobs, and they attributed their employment success to the chance Shawn gave them on the FACHEP project. These are the stories that relate to ensuring the safety, health and welfare of members of a community that are not widely public, because Shawn is not one to draw attention to himself. He doesn't call reporters or cameramen to document his good deeds. He just does them because they are the right thing to do. I can give other examples from Canon #2 (Shawn created FACHEP as a multidisciplinary team exactly because of what Canon #2 asks of us and requires that complex problems be tackled with teams of people with different expertise; unlike other water quality-focused research teams working in Flint that did not have the broad, multidisciplinary expertise that the FACHEP team does); Canon #3 (I know of no public statements by Shawn that are untrue, and all FACHEP press releases went through multiple rounds of comments and debate by the multidisciplinary team); Canon #5 (Shawn has never deceived me or anyone I know; I cannot say the same of the complainant who has made multiple, documented deceptive statements); and Canon #6 (I think Shawn McElmurry has behaved honorably, even in the face of constant harassment and slander by the complainant as well as others he is associated with).

I want to offer some facts relevant to the specific complaint that "...[Shawn] repeatedly cites dissertation work of Faust as 'his' work" and other associated claims. I want to share what I know that is relevant to this claim.

1. Dr. Kasey Faust is an assistant professor who found herself being FOIAed by a full professor who wanted emails to try and prove what I believe to be a crafted storyline about Dr. McElmurry that is completely inconsistent with the person I know. Furthermore, she is one of three untenured assistant professors across three different states that I know of who have been FOIAed, pressured or harassed by the complainant over the last two years. In academic circles, this type of behavior is absolutely inappropriate and can be grounds for removal.
2. In all my time working with Shawn, he has always acknowledged the work of Dr. Kasey Faust and the paper he was invited to be part of. I have never known him to claim her work as his own.
3. When Hurricane Harvey hit the Texas coast September 2017, a senior faculty member at the University of Texas (UT) contacted me about helping them to gear up for the emergency response needs. The UT team included Dr. Kasey Faust, who I have only met over the phone. The senior faculty member knew I had been active in Flint and assumed I would be able to offer some valuable guidance. I included Shawn in the discussions, since he was the leader of our disaster response work in Flint, and we were subsequently invited to collaborate with the UT team. As part of that process, Shawn agreed to openly share a highly valuable field protocol document developed with many people-hours by FACHEP to assist the UT team in a pinch; this gracious act was quite typical of Shawn's manner – in service to the community over worrying about the document as "proprietary property". In the end, we turned down the offer to be co-PIs on their proposal due to timing and scope limitations. Discussions between FACHEP and the UT team remained positive throughout and occurred between mid-Sept 2017 and mid-Nov 2017. Dr. Kasey Faust was part of those discussions and never once indicated that any animosity existed between her and Shawn, nor voiced any concern over working with Shawn to my knowledge. I don't know when the complainant FOIAed Dr. Faust but I think it important to know these facts in light of it.

Before closing, I need to clarify my relationship with the complainant. I was at Virginia Tech from 1994 through December 2007, and was on the faculty in 1997 when our Department Chair elected to recruit him from the University of Colorado (where the complainant noted one reason for leaving was because of a conflict he had with another faculty member) to Virginia Tech. I have worked on at least one research project with him and have one co-published paper with him and one of his former students. I will not elaborate on recent claims by the complainant that I uniformly consider to be false, but will relay this: I

have had multiple experiences with his aggressive tactics and efforts to silence me, even from the time when I was a faculty member at Virginia Tech. I have tried to give him the benefit of the doubt and assumed he has moved on and chosen to behave more appropriately and professionally, but several of his actions over the last two years indicate that he has not. He has taken multiple steps that are, in my view, unacceptable and inconsistent with the ASCE ethics codes he likes to quote. I will note that he is not a licensed P.E. whereas both Shawn and I made the effort to become licensed (a rarity among academics). Furthermore, over the last year, the complainant has taken actions that appear to be attempted threats and false statements against me and the work of my students at conferences and (amazingly) in front of students or student groups. I think it wise to consider his complaint knowing this context and his history.

In closing, Dr. Shawn McElmurry is one of the most ethically-bound individuals I have had the honor to work with. I am willing to answer any questions you have about the complaint against him. To give more information on myself, I am also attaching my full Curriculum Vitae.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Nancy G. Love".

Nancy G. Love, Ph.D., P.E., BCEE  
Borchardt and Glysson Collegiate Professor  
Fellow: WEF, IWA, AEESP  
Michigan P.E. License No.: 6201057483

Attachment