



January 28, 2023

The Evergreen State College
Graduate Admissions, Attn: MPA
Mailstop: Library 2002
2700 Evergreen Parkway NW
Olympia, WA. 98505

Office of Admission for the MPA:

It is a pleasure and honor to recommend Tricia DePoe for admissions to the MPA Graduate Program. My name is Valdean Mountain El Assad and I am the Board Chairperson of Phoenixfire an Indigenous non-profit organization and I have known Tricia for well over a decade; as Tricia has been on our Elder Advisory Leadership Board working directly with the Board of Directors, volunteers, staff and in many public settings and events. I am confident that Tricia has all the expertise, professional experience, concise communication skills and amiable qualities to be a powerful asset to the MPA Graduate Program.

Tricia has demonstrated excellent leadership by building cultural bridges between Coastal Indigenous Peoples and Plains Indigenous Peoples by co-hosting conferences and events for Phoenixfire. In my experience, Tricia is well known in Indigenous Country as a cultural historian with in-depth knowledge of Indigenous issues, grassroots community organizer, Elder Advisory Leadership Board Member of Phoenixfire and Tribal Planner; with utilizing her leadership to bring more tourism traffic and abundance to her Tribe. Tricia's many accomplishments includes leadership and teamwork in forming the Cultural Museum and Wellness Center for her Tribal community. Tricia has been a keynote speaker at many events of Phoenixfire i.e., Honor Mother Earth and Return of the Buffalo, The Whale People meet the Buffalo People, We are the Sacred Stones-Honoring the Medicine Wheel etc... and we have seen her communication skills and humbleness to the utmost benefit to our organization. Tricia has demonstrated her unique ability to speak on complicated matters to the public in a way that they can fully understand. Tricia's lifetime of work has been to elevate the lives and voices of her Indigenous Nation and to empower, strengthen and restore her community and other Indigenous communities.

Tricia has my highest recommendation, and I cannot imagine a better candidate for admissions to the MPA Graduate Program. In receiving the support of your program and opportunity to grow with her fellow leaders, Tricia will impact and uplift Indigenous Country and beyond. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions regarding her candidacy.

Sincerely,

Valdean Mountain El Assad
Board Chairperson

Cc: Tricia DePoe, file

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