

#### Application Related Information

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Application: Application Not Verified  
Grad Program Applying To: MPA

Iteration Name: 202510\_GR\_G  
Program Name: MPA

#### Recommendation Information

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Recommended By:	David Katner	Recommenders Title:	Professor of Clinical Law, Director, Juvenile Law Clinic
Recommenders Institution:	Tulane Law School	Contact Name:	Niles McDonald
Waive Access to Recommendation Ltrs:	I choose to waive my right to review this recommendation.	Recommendation Waiver Choice:	I choose to waive my right to review this recommendation.
Recommendation Form Submitted:	✓	Recommendation Status:	Received
Received Date:	12/14/2023 10:41 AM	Recommender Assessment:	I recommend this applicant without reservation.
Recommendation Type:	General	Recommender Form:	MPA Letter of Recommendation/Form
Recommendation Entity ID:	1024000112460559	Recommendation Owner:	Josephine Bernier

#### Recommender Form Questions

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How long have you known applicant:	about 7 years	Applicant ability as self-directed learner:	Niles has repeatedly demonstrated leadership skills under my supervision as a student attorney representing children in juvenile court.
Time since last contact with applicant:	3 days ago	Applicant as productive member of group:	He would be an exceptional candidate, and he was consistently an exceptional member of groups handling litigation with actual clients.
Relationship with Applicant:	I was his law school professor	Applicant most significant strengths:	Niles is difficult to categorize. he is an original thinker, he does not follow the herd, he is an innovator. I think he will be among the most impressive folks you consider, as he certainly was in my clinical law program.
Ability to complete rigorous grad program:	Outstanding	Responsibility/reliability:	Outstanding
Communication Skills - Oral:	Excellent	Communication skills - written:	Outstanding
Service Orientation-sensitivity/empathy:	Outstanding	Ability to work independently:	Outstanding
Ability to handle stress:	Excellent	Ability to think critically:	Excellent
Ability to analyze/problem solve:	Outstanding	Ability to think creatively:	Outstanding

Openness to feedback: Outstanding

Potential for leadership: Excellent

Ability to work in a team: Outstanding

Personal/professional  
reflection: Outstanding

#### Description Information

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Description:

Form URL: <https://evergreenstatecollege.radiu>

#### Other Information

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Created Time: 11/28/2023 08:51 PM

Created By: Josephine Bernier

Modified Time: 12/14/2023 10:41 AM

Modified By: Josephine Bernier

**David R. Katner**

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11-28-23

Evergreen State College  
MPA Program  
Lab I 3024 Olympia Campus  
Olympia, Washington

**RE: MPA Candidate, Niles McDonald**

Dear Admissions Officers,

My name is David Katner, a law professor at Tulane Law School in New Orleans. Some years ago, following the devastation of New Orleans by Hurricane Katrina, a young man from Washington State arrived in New Orleans to attend law school at Tulane. Niles McDonald applied to work as my research assistant, and he later applied to my legal clinic where he spent his third year of law school representing adolescents in the New Orleans juvenile court system. Since that time, Mr. McDonald graduated from law school, moved back to his home state, and has engaged in the practice of law. He now seeks to enroll in the Evergreen MPA program, and I am totally supportive of this candidate's application.

Nile elected to move into one of our neighborhoods that had been all but destroyed by the hurricane. He had other choices, but he wanted to be in part of our community that was still struggling to survive an event brought upon us by the failure of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to construct levees in accordance with their own blueprints. Our population had been cut in half by the time Mr. McDonald arrived, so much of the city felt like a ghost town, including the area where he elected to take up residence. I had no other law students who voluntarily moved into that neighborhood, not at that time, and not since that time. Mr. McDonald does not march to the beat of the drummer that his peer law students followed. He tends to cut his own path.

I soon realized the commitment that Mr. McDonald brought to the table. He was focused on the needs of the folks around him, not on his own needs. He had no visible means of transportation other than public transportation which remained pretty dysfunctional years after the storm. His objective was to provide for the needs of others. He came to law school with this goal in mind, and he continues to exemplify the best attributes of what the legal profession should offer (but rarely achieves). This is a man who remained undaunted by the devastation of his neighborhood, or the condition of the city, even though hundreds of thousands of residents had fled the storm and never returned.

I entrusted my research agenda to Mr. McDonald and found him to be as reliable as he was steadfast in his resolution to live in a challenging environment. He would not give up, not even on a community that had become his adopted home. I think that others might ring more bells for a conventional program that seeks the typical grad student, but Mr. McDonald hardly could be described as conventional, and certainly not typical in any way. He sees the world in ways that made me delighted to have selected him as my R.A., but moreso in having selected him to work in my legal clinic. Most of the student attorneys in the clinic program came from middle class families who had limited exposure to the minority population of New Orleans, but that was exactly what Mr. McDonald sought and that is where he elected to live and work. His stories about his neighbors indicated a man who found joy in an area where most of his own law school peers would avoid. And that is perhaps one of the best defining elements of Mr. McDonald. If you think you are seeking candidates who are essentially fearless, who seek to be challenged, who seek out ways to help those in need, then I think you've found that man in Mr. McDonald. His work ethic as my R.A. and in the clinic was exceptional. His problem solving skills were unique. His outlook on life was positive and atypical. I think his analytical skills are demonstrated by his J.D. degree; his persistence is demonstrated by his ability to tolerate me for years; his leadership was demonstrated by his decision to live where no law students would dare to travel, let alone live. This is an amazing young man who will do for your program what he did for mine: make you glad you elected to give him an opportunity to engage and learn. And when it is all over, you will be amazed at how much you have learned and benefitted from him! I would be more than happy to answer any questions you might have about Mr. McDonald, just give me a call: 504-266-4919.

Sincerely,

David R. Katner  
Tulane Law School