

December 29, 2023

To whom it may concern,

My name is Sonya Miles. I am writing to recommend Sonja McGraw for your graduate program.

It is my great pleasure to recommend Sonja McGraw for your graduate program. I met Sonja when I took over senior management of a region of five offices of Adult Protective Services in the surrounding areas in the Puget Sound. One of those offices was in Grays Harbor. The supervisor in that office was dealing with some personal issues and Sonja stepped up to assist her colleagues by answering questions, assisting with caseloads, and writing reports. She stayed positive in an office that had a significant amount of conflict. Due to her natural leadership abilities and skills, she was offered the job of Supervisor of the office. For the next two years, we were dealing with the Covid-19 outbreak. We lost a significant amount of our workforce due to the fear of doing in person investigations. During this time Sonja was able to calm the storm and keep most of her investigators. She is the type of leader people wanted to follow. The pandemic required daily flexibility and called for daily check-ins with the management team. Out of that team, many of them looked up to Sonja due to her ability to rapidly adjust to a quick changing environment and continue to stay positive. Sonja understood the mission of the agency and the potential of lost lives if we did not stay focused.

In addition to Covid-19, the personnel issues continued, and it was Sonja's job as the supervisor to follow up on them. She handled this part of her duties with great dignity and grace. Even during times when there was the need to terminate employees, she was able to navigate it impressively.

The job in Adult Protective Services was to conduct investigations into elder abuse. Each allegation had to be vetted and an investigation plan created based on the allegations. One bad move could cause considerable damage to life or property of a vulnerable person. Sonja was able to provide clear, concise, and direct communication to individuals who were being accused of something significant, to family during some of the most difficult times, and coached employees to do the same.

Sonja would also bring these findings to an internal legal review process and was able to answer questions from a legal team to ensure the investigation was complete and the finding was appropriate. Sonja presented her cases with confidence, knowledge of the investigation and knowledge of the RCW findings.

Sonja has all the necessary skills needed for a graduate program as explained above. She has incredible stamina, communication skills, and has exceptional critical thinking in her strong decision-making skills. She is a natural leader that you can depend on and well educated in trauma informed communication with a diverse population.

This letter is to support Sonja moving into a graduate program which I can absolutely give my full support that she is ready for this significant step in her education goals. I have always observed Sonja to be committed to anything she has agreed or signed up for.

Thank you,

Sonya Miles
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