

Application Related Information

Application:	Application Incomplete	Iteration Name:	202510_GR_G
Grad Program Applying To:	MPA	Program Name:	MPA

Recommendation Information

Recommended By:	Marja Eloheimo, PhD	Recommenders Title:	Faculty
Recommenders Institution:	The Evergreen State College	Contact Name:	Athena Ortega
Waive Access to Recommendation Ltrs:	I do not waive my right to review this recommendation.	Recommendation Waiver Choice:	I do not waive my right to review this recommendation.
Recommendation Form Submitted:	✓	Recommendation Status:	Received
Received Date:	02/01/2024 01:26 PM	Recommender Assessment:	I recommend this applicant.
Recommendation Type:	General	Recommender Form:	MPA Letter of Recommendation/Form
Recommendation Entity ID:	1024000117030686	Recommendation Owner:	Josephine Bernier

Recommender Form Questions

How long have you known applicant:	9 years	Applicant ability as self-directed learner:	Outstanding
Time since last contact with applicant:	one week	Applicant as productive member of group:	Outstanding
Relationship with Applicant:	Teacher/Student	Applicant most significant strengths:	Insightfulness, integrity, dedication, reliability, visual and written communication skills, ability to work in a diverse team, awareness of interdisciplinary connections
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:	Excellent	Potential for leadership:	Outstanding
Ability to work in a team:	Outstanding	Personal/professional reflection:	Excellent

Description Information

Description:	Form URL:	https://evergreenstatecollege.radius.net
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Other Information

Created Time:	01/09/2024 04:28 PM	Created By:	Josephine Bernier
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Modified Time: 02/01/2024 01:26 PM

Modified By: Josephine Bernier

January 30, 2024

Marja Eloheimo, Ph.D.
Letter of Recommendation for Athena Ortega

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of Athena Ortega's desire to pursue Graduate Study. First, I will say that I'm delighted Athena has the desire to continue her educational journey. In my time as Athena's teacher here at Evergreen, I witnessed that Athena has the range of characteristics that will contribute to strong success going forward, both educationally and professionally.

Specifically, Athena was my student in the program "Branching Out: An Ethnobotanical Garden in Community" (Fall 2015-Spring 2016). Working as a project team, this yearlong legacy program had a mission, which was to understand and enhance the ethnobotanical garden at the s'gwi gwi ? altxw "House of Welcome" Longhouse. While this unique program was grounded in community-service learning, topics in several disciplines were woven into the fabric of Athena's work, including the history and scope of ethnobiology, basic field botany, topics in environmental studies, an introduction to community herbalism, basic skills in horticulture, educational garden interpretation, Indigenous studies, and multiple modes of writing and visual communication. Finally, the program required commitment to a meaningful real-world project, cultivated community by nurturing each member's contributions and growth, and acknowledged the broader context of sustainability.

Athena excelled in the program. Her attendance and participation were excellent and her assignments were thoughtfully and thoroughly done. Athena gained exposure to terms, concepts, and practices related to using plants as medicine and carried out studies on five medicinal species. She wrote insightful, thorough, and interesting summaries and responses to the program learning, demonstrating the ability to read and think carefully about issues related to Indigenous People's history and Traditional Ecological Knowledge, and to write well. Athena explored ecological studies related to four habitat types present in the ethnobotanical garden: forests, wetlands, mountains, and South Salish Prairies. For her communication project throughout the year, Athena chose to support development of a garden

website through photographing the garden during fall, winter, and spring seasons. Overall, Athena made strong contributions to the learning community, along with significant strides in strengthening her knowledge, understanding, and skill in the areas described above. She also gained substantial awareness of her personal integrity, stating, "I realized that I'm accountable. I say I will do something and it gets done. I make sure I'm making as much effort as I can give to things I have committed to... I don't have a choice about whether or not I want to care for myself, my environment, and all people as one. It is necessary to keep those relationships healthy for my wellbeing as a human and all of the humans that will come after me." It was a great pleasure to have Athena as part of our learning community.

I have enormous confidence that Athena will continue to exhibit these qualities and will bring valuable contributions to any Graduate Program she feels called to attend. I wholeheartedly support Athena in pursuing Graduate Studies.