

April 1, 2021

Dear Award Selection Committee:

I give my highest recommendation to Sara Sterphone for the Margaret T. Getman Service to Students Award. Sara was the former Student Affairs Manager at the College of Creative Studies (CCS) who made a significant impact on students' UCSB experiences.

Sara was one of the first people you met at CCS and immediately made you feel at home. Whether you bumped into her in the hallway or at a CCS coffee hour, she was always interested in how you were doing and what you were doing. The door to her office was open when she was not in meetings, inviting you to go in and chat about anything. Sara's advising was a resource many students were drawn to because she was so personable.

Because of how genuine Sara was, I never felt like I had to put up a front to her. I would sometimes go to her office in tears, overwhelmed with making decisions and doing what was "right." Something that was unique to Sara was that I never felt ashamed for being vulnerable in front of her; in fact, she always reminded me that I was human. When being advised by her, she was never focused on what was right for my career or future, but rather helping me figure out what was right for me. Whatever I decided, she supported me 100%. Without Sara, it would have taken me much longer, if at all, to learn to make decisions for my own well being and not giving in to external pressures. I know that Sara made a similar impact on my peers as well.

It was clear that Sara cared for all of the students--from the simple act of learning all 400+ students' names to attending our presentations or performances. She was proud of us for taking chances and trying, regardless of the outcome. If you needed help, you knew you could count on Sara. When I decided I needed mental health assistance, she walked with me to CAPS and sat next to me in the lobby as I filled out the paperwork. I remember she had to cancel a lunch date to sit with me until I was seen by a professional, but she did not mind. She just wanted me to be okay. It is acts like these that you never forget and made you know that Sara truly put the students first.

I am only one of the many students who Sara touched the lives of while working at UCSB until her cancer diagnosis in 2020. Sara is truly one of the most deserving individuals for the Margaret T. Getman Service to Students Award for how much she cared and supported each and every student during these pivotal years in our personal and professional development. For myself and numerous others, she made the CCS experience all the more enjoyable and enlightening. It all started when you first entered the CCS building and she would say with a big smile, "Welcome to CCS."

With warmest regards,



Emily Lopez
CCS Mathematics Student Class of 2022