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**RE: Endorsement of Sara Sterphone for the Getman Service to Students Award**

To Whom It May Concern,

I am honored and humbled to endorse the nomination of Sara Sterphone for the Getman Service to Students Award. I worked closely with Sara in her capacity as Student Adviser in the College of Creative Studies (CCS). She transitioned to a position in the Registrar's Office at the end of 2019 as a move toward having an even larger impact on some of the challenges facing students and the campus as a whole.

My closest interactions with Sara have been through her role as Student Adviser in CCS for 5 plus years, as a faculty member in the Biology major and then for 2 years as Interim Dean. I have worked with many Student Advisers over the years and Sara is among the best of the best. I say this because I have rarely seen anyone who has the qualities of dedication and caring coupled with sheer competence. In CCS, the Student Adviser sees students daily. Their needs range from simple course advice to serious assistance with personal problems. She routinely, not just occasionally, would go out of her way to check up on a student. Sara also worked effectively with faculty, who teach and advise these same students. Sara has a good way with students, and with faculty – respectful and professional, but at the same time, approachable and with a good sense of humor. I think just about every one of the nearly 400 students in CCS knows Sara and amongst the faculty, everyone knew to “ask Sara” if they had a question about academic advising or needed advice in general. When we had all-college events, including Commencement, and Sara was introduced, the student applause brought down the house in appreciation.

When she switched positions, all of us still kept in touch with and consulted her. Students still stay in touch with and seek out Sara, and I know she still cares about them as well. Her interactions with students went well beyond academic advising to true mentoring and then after students graduated, to real friendship. Prior to the pandemic, many of my own advisees would start our conversations with “I saw Sara yesterday!” She has followed up with me on a few students who were struggling and even during the pandemic, and while fighting her own, very serious medical battle, Sara continues to be focused on UCSB students. Now students open our conversations with “How is Sara doing?”

I frequently worked with Sara to review student petitions or develop academic plans. This gave me great insight into how she viewed students and how to best enrich their UCSB experience. She *always* did her homework and quickly brought me up to speed. She is fair and comes from a point of view that identifies and respects individual students, one of her core values. She was

proactive and took on several projects to help improve the close CCS faculty academic advising as well. For example, she attended our Fall Faculty Retreat and worked with CCS faculty to develop a plan for staying abreast of various GE requirements and courses across the diverse majors. She sees a need, then fills that need – and does it very, very well, and always from a “students first” perspective.

Sara went above and beyond her required roles in advising to assist students in any way possible. She coordinated Admissions and student recruitment (including regional receptions), student events, worked with the CCS student council and importantly, she worked exceptionally hard to bring resources and training into the college for student and faculty development. The latter was critical for helping the faculty and staff better serve the needs of the students. Sara listens and discerns those students’ needs. For example, when she noticed that many students were struggling with stress and anxiety, she immediately worked with CAPS to set up informal meetings during the weekly student coffee hour to determine how to help navigate challenges and identify students who required assistance. She brought in a speaker from the campus Resource Center for Sexual and Gender Identity to provide Safe Zone training for faculty when she realized that many faculty were asking her questions about this. Because she herself takes advantage of campus training opportunities, Sara is well connected and aware of the resources available to students, faculty and staff. I was also particularly impressed with her ability to train a new junior adviser and when she transitioning to her new position in the Registrar’s Office, she trained the new senior student adviser as well.

Sara is truly a person who does such excellent work that those around her can’t help but be excellent as well. She pulls everyone up and, particularly in her position, keeps everyone focused on the students. She is a student advocate, a seeker of inclusion and equity for students, and in all ways, has approached her position as one of humble service with the goal of student success.

Thank you for considering Sara Sterphone for this award. She is incredibly deserving of our recognition for all she has done for students.

Kind Regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathleen R. Foltz". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned to the right of the typed name "Kathy Foltz".

Kathy Foltz