December 1, 2020

Dear Selection Committee:

I am writing to express my highest recommendation of Destiny Hayes for the Foundation for the Advancement of Health Education (FAHE) Dr. Becky J. Smith Scholarship. I have been fortunate to work with Destiny both as a professor and as part of a university-community partnership focused on reproductive justice work. I am impressed by Destiny’s drive, her passionate commitment to centering equity and social justice within health education, and her leadership skills.

Destiny is a pragmatic and critical thinker. She is able to glide between the theoretical and practical elements of our field and is especially adept at thinking about how overarching issues (e.g. reproductive justice) have a direct effect on community outcomes (e.g. infant mortality) *and* how community experiences connect to and illuminate overarching structural issues. This ability to move back and forth between the general and the specific makes Destiny unique among her peers. It also contributes to the way she consistently engages equity and social justice within her incisive, well-reasoned ideas and strategies.

Destiny’s aptitude, commitment, and unique perspectives have made her an important member and cocreator in our reproductive justice partnership which she has woven into her disciplinary honors work. This group includes community activists, university faculty, graduate students, and now, with Destiny, undergraduate students as well. Destiny was integral in planning and orchestrating our first event, the NC Reproductive Justice & Health Policy Advocacy Panel. In addition, she also created and analyzed an evaluation of the panel and disseminated the results to our partnership. In this way Destiny is not only participating in but also helping to lead our work. We all immensely value her presence in the reproductive justice partnership and in our department and University.

As I read about Dr. Smith, I was struck by the sense that Destiny’s contributions within public health education reflect and take up the call of Dr. Smith’s work. Destiny is both committed to responsive public health education and a burgeoning change-maker in the field. Destiny has my enthusiastic support. Please feel free to contact me for any additional information.

Sincerely,



Meredith R. Gringle, PhD, MPH

Director of Online Curricula