

Duluth Campus

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To: Dr. Becky J. Smith Scholarship Committee

From: Dr. H. Mitzi Doane
Professor of Public Health
Licensed Psychologist
Dean emerita

Re: Nomination for Amy Harris

Seldom does a professor come across such an outstanding student, however Amy Harris is such a student. Amy will be a senior next year and she is a double major in Public Health and Biology. She will graduate in the spring of 2022. Her dream is to go to medical school upon graduation and to seek not only an MD but a MPH as well. Given her current track record, I have no doubt that she will succeed. Amy is a young woman with grit, determination and a work ethic that is almost boundless.

Let me just walk you through her resume. Her current GPA is 3.56. Please bear in mind that she is a double major in two very demanding majors. In addition, she works over 20 hours a week at a hospital as an emergency room technician and prior to that as a receptionist/scheduler. Obviously she made an impression at the hospital to be given more responsibility.

In the summer of 2019, she was selected to be a research assistant by the Minneapolis Heart Institute. She was responsible for taking the vital signs and collecting consent forms from participants in the study. This also gave her the opportunity to work closely with cardiologists and nurses who specialize in cardiac care.

She is a research assistant for Dr. Jessica Hanson who has a national grant to study the effects of fetuses exposed to alcohol and fetal alcohol syndrome

among American Indian and Alaskan native populations. She is responsible for data collection and data mining. Her personal goal as a research assistant is to educate others regarding the health disparities and gaps in minority communities.

Amy has a genuine passion for helping and empowering others. Her plan, at present, is after completing her MD and MPH, she hopes to return to Duluth and work at one of the hospitals as a doctor but to continue to work to minimize the health disparities in treatment and access in the American Indian community. I truly can envision this happening.

This past summer as part of her internship credits, she was the public health communication assistant under the directions of Drs. Nowak and Hanson. She worked closely with the entire public health faculty to revise the program's website creating additional content directed at both current and prospective students. She also developed a blog about our program and she produced a video for new parents with students in our program. I encourage you to check out the Facebook page she developed and she still is responsible, as the SOPHE collegiate champion, for posting on the site <https://www.facebook.com/UMDPUBLICHEALTH/>.

To say that Amy is active in service would be an injustice. This young woman wears many hats. Throughout her life, she has striven to be a leader. As a sophomore, she was elected the president of the UMD Figure Skating Team. In that position she organized and scheduled all figure skating practices, oversaw the team website and social media pages, registered the team for competitions and assisted her teammates with any of their needs while simultaneously competing as a team member.

Outside of athletics, she is an academic leader. She has served as a biology tutor since she was a sophomore. She was recently nominated into the Mortar Board National Honor Society (this society recognizes students for outstanding academic achievement, service, and leadership).

This past year she was selected by a vote of the Public Health faculty to be our SOPHE (Society of Public Health Education) collegiate champion. This is a two year commitment. In this capacity she acts as the liaison between the national organization and UMD. It requires a great deal of work. Each semester the champion chooses a health topic to promote throughout the campus. Since the SOPHE Champion is a two year commitment, last fall she put together a National Arts in Health Panel that was not only attended by UMD students and faculty but also SOPHE members nationally who could earn CEU credits. Last

spring, she focused on healthy eating and planned a number of online activities including a nutrition panel, cooking instruction, and a presentation by a dietitian. This fall the Sophe champions are focusing on Arts in Health, the relationship between the arts and good health. They are sponsoring a student art contest as well as highlighting the work of Professor Tornabene. As the collegiate champion, she is also responsible for posting resources on the programs social media sites which include Instagram, twitter, and Facebook.

She is also the marketing and events coordinator for UMD's Pre-Med Club. She has organized two highly successful blood drives and planned a number of club events.

She serves on the UMD Student Behavior Committee. Being on this committee requires numerous hours of training (and I should know as I am on it as well), when chosen to be on a panel, she is charged with making ethical and unbiased decisions when students have violated UMD's Code of Conduct.

I have yet to mention her numerous volunteer positions which range from volunteering at St. Luke's Hospital to teaching figure skating to underprivileged youth.

Normally, I do not write so much but Amy's contributions made it impossible not to do so. I know the selection for this scholarship is rigorous and the decisions are hard to make. I can assure you that Amy Harris is a student truly worthy of the honor. To put it simply, she has worked her butt off and she does so with a smile and a can do attitude. As I read about the many accomplishments of Dr. Smith, I can assure you that Amy is cut from the same strip of steel.