

Graduate Program

Master of Public Health (Campus)

Master of Public Health (Online)

Undergraduate Programs

Public Health

Recreation

November 6, 2021

Foundation for the Advancement of Health Education  
Dr. Mary K . Beyrer Graduate Student Scholarship**Re: Letter of Recommendation for Elizabeth Riggall**

Awards Committee,

It is my great pleasure to provide this letter of recommendation for Elizabeth Riggall for the Dr. Mary K. Beyrer Graduate Student Scholarship. Ms. Riggall was a student in the introductory course of the online Master of Public Health (MPH) program at San Jose' State University (SJSU) which I taught this last August. When asked for my support in her application for the Beyrer Scholarship I had no hesitation due to her prior commitment to the Health Education (HE) profession, as well as to the health of children and rural communities. Her clear professional interests and creative methods speak to her commitment, and receipt of this scholarship will represent a valuable investment in our profession.

Ms. Riggall began the online MPH at SJSU this past August and is representative of the professionals we had in mind when developing the program more than a decade ago. Our program is designed for professionals who have demonstrated their commitment to HE and who are looking to expand their knowledge and skillset for future work in the profession. Her efforts in rural Northern California, developing and implementing programs to increase the health literacy of youth through health education on sexually transmitted diseases and infections, addressing food insecurity, as well as social isolation among seniors, have increased access to services, health education, and increased community capacity. All of her efforts have been grounded in the core values of equity and social justice which are at the heart of our program, the HE profession, and the Beyrer scholarship.

Our program is somewhat unique among online MPH programs being fully synchronous, something we were intentional to create to provide online students with the same valuable interactions that asynchronous and hybrid programs cannot do. This requires a strong commitment to weekly participation and engagement, and an ability to produce professional work during accelerated courses of five to seven weeks. Ms. Riggall engaged fully during PH200, the Health Professional, which is the introductory

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course. She was active in every session, providing her insights and perspectives during general sessions as well as during breakout sessions. The major product in this course is an issue in context analysis and Ms. Riggall continued her focus on rural communities with a thoughtful and professional written analysis of the effects on child health from the wildfire smoke that has been an omnipresent feature of summer and fall in California in recent years. She utilized current data to define the problem in the social and environmental contexts and proposed actions at key levels of the Spectrum of Prevention. This first course is a challenge for many students as they acclimate to the demands of the program and the expectations of graduate-level work, but Ms. Riggall approached the course with the rigor that her experience and resume' suggest, easily earning an "A" for her efforts. She has finished the second course in our program and has a GPA of 3.72, and I look forward to teaching her again in January for PH272, Health Promotion Program Planning and Evaluation, during which I expect her to continue to showcase her knowledge and skills, while further increasing her skills in this core component of health education and health promotion.

I have also had the opportunity to communicate with Ms. Riggall since her first class and have been impressed by her steadfast commitment to our profession and its core values. Her commitment to the health of people in rural areas, including children and young adults, align with the spirit of the Dr. Mary K. Beyrer Graduate Student Scholarship and the Foundation for the Advancement of Health Education. I know investing in her education will not only benefit her but also the communities in which she works and as such give my highest recommendation for her for this scholarship. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



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