

Date: November 5, 2021  
To: Foundation for the Advancement of Health Education  
Reference: Megan Williams

It is with great pleasure that I recommend Megan Williams for the Dr. Mary K. Beyrer Graduate Student Scholarship. I have known Megan since we admitted her into our doctoral program in 2020, and I have gotten to know her well in my role as sponsor for the Delta Xi Chapter of Eta Sigma Gamma (ESG) and its sister organization, Hands in Health (HIH). I also have had the pleasure of having her as a student in one of our doctoral level seminars.

Megan has impressed me as an ambitious young scholar with outstanding leadership potential. Despite the challenges a doctoral program poses, she eagerly took on the role of secretary – and research committee co-chair -- for ESG and HIH during the 2021-2022 academic year. As the secretary of these organizations, she has provided outstanding support to the executive committee and general body through professional record keeping and communications. As the co-chair of the research committee, she is leading a project studying the university's tobacco policy. With little guidance, she and her team modified a web-based survey, successfully obtained IRB approval for the study, and are currently collecting data. What impresses me the most about Megan is the outstanding mentorship she provides to undergraduate students helping with this and other projects.

Megan has fully engaged in and supported all other chapter activities including, but not limited to, recruiting, fundraising, and on-campus sexual health promotion. She has consistently met her leadership obligations and encourages other members by facilitating group discussion and effectively engaging others in the decision-making process. She has met all my high expectations of chapter leaders, and she has set an example of leadership and accountability for other graduate and undergraduate students. Because of her enthusiasm, contributions to the chapter, and outstanding leadership, she earned our chapter's Leadership Award for two consecutive semesters.

Megan's outstanding service to our local ESG chapter and HIH is complemented by her service to professional organizations. Megan doesn't just belong to professional associations or attend their meetings, she is an active participant. Already in her early career, she has served as an abstract reviewer for the Society for Public Health Education (SOPHE) and the American Public Health Association (APHA). She moderated a poster session for the Student Assembly at APHA this year. Megan has presented at both SOPHE and at APHA; and not only did she participate in SOPHE's 2021 Health Edu-Thon (case study competition), she and her team secured first place in the graduate competition!

Academically, Megan exceeds expectations on all levels. She has maintained an exceptional GPA while building her impressive curriculum vitae. Early in her academic career, she already has three peer-reviewed presentations and two manuscripts in progress. Being an outstanding instructor, she has taught multiple health-related courses, including Foundations of Health Education and Promotion, Introduction to Public Health, Personal Health, Stress Management, and Sexuality and Society. She has been

recognized for her accomplishments with multiple academic awards and scholarships. Because she teaches some of our undergraduate courses, Megan has been a crucial piece of ESG's and HH's recruiting efforts. She actively touts the benefits of participating in these organizations, and many students join because of Megan's enthusiasm.

On a more personal level, Megan brings the maturity, passion, and social skills needed to collaborate on projects and succeed in health education and promotion. She is a kind person who gets along well with others. Her dependability and enthusiasm for the profession have enabled her to work effectively with other faculty and students in our department.

In sum, I have no doubt that Megan will excel as a scholar in the field of health education and promotion. I expect her to make many contributions during her career to advance the health of society. I highly recommend Megan Williams for the Dr. Mary K. Beyrer Graduate Student Scholarship.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jen Nickelson".

Jen Nickelson, PhD, RD, MCHES®  
Associate Professor  
jnickelson@ches.ua.edu