

April 21, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my great pleasure to provide this letter of recommendation on behalf of Melissa Johnson. I have known Melissa since August, 2018, when she enrolled as a graduate student at Butler University in order to pursue a Master's Degree in Instrumental Conducting. In addition to my work with Melissa as her primary conducting instructor, she has also played oboe in the wind ensemble I conduct, and was a student in a course I teach on the History and Literature of the Wind Band. Additionally, throughout her two years at Butler, Melissa has served as the Graduate Assistant for our Athletic Bands, and while I didn't have direct supervisory responsibility for her in that role, I did have the occasion to observe much of her work. In all of these capacities, Melissa has distinguished herself the kind of outstanding musician, conductor, student, and leader who is destined for a great career as a music educator.

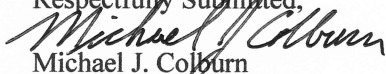
One of the first things that impressed me about Melissa is her quiet and understated determination to grow and learn. When she arrived at Butler, she demonstrated tremendous potential, but didn't have a wealth of experience conducting university-level musicians in the more advanced repertoire for wind band. Rather than being intimidated by this fact, Melissa threw herself into the process of expanding her score study abilities, developing appropriate rehearsal techniques, adding to her arsenal of conducting gestures, and improving her presence and effectiveness on the podium. The results of her efforts are nothing short of astounding, and I can honestly report that I have never had a student who has demonstrated greater growth as a conductor and musician during my time as a university professor.

Her determination to grow as a conductor is mirrored in other aspects of her development while at Butler. A quick perusal of her transcript will reveal her dedication as a student, evident in her 4.0 GPA. As a student in my class on the History and Literature of the Wind Band, she distinguished herself through her contributions to class discussions, impeccable preparation for every assignment and test, and outstanding writing abilities. She has taken advantage of every opportunity to grow and improve as a musician, including a unique chance to work with acclaimed conductor Michael Francis, who led a workshop for Butler student conductors on Edward Elgar's cantata "The Dreams of Gerontius" in which Melissa demonstrated notable aplomb and poise. Melissa's growth as a performer on the oboe during her time at Butler also deserves mention, especially because her advancements on the instrument led to her appointment as principal oboe of the wind ensemble for her second year.

One of Melissa's most valuable and notable qualities is her sense of responsibility. Whether it is a class assignment, preparation for a rehearsal, or her duties as the Athletic Band Graduate Assistant, Melissa has proven to be indefatigable in her determination to attend to every detail and ensure that her responsibilities are met. One of the most vivid examples of this occurred in the Fall semester of 2019, when she helped to coordinate a reunion of Athletic Band alumni who returned to campus to honor the centennial of bands at Butler. Melissa was a key player in coordinating the myriad details involved in this event, and the success of the reunion was due in no small part to her impeccable planning and organization.

Last, but certainly not least, is the pleasantness of Melissa's personality. Her kind, patient, and nurturing temperament brings out the best in student musicians of any age level, and she is well liked and admired by everyone with whom she works, students and teachers alike. I am confident that she would a positive and effective presence on any faculty, and offer my strongest and most enthusiastic endorsement. It would be my pleasure to speak further about Melissa Johnson's many fine qualities, and to answer any further questions you might have about her qualifications.

Respectfully Submitted,



Michael J. Colburn

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