

AQUINAS ACADEMY

2308 West Hardies Road, Gibsonia, PA 15044 (724) 444-0722

March 10, 2019

Dear Scholarship Committee,

It is my pleasure to write a recommendation letter on behalf of Mary Bence. I have had the privilege of being Mary's teacher and faculty advisor over the past four years. She has many talents and attributes, but there are three that stand out to me: Her love of the arts, her love of learning for its own sake, and her strong leadership abilities.

When Mary was elected as the Fine Arts Prefect at our school, I knew the student body had made the correct choice. I direct the plays at Aquinas and have seen her gifts as an actor, singer, dancer, and choreographer in several productions over the years. I remember asking her in her eighth grade year, if she would be interested in helping with the choreography of our production of *Around the World in Eighty Days*. She did far more than help. Her ability to manage large groups of middle school students and create some beautiful choreography made me realize I had found a young woman with great maturity and leadership skills. She went on to choreograph two plays in high school. Her work on *Guys and Dolls* was particularly noteworthy. She also was one of the editors and publisher of our school's literary magazine, *Making It Up*. Again her love of writing and the visual arts, as well as her strong leadership abilities was on display again. I realize, as I write this, that this letter would be far too long if I recounted all of her contributions to student life at our school. The arts however are not the only area in which Mary excels.

Mary is a tremendous student. All of what I have described above was accomplished while attending to a challenging academic workload. She has taken five AP classes in her high school career and carries a 4.13. The amazing thing about Mary is that none of this is resume padding. She has a love of learning across the disciplines that I have rarely seen in a student. I have taught her in both history and religion in high school. She contributes regularly in class, but more importantly she earnestly desires to understand other students' perspectives. She is open minded in the best sense of that term. She has strong positions on issues, but never undermines those who disagree with her. She possesses a tremendous work ethic and would be a great addition to any college level classroom.

This letter can only skim the surface. Mary is co-editor of our school newspaper, has worked as a student mentor for middle school students, and has participated in countless service projects for *Leaders Now International*. She has been a great gift to our school community and I know from my conversations with her that she looks forward to growing even more as a young woman as she enters her college years. I recommend Mary Bence unreservedly for this scholarship.

Sincerely,

Michael V. Flynn
High School Director