To Whom It May Concern:

I write this letter of recommendation on behalf of Elaine (Lanie) McLaughlin, a student in my senior English class this year.

Lanie is a very special girl, a true leader in my class. Not only is she intelligent, but she seeks to help others to be engaged in class and to deepen their thinking. Not only does she ask terrific questions and make thoughtful connections between class content and the real world, I can always count on Lanie to participate in class and to take the lead in group assignments. Though she has had her share of struggles with a concussion, she never uses it as an excuse to slack off or have a bad attitude. I’m often amazed at how she overcomes challenges. She takes extra measures to be sure she does her work punctually, effectively, and impressively. She recently wrote an essay for my class that had me laughing out loud. Her personality is contagious and optimistic, and I see each day the positive effect she has on everyone around her.

This young woman extends her efforts beyond the classroom as well. She went to North Carolina on a mission trip to help parents who can’t afford child care during the summer to watch their children and spend time with them. She also spent time with seniors who were unable to pay for a senior living center, or didn’t have family willing to see them.  Not only did she give them the gift of conversation, she fed them and did everything she could to brighten their days. When Hurricane Harvey hit Houston, Texas, Lanie volunteered right away and went down South to help rebuild affected areas. She constructed homes, hung drywall, painted walls, and did everything she could to help many families get back on their feet. For the past three springs, she has volunteered with Girls on the Run at Poff, and she also shares her soccer skills by coaching 3-6 year-olds.

It's hard for me to imagine any young person more deserving of this award, so I give Lanie my highest recommendation.

Sincerely,

Savina Cupps

English Teacher at Hampton High School