

March 4, 2020

To whom it may concern,

It is with great pleasure that I introduce you to Beatrix Stickney and give her my highest endorsement. Beatrix (I know her as Bea) is a gentle young lady, an introvert at heart, yet courageous enough to step outside her comfort zone. Most recently she has demonstrated this by accepting the role as the leader of our School's Catholic Faith Club where our students discuss topics of interest regarding how to live their faith while still being part of a culture that is contrary to Catholic beliefs. As a strong person of faith, Bea opens the meeting by introducing a topic and being the first to share her experience with it. She has also guided the process of designing a shirt which the members can wear to open conversation about the faith with others who see it. She collaborated not just with the members of the club, but also with other students in the high school who were not interested in being a part of the club. In this way she was able to open conversation with that student.

Another leadership role she has held came about because of her exceptional sewing ability. Beginning her freshman year, Bea offered her talents to assist with costume design for the School Musicals. In the three years she has been involved with this, our little school of about 150 students has been nominated for "Best Costumes" for the Gene Kelly Award for Excellence in High School Musical Theatre. Her freshman year they won! And, Bea was chosen as the representative to accept the award on behalf of the costume department. The event was played out again her sophomore year when Saint Joseph High School won this prestigious award a second time!

Not only has she shared her talents with the cast of our musicals, she has shared them with her classmates. Freshman year she made her own semi-formal dress. Sophomore year she generously made another girl's semi-formal dress and she also designed and made her own. Last year she upped the ante and designed and sewed her own formal prom gown. Each of those pieces mentioned were lovely and unique. They were elegant and modest in a way that allowed the beauty of the wearer to be the focal point of the outfit. Most recently, Bea showed her initiative and care beyond herself and her immediate school interests. She has shown her commitment towards her community: She sewed a lovely quilt to help with a fundraising event to assist a classmate who has cancer. She donated it for the silent auction and is sure to bring in a nice amount of money to help this student and his family meet the rising costs of his treatment.

I would be remiss if I did not share that Bea is the epitome of integrity: She can be counted on to know what the right thing to do is. And, she is sure enough in herself to do it. She does not compromise herself or anyone else. She can be counted on to complete a task to the best of her ability. In every aspect of the word, she is honorable. She is discreet when appropriate and she encourages others to do the same.

It is rare that I meet a student who impresses me the way Bea does. She has a way about her that makes others feel that life is properly in balance: She can look at a person and innately know who that person has the ability to be. I saw her peers experience this when I had her for Sophomore Religion. Her exceptional ability to pinpoint the heart of the matter was highly regarded. During discussions, the students would often look to her for additional comments. One day, the entire class spontaneously began applauding her. And, she hadn't even said a word yet! It was a weirdly odd celebration of her virtue.

I am sure you are aware of her excellent transcript. Bea's grades are top notch. She has applied to the Schreyer Scholars Honors College program at Penn State.

I would like to share one final story that characterizes Bea: She makes people desire goodness, to want to become better individuals. She makes them feel like they can be more than they are. I know this because not only have I witnessed this through my students, but she also has this effect on me. As I stated in the beginning of this letter, she is one of those rare people who make a profoundly good and lasting impression on others. This past summer I saw Bea's mother at the Butler County Farm Show. Alone. I spoke to her and specifically asked about whether Bea was entering any of their sewing contests. She was. She was at that moment in another building entering her things. (And she won 1st place on all her entries.) Not more than 15 minutes later, Bea appeared at my side just to greet me. Her mother had informed her that I was standing in line across the way and Bea chose to come support and encourage me. In over 20 years of teaching no other students have ever gone out of their way like that to speak to me!

Bea is an excellent choice for the Outstanding Young Citizen Award. She meets all the qualifications of exemplary character, leadership, being involved in her community, and excellent scholarship. She is a super person who is destined to make a difference in the world.

If you have any questions or need clarification on anything about her, I am happy to share more about her. Please feel free to email me at jbrown@saintjosephhs.com or call Saint Joseph High School at 724-224-5552 room 205. Thank you for allowing me to tell you about Beatrix Stickney.

Cordially Yours,

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