

October 26, 2015

School of Education
Department of Teaching and Learning
Oliver Hall, Room 3094
1015 West Main Street
P.O. Box 842020
Richmond, VA 23284-2020

Dr. Diana Yesbeck
Chair, Search Committee
Interim Chair, Education Department
Randolph-Macon College

Dear Dr. Yesbeck:

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of reference for Amber Peacock, who is applying for a tenure track position in Education at Randolph-Macon College for the 2016-2017 academic year. I am an associate professor of reading at Virginia Commonwealth University (VCU) and advised Amber throughout her doctoral program.

I can say without qualification that Amber is one of the strongest students we have graduated from our program. She is exceptionally focused and a quick study. Her identity as a teacher (and special educator) is in-her-bones deep. She is a teacher's teacher and has a fierce a passion for developing new teachers just as she does for teaching children. I use Amber as a poster-child for all my new advisees. Her brilliant externship set the bar for our program, in terms of the ambitious scope of the project, the ideal way it reflected core learning from the doctoral program, and the doors it opened up for Amber professionally. (I will return to her externship below.)

Amber is perfectly suited to the position you have advertised. In addition to having excellent skills as a researcher, her research interests are fixed on the scholarship of *teaching*. Thus she is at-home with thorny issues of value-added measurement, the role of the practicum, the supervision of interns, the subtle (and not-so-subtle) ways the administration of schooling impacts the quality of teaching and learning, and the realities of administering programs in today's world. Further, Amber has extensive experience as a special education teacher—both in K-12 settings and in the academy.

As you may know, in her externship at your College, Amber developed a new special education track that was approved by the Virginia Department of Education in 2014. The externship resulted in the development of four new classes (EDUC 234 Issues in Special Education, EDUC 235 Characteristics of Exceptional Learners, EDUC236 Fieldwork for Characteristics for Exceptional Learners, and EDUC 357 Principles and Methods in Special Education) and a full-time special education teaching block completed during the spring semester of the candidate's senior year, leading to a Virginia teaching license in Special Education: General Curriculum K-12.

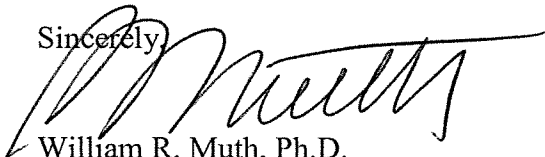
After the program was approved, Randolph-Macon hired Amber as a visiting instructor to teach the program that she developed. I understand that this spring, she will supervise the student

teaching of her first cohort of three special education preservice teachers and a second cohort is preparing to student teach in the spring of 2017.

I reiterate an earlier point: Amber is uncannily well matched to the position you are trying to fill. She is a seasoned teacher with an intense passion for teaching; a teacher's teacher who loves to mentor and develop future teachers; a savvy administrator who knows how to protect and nurture classroom instruction and effect change in the real world; a pioneer who created a special education track in higher education before completing her doctorate; and, above all, a caring, compassionate, bright, talented and highly energetic individual who can move mountains and hearts.

For these reasons I urge you to give Amber every consideration, and wish you continued success with your growing and exemplary program. Thank you for your attention to this letter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. Muth', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

William R. Muth, Ph.D.
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