



ALMA COLLEGE

April 29, 2016

Re: Letter of recommendation for Ms. Mary Harwood

To Whom It May Concern,

It is my pleasure to write a letter of recommendation for Mary Harwood. Mary was a student in many of my elementary and early childhood classes at Alma College. I also served as her academic advisor and field supervisor during her early childhood student teaching experience.

Mary is well trained for a position working with children and families. She had 180 hours of successful placements in early childhood and elementary classrooms prior to doing a successful 7-week early childhood student teaching experience, and then a successful 14-week elementary student teaching experience. This does not include the hours she has volunteered her time working with children and families outside of her time at Alma College.

Mary did her Early Childhood student teaching in a rural childcare program, specifically in the toddler room. It was during this experience that I saw Mary's thorough understanding of the growth and development of young children. She prepared lessons that were both developmentally appropriate and exciting for toddlers, yet she always kept in mind that children this age may or may not choose to participate or cooperate. She chose appropriate toys and materials that would engage the children and meet the needs of all of the developmental ages and stages of the children. Mary was especially able to maintain patience and perseverance when planning and executing activities for the toddlers. She created a warm and caring atmosphere for the children. They came to love her and depend on her. Mary was able to interact and communicate with parents successfully. She worked very closely with the lead teacher to form a respectful co-teaching situation, and was always respectful and positive with all of the other staff members in the program.

The early childhood courses Mary took at Alma College included specific courses on child development as well as courses on working with families and communities in early childhood settings. Thus, I believe that with Mary's extensive experience in elementary classrooms, in early childhood programs, and with her comprehensive coursework, she has the solid background needed to be successful in a Child Life position. Mary is a calm, patient, even-keeled person. These personal characteristics will support her success in highly stressful situations such as those found in trauma and medical settings. She is a staunch advocate for children and families and will continue to be as this is her passion.

I highly recommend Mary Harwood for a practicum as a Child Life Specialist. She is a strong candidate and will be a pleasure to work with. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or you would like to discuss Mary's strengths and abilities further.

Sincerely,

Dr. Peggy Thelen
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Director of Early Childhood Education
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