



To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to write on behalf of Naomi Yamawaki Taylor. Naomi has been my student as a member of the Heinz Chapel Choir since she arrived at the University of Pittsburgh in August 2022. During that time, she has contributed her skill and talent in marketing and media to the choir, and the group's public profile has benefited enormously from her creative vision, exceptional work ethic, and generous collaborative spirit.

After navigating a rigorous audition process to join the ensemble, Naomi has displayed a consistent commitment to and enthusiasm for the choir's work and music-making. At every rehearsal, she demonstrates the standard for engagement and dedication. Her experiences as a musician, particularly in ensemble settings, have provided a window to Naomi's self-discipline, capacity for independence as well as for cooperative engagement, ability to thrive within a structured environment, and her aptitude for creativity. It is clear that these characteristics extend beyond her musical accomplishments.

During her first year of membership, Naomi volunteered to design, film, and produce a series of short member interviews for a crowdsourced fundraising campaign in support of the choir's international tour. The resulting “Tuesday Talks” videos have a playful, natural feel and unified aesthetic that both elevated the group's fundraising efforts and shared the students' perspectives on aspects of the choir and upcoming tour. On the strength of this creative effort and Naomi's warm personality, the choir members elected her to serve on the ensemble's executive board as the group's public relations chair for the following academic year. She subsequently ran unopposed to return to the position for a second term during her senior year.

Throughout the years that Naomi has contributed her work in film and media to the choir, I've been consistently impressed with the evolution of her artistic vision and technical execution. Her projects have primarily supported the choir's efforts in recruiting new members, fundraising for a variety of initiatives, and promoting upcoming performances within the university community and the broader geographic region. Although these needs recur annually, Naomi's work has been anything but formulaic.

The recruiting campaigns Naomi built, primarily for engagement by the undergraduate student community, retained the candid and personal feel of her “Tuesday Talks” series. Although the social media posts included a short video clip of each choir officer sharing a memory or insight, they were primarily constructed with imaginatively edited photos contributed by the subjects; the resulting collages thoroughly engage the viewer. The profiles also featured the officers' answers to questions Naomi crafted to reveal their personalities, simultaneously demonstrating her understanding of the college student experience, the social zeitgeist, and a mastery of design possibilities within the Instagram platform.

During the choir's tour to the United Kingdom in May 2023, Naomi took the initiative to arrange the loan of high-quality audio recording equipment from the university in order to capture the group's performances in a variety of venues as we traveled. In addition to performing with the choir at each concert, she managed equipment placement in unobtrusive but sonically desirable

locations. Upon our return, she elevated the iPhone video footage captured on tour by syncing the audio content she had collected, producing beautiful retrospective short films. The following year, lacking video footage of that season's local performances, she created slideshows of concert photos artistically paired with brief audio clips of the choir that illuminated and expanded on the meaning of the music. In each of these instances, Naomi demonstrated a willingness to go beyond expectations, a clear understanding of the project objective, and a commitment to producing an exceptional and eloquent product.

I am consistently appreciative of Naomi's gifts of communication, flexibility, and collaboration. She is acutely aware of the potential impact of her work and approaches each project with positivity and an openness to evolving the concept or implementation as necessary. She embraces feedback, meeting it with quick and insightful responses. Her emotional maturity, technical ability, and creative insight belie her years. I am certain that Naomi Yamawaki Taylor will have a remarkable career however she applies her extraordinary talent and skills. She has my highest recommendation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Susan Rice", written in a cursive style.

Susan L. Rice, D.M.A.  
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