

Application Related Information

Application: Application Verified
Grad Program Applying To: MES

Iteration Name: 202410_GR_G
Program Name: MES

Recommendation Information

Recommended By: Zoe Loutos
Recommenders Institution: Seattle Public Utilities
Waive Access to Recommendation Ltrs: I choose to waive my right to review this recommendation.
Recommendation Form Submitted: ✓

Recommenders Title: Restoration Ecologist
Contact Name: Xitlali Herrera
Recommendation Waiver Choice:
Recommendation Status: Received

Received Date: 12/07/2022 12:19 PM
Recommendation Type: General
Recommendation Entity ID: 1024000108580964

Recommender Assessment: I recommend this applicant.
Recommender Form: Letter of Recommendation
Recommendation Owner: Josephine Bernier

Recommender Form Questions

How long have you known applicant:	Applicant ability as self-directed learner:
Time since last contact with applicant:	Applicant as productive member of group:
Relationship with Applicant:	Applicant most significant strengths:
Ability to complete rigorous grad program:	Responsibility/reliability:
Communication Skills - Oral:	Communication skills - written:
Service Orientation-sensitivity/empathy:	Ability to work independently:
Ability to handle stress:	Ability to think critically:
Ability to analyze/problem solve:	Ability to think creatively:
Openness to feedback:	Potential for leadership:
Ability to work in a team:	Personal/professional reflection:

Description Information

Description:

Form URL: <https://evergreenstatecollege.radiu>

Other Information

Created Time: 12/03/2022 07:04 PM
Modified Time: 12/07/2022 12:19 PM

Created By: Josephine Bernier
Modified By: Josephine Bernier

December 7th, 2022

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Re: Letter of Recommendation for Xitlali Herrera

Dear Averi Azar,

I first met Xitlali when I hired her to serve on my Washington Conservation Corps (WCC) crew and we have maintained frequent contact since. Xitlali joined WCC as an AmeriCorps member for an 11-month term, October 2021 to September 2022. I was Xitlali's direct supervisor from October 2021 to June 2022. This is because I switched job positions in June, but it should be noted that Xitlali successfully completed her 11-month term with WCC. During that term, our crew was sponsored by the City of Redmond to install and maintain ecological restoration projects in upland, riparian, and wetland ecosystems. This largely included native plant installation and invasive species control, with additional tasks including fish passage assessment, large woody debris installation, and stream surveys to collect cross section and sediment data.

When her 11-month position terminated in September 2022, she signed on with a different crew for an additional 11-month term, which she is currently completing. Her decision to complete a second 11-month term with WCC reflects her commitment to environmental stewardship and personal growth and development. The position Xitlali is currently serving with WCC has a different scope of work than the position she had under my supervision; as such I am confident her skills have only grown since our time together earlier this year.

During my time as her supervisor, it became quickly apparent that Xitlali was going places. Her self-motivation, communication skills, and dedication to growing and advancing her skills and knowledge about current environmental issues and ecological restoration techniques was impressive. Xitlali did an excellent job of bringing her current technical skills to the position- including her ability and drive to complete physically demanding service projects outside in adverse weather conditions, plant identification, knowledge of PNW ecology- while also maintaining a growth mindset, capitalizing on learning opportunities whenever they were presented to her.

I was immediately impressed with Xitlali's communication skills and approachability, prompting me to designate her our crew's Public Information Officer. Xitlali excelled in this role, which required her to communicate both general and scientific information to a range of audiences. Xitlali did particularly well with this role on special assignments, specifically when we were on a deployment sponsored by WA State Department of Health to assemble thousands of COVID-19 Test Kits in November 2021. This

required her to remain flexible, have a high attention to detail, and communicate frequently changing information she received from a range of stakeholders to her peers and supervisors. Her success in that high-stakes, high-stress environment showed me she is more than capable of handling herself well in similarly important and stressful situations.

Equally impressive, Xitlali has experience engaging stakeholders on contentious environmental issues. She both comes from and has worked with an agricultural community of color that has been negatively impacted by a lack of environmental regulation oversight. Her personal experience with racial disparities in environmental justice issues combined with her experience working on environmental service projects gives her a uniquely diverse and informed perspective from which the environmental field will benefit. Her ability to reach audiences that have every right to distrust governmental entities will be a future asset to environmental organizations looking to establish trust with communities that may question the motives of institutions that have historically systemically excluded them from the narrative.

Xitlali's experience, passion, and dedication to environmental stewardship make her an ideal candidate for a Master program that will utilize her skills while challenging her to develop new ones.

To conclude, I fully recommend without reservation Xitlali Herrera for Evergreen's MES Program and feel it is a great fit for Xitlali to continue growing her skills and advancing her career goals.

Thank you,

Zoe Loutos