

Recommendation for Catherine Johnson

Evergreen College Masters in Environmental Science (MES) Program

To the Evergreen MES Selection Committee:

I have known Catherine Johnson for more than 25 years. I worked with her when I was a User Information Analyst at the Corporate Headquarters of Fred Meyer (owned by Kroger), a large one-stop-shopping store chain for groceries, home goods, hardware, jewelry, electronics, and clothing. The company grew exponentially during the time Catherine worked there, having doubled in size as it was acquired by Kroger, and having grown since then as Fred Meyer became just one of the many brands managed within the Kroger family.

I worked with Catherine in her technical writing and communications capacity, where I was able to observe her flexibility in managing multiple tasks, her strong work ethic (she often was the last person out of the department working to deadlines), and her good nature as a colleague. Catherine is intelligent, open-minded and a good listener. She thinks before speaking, and brings with her an enthusiasm and positive outlook that I find infectious.

In my experience working with Catherine, she has always been flexible, picking up whatever writing jobs needed to be done, to include but not limited to editing, formatting, writing, and even testing useability for technical materials that enabled employees in our stores to do their jobs in a myriad of departments.

Catherine has worked with many SMEs (Subject Matter Experts) over the years, as well as software developers, business managers, and human resources. She has a breadth of understanding in what it takes to run a company and I believe has a lot of applicable experience when it comes to understanding what motivates people. Her quantitative and analytical skills, as well as her data interpretation skills are excellent. I have gone to her to ask for help in how best to represent something graphically. Her writing is top-notch. She may come across as overly exuberant at times, but I expect that the sheer number of graduate school presentations she will be doing will give her practice getting to her thesis in an engaging fashion with the clarity and conciseness required for the serious subject matter of climate change. She is definitely up to the task.

Catherine is extremely ethical, and backs up her life philosophy with her actions. She has overcome personal hurdles I would not wish on my worst enemy, and yet she still shows up, works hard, and doesn't complain. I have seen her be a source of support for others – both in life and at work. In that sense, she is a true 'mensch' in the best sense of the word.

In looking at her resume over the past few years, I know she is capable of more than her jobs have demanded. In discussions with her about her desire to make a career change, I see that she has been preparing for this change in small ways for a long time. She's very excited about

the prospect of returning to grad school to get the formal training needed to work for climate change and write her book.

I wholeheartedly support her in this endeavor and have no reservations about her abilities. I've seen her turn data into meaningful flow charts, graphics, and tables. I've worked collaboratively with her to put the finishing touches on my own work when she was the only person who could do the graphics. I see she is working with a few more tools than she had at her disposal when I last worked with her, which only goes to show that she picks up things quickly and is facile with them. She's a quick study.

I think she will probably be a lot like I was when I was last in grad school – also as an older student. My math professor said older women like me were the most serious students he had because they didn't just want to pass the tests with good grades – they actually wanted to understand WHY things were the way they were. I believe Catherine will be searching for these answers as part of her studies while she acquires more of the quantitative skills she is looking for to aid in her analysis for the book she wants to write. And if she ends up working for a nonprofit or a for-profit company upon completion of her studies, all the better for them to get a good employee like her.