

Application Related Information

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| Application: | Application Not Verified | Iteration Name: | 202510_GR_G |
| Grad Program Applying To: | MES | Program Name: | MES |

Recommendation Information

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|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------|---|
| Recommended By: | Eric Stein | Recommenders Title: | Professor |
| Recommenders Institution: | The Evergreen State College | Contact Name: | Marina Aune |
| Waive Access to Recommendation Ltrs: | I do not waive my right to review this recommendation. | Recommendation Waiver Choice: | |
| Recommendation Form Submitted: | ✓ | Recommendation Status: | Received |
| Received Date: | 12/31/2023 12:10 PM | Recommender Assessment: | I recommend this applicant without reservation. |
| Recommendation Type: | General | Recommender Form: | Letter of Recommendation |
| Recommendation Entity ID: | 1024000112606472 | Recommendation Owner: | Josephine Bernier |

Recommender Form Questions

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| 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

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| Description: | Form URL: | https://evergreenstatecollege.radius |
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Other Information

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| Created Time: | 12/06/2023 04:45 PM | Created By: | Josephine Bernier |
| Modified Time: | 12/31/2023 12:10 PM | Modified By: | Josephine Bernier |



December 31, 2023

Dear MES Admissions Committee,

I am writing to highly recommend Marina Aune for admission to the Master of Environmental Studies program at The Evergreen State College. I worked with Marina for two quarters in 2021-2022 in my In Sickness and In Health program, co-taught with Toska Olson and Arita Balaram. Marina was a strong student who took responsibility for all aspects of our studies, playing an active role in our learning community. Marina often went beyond what was required in the pursuit of knowledge and demonstrated the capacity to work successfully on both independent and collaborative assignments. These skills suggest that Marina is ready for graduate level work. Marina's goals for MES build on a long-term interdisciplinary focus on environmental studies, GIS, and disability studies.

Marina collaborated effectively during both quarters of In Sickness and In Health to complete a successful project on the complexities of students with disabilities in higher education. In winter quarter, the project focused on accessibility barriers on the Evergreen campus, using original survey research to better understand concerns of students with disabilities. Drawing inspiration from the UCLA Disabled Students Union, the group proposed a highly significant intervention to form a similar union on Evergreen's campus in order to give voice to the ongoing concerns of students with disabilities. The group's excellent, accessible final presentation, which was well-attended by staff from Access Services and TRiO Student Success and Disability Support, made a compelling case for providing additional support for students with disabilities. Group members noted that Marina contributed substantially to the research paper and presentation in fall quarter and attended meetings, helped find sources for

the contextual report, collaborated on the survey, and helped put together the group's final slide presentation in winter. In all, the successful project showed that Marina plays a significant role in collaborative work and has a dedicated, long-term interest in issues around supporting people with disabilities in contexts of education.

Among Marina's strongest work for In Sickness and In Health was an autoethnography essay that provided an extended narrative of struggles with ableism, drawing on an illness narratives framework to make sense of the experiences. Marina made especially good use of central concepts in Arthur Frank's book *The Wounded Storyteller* and applied them in a largely accurate way to the narrative. The book was challenging and theory based; the project suggested that at the time Marina was working toward an advanced level of proficiency in the social sciences.

Marina's proposed plan of studies in MES comes out of an immersive, applied, and uniquely interdisciplinary Evergreen approach. Marina holds a passionate interest for studies and education in the sciences and is at the same time uniquely aware of the barriers faced by students with disabilities in science fields. Marina's dedicated mission is to make the sciences more accessible. To do this, Marina needs to first become a science insider and have the capacity to work within science fields. An MES degree will enable Marina to take the next step in what is perhaps a larger trajectory toward applying GIS-based tools to issues of accessibility in the sciences.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with questions concerning my recommendation.

Sincerely,

Eric A. Stein, Ph.D.

Anthropology and History

The Evergreen State College

Email: steine@evergreen.edu