

July 29, 2022

To the Admissions Committee:

I am writing to recommend Mari Gossage to Evergreen's Master in Teaching Program. I currently serve as Mari's Academic & Career Advisor here at The Evergreen State College, and, though I've only known her a short time, I have been impressed by her drive to succeed and her deep personal investment in language education.

I believe Mari has great potential as a language teacher. The quality which makes her stand out is her recognition that, to be a language teacher, one must also be a language learner. Mari's fraught relationship with English, her traumatic early schooling, and her late-life transition to a whole new cultural-linguistic context—all these experiences fuel a commitment to her own brave linguistic expansion. Curiosity and a keen sense of observation have led her to realize that others around her are facing their own linguistic challenges and opportunities, and her community-oriented mindset has in turn led her to this impressive goal: to teach Japanese to non-native speakers. I believe the best language teachers are those who can feel for students in both their struggles and triumphs, and Mari's background makes her especially attuned to those learning lows and highs.

In her Summer Independent Learning Contract, Mari focused on lesson planning and facilitation in an informal learning community, a Facebook group for English language learners, mostly from Japan. Mari's assignments demonstrate her ability to plan and execute a focused, effective lesson, solicit learner feedback, and consider how to address feedback in future lesson planning and delivery. She seems to have good pedagogical instincts, and she is willing to experiment with a number of different elements in order to create an engaging and productive learning environment.

Graduate-level work in English will be a challenge for Mari, but she seems ready to put her best foot forward, and I have no doubt she'll apply herself earnestly to every task. If she's admitted to the program, I am more than happy to continue supporting her in my capacity as an advisor after she completes her undergraduate work.

Best,



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