

December 20, 2006

To Whom it Might Concern:

My name is Mr. Richard Geib, and I am a history and English teacher. I have been teaching for 13 years, and my specialty has been in the Advanced Placement curriculum and with advanced high school students. I am writing this letter of recommendation about Mr. Joe Student for Harvard University.

Joe was a student in my “American Experience” class during his junior year. This class was a joint Advanced Placement United States History and Advanced Placement English course, and it contained many of the best writers and thinkers in our school. Our class met daily for ninety minutes over nine months, and consequently I had the opportunity to get a good look at Joe Student as a writer, thinker, and individual. As such, I most enthusiastically recommend him to the Harvard University. Even at the Advanced Placement level in a strong suburban public school, Joe stands out as a very strong student.

Joe Student is one of the finest writers I have ever had the privilege of teaching. Joe’s writing is like silk, always elegant and smoothly fluent – with the “ear” finely attuned to nuance, and to the cadence and rhythm of written expression. He has been regularly scoring “8s” and “9s” on the AP rubric with his essays without having seemed to have broken a sweat, and so I have released him from the normal assignments of my class and allowed him to write on self-selected subjects in the format of the personal essay. I have never done this before with a student, but with Joe it seems fully appropriate. He is already far beyond most high school students in his writing – further than most college students, actually.

It is a common sight to see Joe, a young man living in the quiescent suburbs of Ventura, CA, pouring over *The New Yorker* magazine and engaging the literary community from afar (even if only in his mind). Even among his peers in Advanced Placement classes, Joe is almost unique in his love of writing and literature. He has two or three friends with whom he can discuss poets and ideas late on a Friday night, but Joe will have to move beyond high school to move in the circles where he will belong. Joe would bring with him to any university campus his love of good writing and thinking, and he would contribute all he had. Joe would be one of those students who hitchhike to New York City to hear his favorite author give a reading at a book store. Joe cares about literature and the life of the mind, and he would gravitate almost automatically towards any group of persons who share his love of learning and the mind.

Joe, in my experience, has been almost the perfect student in the very best sense. He loves literature; he is never happier than thinking and writing, and in being able to find others to share in such. As an example, I have included a copy of Joe’s latest blog posting (Appendix A) – completely independent of my class or school generally. This underscores well where Joe is coming from as a writer, thinker, and individual. I have never seen Joe beg for points or focus overly much on his grades, although his grades are fine. Joe wants to learn because the world is such an exciting place full of potential, ideas, and creativity.

I enthusiastically recommend Joe to Harvard University for his love of writing and desire to share that love and discuss it with similarly minded young people. Joe will contribute to, rather than detract from, any campus culture he becomes part of, and

Please feel free to contact me should you have any further concerns and/or questions.

Very Truly Yours,

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