



Date

01-05-2024

Subject

Letter of reference

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Dear mr. Kane,

In this reference I would like to share our impressions and experiences with Cyndi Rickards, also on behalf of my immediate colleagues Marco Hofman and Annekee van Bemmel.

Since summer 2020 we have been working with Cyndi in a collaborative online international learning (COIL) project on social justice. We got to know her as a decisive, pragmatic, socially involved, enthusiastic and hospitable person.

Together, we have developed a relevant education program about the issue of social justice and the just city. Cyndi is very involved in the social issues in her city, her country and the Netherlands. She delves into the socio-economic and structural backgrounds of these issues and investigates their causes, background and policy approach in an international comparative perspective. Also, Cyndi is very committed to her and our students, motivating and encouraging them to share knowledge and experiences in our weekly online Zoom sessions.

In September 2022, we made a study trip to Philadelphia with a group of 30 Dutch public administration students and a staff of 4 employees. Cyndi offered us a very interesting program involving numerous stakeholders: (metro (SEPTA) police, hospital, universities, NGOs. She is a real connector: she knows how to involve many different people and institutions in our collaboration, thus really putting Philadelphia on the map and clearly showing how social justice issues play out there. Cyndi is also very hospitable, both personally and professionally. She invited us all to her home and to her working environment, providing a valuable insight in the city and university life. This made our visit to Philadelphia substantively interesting.

It is impressive to see how Cyndi is focused on sustainable, long-term collaboration. She is persistently looking for opportunities to perpetuate our collaboration. She is always willing to engage in discussions and knows how to mobilize key strategic figures at Drexel University.

We cherish the special cooperation and friendship that has arisen. Without her energy, enthusiasm and tenacity, this collaboration would never have been so successful. We are very grateful for her contributions to our program and look forward to continuing and expanding it.

Yours Sincerely,

Esther Koster
Coordinator of the course Comparing Just Cities
Assistant professor at the Public Administration department