

February, 2020

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

It is my pleasure to offer this letter in support of Gretchen Cannon's application for employment with your organization. I worked closely with her for thirteen years in my capacity as Vice President for Student Affairs at Georgia State University. Student Affairs was one of six major administrative divisions of the University, composed of twenty departments and programs, serving the co-curricular needs of 52,000 students with an annual operating budget of approximately \$60M and over 1,000 employees.

I know that you are familiar with her responsibilities at Georgia State, so I will not summarize them here, but I do wish to emphasize the fact that the scope of her responsibilities increased dramatically during the time we worked together. Within three years of her employment, the University made a major commitment to the expansion and professionalization of its public relations presence. With no additional resources, Ms Cannon, a member of our division staff, not an employee of central PR, assumed responsibility for insuring our division's compliance in all aspects of our print, social media and web presence.

During the same period, the University experienced dramatic programmatic and enrollment growth. The number of programs and events to be promoted by her office increased by conservatively 500% and our marketing efforts evolved to embrace social media as well. With the acquisition of Perimeter College, Ms. Cannon assumed responsibility for providing oversight, production and marketing leadership for our programs across five more campuses, again without additional resources.

A review of her portfolio provides abundant evidence of her artistic and technical skills, but I would like to speak to those qualities which may not be so apparent in that context. I so valued her insight and creativity that I included her on my Senior Staff, which was comprised of my Associate and Assistant Vice Presidents and my Chief Financial Officer. This distinction was extended to none of the other department heads serving at the Director's level. Her confidence was critical to participating as an equal player in that environment and her fresh perspective and candor proved invaluable.

Her work was characterized by her attention to detail, her commitment to quality, her creativity and her strong work ethic. Ms. Cannon truly appreciates the value of seeing "the big picture." She thinks systemically and has a fine sense for discerning interrelationships and the potential for cooperative ventures across administrative boundaries.

Most of the production work in her design studio was done by student employees. It is no exaggeration to say that placement in her studio was highly coveted by our graphic arts majors due to her commitment to the training and development of her students. I was annually impressed by the fact that her graduating seniors routinely received employment offers from prestigious companies in their field.

In summary, I regard Gretchen Cannon as one of the finest professionals with whom it has been my good fortune to work. More than an experienced and talented colleague, she brings a degree of loyalty and dedication to her work which is most uncommon. That, coupled with her good sense of humor and sincerity, make working with her a true pleasure. If I may be of further service in your evaluation of her candidacy, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

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