



May 1, 2019

To whom it may concern:

As a Curriculum Manager for Summit Learning, I would like to earnestly and enthusiastically recommend my former colleague, Lovely Shanti Kelly, for an art teaching and/or leadership position. Lovely has been among my most trusted and admired colleagues for the past 6 years as we have served side-by-side roles as chairs, teachers, mentors, and advocates for progressive education. She is an energetic, visionary, intelligent, experienced, dedicated, forward-thinking, and inspired education leader who is willing to seize opportunities for progress and then work tirelessly to fulfill them. Further, she is unflinching in her educational aim: to serve all students through project-based-learning, co-create the learning space with her students, and challenge all to think critically and reflect deeply on conceptual and thought-provoking forms of art and media.

I had the honor of observing Lovely's work as a department chair at Livermore Valley Charter Preparatory (LVCP). She single handedly designed and facilitated 3 school-wide events, FLAM (a festival of art and learning), The Cardboard Challenge, and Utopian School Day. Each of these events not only required curriculum design for art students but also facilitation training for all school staff, logistical planning and collaborating with administrators, and extensive community outreach. Lovely is driven by a vision and will perform great feats of strength to see it realized. In this way, she served as a role model for our LVCP faculty, encouraging everyone to "go big" with their projects and to consider how subjects could be incorporated into interdisciplinary, large-scale, truly exciting events. Lovely's approach to education makes school vital and alive for students, and she connects with both students and her fellow teachers on a supportive and profoundly vulnerable level by giving herself wholeheartedly to her work. In short, Lovely is an incredible, as-yet-to-be-discovered figurehead in the education world, and she will be a spectacular asset to any teaching team.

Lovely came to our school with a vision for learning and an immediate desire to become familiarized with our school culture. She sought me out to learn more about how we implemented projects, but soon we learned that we were both commuting from Oakland so we organized a carpool. This carpooling experience accidentally turned into a rich collaboration between two like-minded and passionate educators seeking to design best-in-class English and Arts curriculum. The carpool became a think tank, where we tackled curriculum design, instructional strategy, current policy, and culture, emerging with solutions to better organize our students, faculty, and programs. Specifically, we re-designed a school-wide Advisory program, including reflective, interactive student Presentations of Learning and a 20-time project. Additionally, we created, organized, and initiated implementation of a new structure for faculty collaboration and design/culture improvement through our school-wide committees program.

Lovely is a tremendous leader because she can ascertain the needs of a school on a large scale and has the patience, optimism, courage, and energy to endeavor to address them. Meanwhile, she happens to be a phenomenal art teacher, involving her students in meaningful and thought-provoking projects that are completely inspired and created by her students. She is an expert facilitator, encouraging and pushing students until they design the projects that most inspire them. Together, she and her students create meaningful exhibits that help students learn more about themselves with big essential questions about family, identity, social justice, personal intentions, and our society at large. Perhaps most impressive to me is Lovely's bonus ability to publicize her students' work through her skills in graphic art and public relations. It seems as though every couple of weeks she is releasing a new blog, designing a new website, or premiering a

new film to showcase all of their many accomplishments.

The meaningful beautiful work created in Lovely's art classes is contagious and rallies other teachers to rise up and do more. She was especially inspiring in one memorable professional development session, where she lead all of our new and old faculty members in a meditation that resulted in our creating our own words of intention for our school year, and then in true PBL form, instead of making cheesy throw-away posters with magic markers, we learned basic watercolor technique and spent a relaxing and reflective 20 minutes creating beautiful keepsake watercolors of our words. We then created a display for all the words, and finally, together, Lovely facilitated a discussion and nomination of one word for all faculty members to live by for the year. The word we chose was "Inspire." That year, a large poster, illustrated by students, with the block letters "INSPIRE," hung in our main hallway, with a note from each teacher about how they would commit to inspire. I have never experienced a more, umm, inspiring, PD in my life. It invigorated all of us to be the type of teachers that made us choose this profession in the first place. This is a normal day in the life of Lovely Shanti Kelly. She is a visionary who never stops inspiring others.

In my career as a Curriculum Manager, I continue to collaborate with Lovely. Driven only by her personal passions and vision, she has been completing a research project outside of her full-time teaching position with a mission to create extensive curricula that gives voice to topics of race and social justice in the arts. I sought her input on a curricular material related to this subject, and she devoted time to review it in detail and we then had several in-person discussions with the goal of identifying approaches to make the curriculum sensitive, relevant, and effective for meaningful learning. For all of these reasons and countless others, I recommend Lovely Shanti Kelly with enthusiasm--any institution will be lucky to have her.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emmy Spencer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Emmy Spencer
Curriculum Manager
Summit Learning