

February 14, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

It is with great pleasure that I recommend **Mr. Ken Khalouf** for a position teaching physical education and/or health. I have known him for the past four years as a student in several required courses in the undergraduate Exercise Science curriculum. He is an outstanding student successfully pursuing a dual degree in Physical Education Teacher Education and Exercise Science. Ken is truly an exceptional person and one of the most highly motivated, intelligent, enthusiastic, talented and dedicated individuals that I have ever met. *In fact, I would rate him as the "best" student that I have had throughout my 20 years of teaching.*

Ken graduated in exercise science *Summa cum laude* with a G.P.A. of 3.8. He is an independent thinker and learner and goes far beyond expectations to seek knowledge and experience through problem solving and critical thinking skills. His innovative nature and persistence show his willingness to learn, not merely to obtain the necessary grade. These qualities were consistently exemplified by the outstanding work he did in the various courses in which I have taught by far surpassing the criteria set for the grade of an "A". Ken set the bar for other students and was an absolute pleasure to have in class. His dedication, enthusiasm and work ethic were impeccable. He possessed remarkable communication skills and consistently demonstrated confidence in his abilities and knowledge. When working in professional settings, he was focused, intense, and passionate. He displayed a sincere interest and respect for others and maintained a caring and compassionate demeanor. Ken related extremely well to supervisors, associates and clients and solicited, welcomed and immediately acted on constructive feedback and suggestions.

Ken has several practical and professional experiences that directly relate to teaching physical education. Most recently, he served as the Interim Sports and Family Director for the Butler YMCA. In this position, he managed and supervised staff and coordinated and implemented programs. During his time as an undergraduate, he was employed as an Exercise Specialist by the SRU Russell Wright Fitness Center. In this position, he has gained relevant fitness experience including assistance with members' exercise programs, facility management and equipment maintenance. He implemented an after school fitness program for children and teenagers that included several strength and conditioning activities. In addition, he has had experiences as a personal trainer working with older adults.

With respect to his professional involvement in the field, Ken far surpasses any student that I have known. In fact, his resume compares more to that of an active professional with three to five years of experience. Ken holds three national fitness certifications including the gold standard American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) Health/Fitness Instructor and National Strength and Conditioning Association (NSCA) Certified Strength and Conditioning Specialist and the Aerobics and Fitness Association of America group fitness instructor. Ken has made five

professional presentations (two national, one regional and two state) related to fitness and leadership. His national presentation at the NSCA conference was based on conducting a research project involving body builders and fitness competitors and their physiological and psychological responses to training. This research was funded by two very competitive grants he obtained from the organization. Finally, Ken maintains memberships in several professional organizations and regularly attends state, regional and national conferences.

One of Ken's most notable characteristics is his *remarkable* leadership ability. During his last semester in the exercise science program, he served as the president of the SRU Exercise Science Society, which had approximately 200 student members. Under his leadership this organization had its most successful year ever by increasing membership by 200%, planning the first annual fitness field trip to Washington, DC, fundraising over \$4,000 and being involved in several community service activities. This organization benefited greatly from his outstanding leadership, enthusiasm, and commitment. It is quite extraordinary that Ken successfully met the demands of all of these extracurricular activities and maintained excellent academic standing.

Mr. Khalouf is an amazing young man and we are very proud of his accomplishments. He has proven himself to be excellent role model for the health/fitness field and an ambassador for Slippery Rock University and the major of Exercise Science. Ken is wise beyond his years and it is without question that I would recommend him for a teaching position. He will have a profound impact on the fields of physical education and exercise science and on the lives of young people.

Sincerely,



Patricia A. Pierce, PhD, FACSM, CSCS
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