MU **MYTHIC UNIVERSITY**

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December xx, 20xx

To the Review Committee:

I am pleased to write a letter of recommendation for Janet Lerner, an honors undergraduate student in our program. I have known Janet for more than two years. I came to know her very well when she was a student in my economic geography course. This summer, I hired her to work on an NSF-sponsored research project on Human Dimensions of Global Environmental Change. And for the past six months, we have been developing a laboratory manual for my undergraduate course on the global economy. It is on the basis of this extensive experience that I write a letter of unequivocal support.

Janet is an undergraduate student in the honors program at Mythic University. The honors program is designed to provide the educational experience of a small Ivy League college within a large public university. To be accepted, a student must have high SAT scores, be an excellent writer, and have very good high school grades. Students fulfill their course requirements by taking honors courses or by selecting a combination of classes with a heavy emphasis on graduate seminars and independent reading courses. Students must maintain a GPA of 3.2 or better in all courses in order to remain in the honors program. Janet has fulfilled this requirement admirably, maintaining a GPA of 3.8 or better throughout her career. Over the last few years, Janet designed a difficult curriculum for herself and has been very successful in combining graduate seminars and advanced undergraduate reading courses to fulfill her degree requirements. She is comfortable with herself and is well-recognized by her peer group. She, along with her peers from the honors program, will enter the nation's best graduate schools next year in such varied fields as medicine, law, and other allied social sciences. She seeks to enroll in your graduate planning program.

Janet is an enthusiastic, energetic, and exceptionally well-organized student. She writes beautifully, is widely read, and demonstrates good quantitative skills. In my economic geography course, she was the best student in the class. Her performance exceeded that of the incoming graduate students, including an NSF fellowship recipient. She always came to class prepared and was clearly far above her peers in understanding and appreciating the course material.

I have been especially impressed by Janet's determination and sparkle. Her work on the Model United Nations program (MUN) is an extremely large responsibility. The Model United Nations program convenes approximately 1000 high school students from around the world to simulate the experience of the UN. Janet has responsibility for designing and executing all phases of the simulation. She reviews the agendas of the UN over the previous year, and then collaboratively develops the student-run assembly

agenda. To undertake this task successfully, she must understand international relations, international political economy, and world economic development issues. Her UN work has clearly influenced her interests and has been a very broadening experience for her. I am sure one explanation for why she has done so well in courses with me is that she understands the geography of the global economy from the simulated, yet very real-world perspective of the Model United Nations program.

Concerning her potential as a teaching assistant, Janet has detailed experience in developing educational materials for courses. After many years of dissatisfaction with economic geography texts, I decided I would develop a laboratory manual for my introductory course. Based on Janet's superior performance in the course I employed her to put the manual together. Although we talked at length about the project and I gave her broad outlines for each segment, nonetheless the lab manual is very much her creation. It is a five-assignment workbook built around a hypothetical scenario in which the student is a staff advisor to a program officer of the Ford Foundation. The assignments require that students complete a thorough analysis of a country, including an economic history, demographic analysis, trade assessment, and policy proposal. The manual is designed such that a student will be able to retrieve the necessary quantitative and cartographic information to complete the projects. Each assignment results in a memo based on a template Janet developed. Janet identified and tested all sources listed in the manual, and this project would not have reached fruition without Janet's tireless efforts.

I know from discussions with colleagues and graduate students in my department that we all think Janet is a very special student. I have enjoyed getting to know her as a person and find her surprisingly mature for her young age, quite capable of working entirely on her own in a self-directed manner. I am pleased that Janet is planning to enroll in graduate school starting this fall. I have no doubt that she has the skills, focus, and determination to successfully complete a master's degree in a timely fashion. I also believe she will seek to complete a Ph.D.

Janet is a rare find. She is well-trained, ambitious, and yet very open-minded and even self-effacing. I believe she will be successful wherever she ends up attending graduate school. She will be a dedicated student and a competent professional.

I recommend her very highly and without reservation.

Sincerely,
Janet Teacher
Janet Teacher
Professor of Geography