



VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE
AND STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Mathematics

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Dear Members of the Selection Committee:

As faculty advisor to Womanspace+ (now known as the United Feminist Movement) at Virginia Tech, I have known Claire Kelling since Fall 2013 through her work with this feminist activist group. This valuable member of Womanspace+ was its president for two years. I am delighted to recommend her for an internship with a Data Science for the Social Good Program.

Claire has a strong work ethic and has been involved in many projects on campus. She doesn't just sit through committee meetings; she volunteers to lead and she follows through. She balances well her academic and volunteer workloads.

Claire was a superb Take Back the Night Committee co-coordinator for our annual rally and march in 2014, 2015, and 2016. This event, which raises awareness of gender-based violence in our community, takes enormous time and energy to produce. In 2014, Claire invited over 100 Womanspace+ alumnae to Take Back the Night, attended and contributed both to coordinator meetings and Womanspace+ meetings, attended other organizations' meetings to encourage their participation at Take Back the Night, distributed flyers, signed hundreds of letters of invitation to campus and community groups and athletic teams, helped set up the rally, staffed our information table, led the march as a banner holder, and helped pack up at the event's conclusion. Claire wrote wonderful thank you notes to our rally speakers.

In 2015, she led members in discussing, deciding, and walking our march route, handled well the above actions, and was the emcee for the rally. Her organizing and facilitation were excellent. She also organized carpools of Virginia Tech students to attend 2015 Take Back the Night events at James Madison University to support student activists there. During our March 2016 event, Claire continued to be an outstanding Take Back the Night coordinator and was again our emcee.

As you are probably aware, raising awareness of gender-based violence, giving participants clear steps that they can take in their everyday lives, and energizing participants to work on change in both the campus and extended community can and do lessen gender-based violence. Our Virginia Tech Take Back the Night annually strives to do this, and annually is successful.

Claire also worked on gender-based violence as our Womanspace+ representative to the Sexual Violence Prevention Council at Virginia Tech, composed of individuals from our Women's Center, Title IX, athletics, community groups, and so forth.

During Claire's first year with Womanspace+, this responsible young woman took excellent minutes of weekly Womanspace+ meetings, sending them out on the listserv by the next day.

Claire was elected Womanspace+ co-president for the 2014-15 academic year. During that academic year, she was an excellent meeting coordinator and a wonderful Womanspace+ point person, following up on networking opportunities with other groups and organizing events. Because of her outstanding skills and leadership, Claire was unanimously elected the

Womanspace+ president for 2015-2016 and continued to be a courageous leader.

Young people of all genders attend Womanspace+ meetings, and the enthusiasm and energy in the room is wonderful. Claire is key to this positive atmosphere.

In spring of 2016 Claire was honored in the Champions of Change program that was established to "honor everyday Americans doing extraordinary things in their communities." This was a great opportunity to talk about gender-based violence with influential people and to talk about how to make real change on college campuses. Claire was able to dialogue with Vice President Biden at the White House and to share her work with him and the other champions.

Claire's passion is not only gender-based violence. She annually encouraged Womanspace+ to co-sponsor Women in Mathematics: Career Day at Virginia Tech for area sixth grade girls. This math department program creates enthusiasm in sixth graders to pursue interests in mathematics, engineering, and other STEM fields. Our organization again sponsored Career Day in Fall 2016.

And Claire herself was interested in broadening her own STEM knowledge, taking Differential Equations (Math 2214) her senior year solely due to her interest in the subject matter.

Our university administrators have also recognized Claire's extraordinary abilities. On April 19, 2016, she was honored as one of Virginia Tech's Keystone Fellows, "students who embody the Aspirations for Student Learning" and who "desire to become their very best selves."

Although Claire graduated in May, her work has not stopped. As a graduate student at Penn State this academic year, Claire is a part of the Commission for Women, an organization of faculty, staff, administrators, and a few students who work on women's issues on campus. Also, she was accepted as a Graduate Fellow for Futures Without Violence, an organization that helps graduate students combine their academic fields with violence prevention research skills. Claire continues on her quest for positive change.

Claire has a strong commitment to community. Her drive to curb abuse and to stop social injustice is strong. If she sees a need or a problem, she works hard to make the situation better. She is interested in and open to listening to others' viewpoints and experiences, is extremely dedicated and dependable, and works well in a team setting and alone. She talks with people and not at them. She is highly organized and comfortable in diverse social settings.

Claire Kelling is an intelligent, compassionate individual. She is pleasant, direct, and conscientious. Claire Kelling would be an excellent choice for an internship with a Data Science for the Social Good Program. I highly recommend her to you.

Sincerely,



Susan Anderson

Senior Instructor, Mathematics
Womanspace+ Faculty Advisor
Blacksburg Town Councilwoman
Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley Board Member