

The University of Central Florida
College of Education
Department of Educational Research, Technology & Leadership
Higher Education Policy Studies

Re: Ms. Carla McKnight's Nomination for The Graduate Student of the Year Award -SEAHO
(Southeastern Association of Housing Officers)

Dear Selection Committee:

It is my honor and privilege to support the nomination of Ms. Carla McKnight for The Graduate Student of the Year Award -SEAHO (Southeastern Association of Housing Officers). Carla is a second year master's level student enrolled in University of Central Florida's Higher Education Student Services program. I have known Carla for two years, and in that short time, Carla has affected the university community with her sense of excellence and dedication to the higher education profession.

Throughout her time in the program, Carla has consistently demonstrated outstanding civic leadership. A most recent and notable example has been Carla's work with the University of Central Florida's Upward Bound six-week summer component program. She mentored first generation, low income high schoolers preparing for matriculation in college, by focusing on students' self concepts and self esteem. Through the development and implementation of a wellness program, Carla did an outstanding job tying theory to application and fostering a learning environment that actively engaged students in the learning process. The review she received from the director lauded Carla not only for her dedication and initiative to seeing the program through, but more importantly Carla's leadership. She described Carla as "a 'gem' and someone who made a positive impact in changing lives, particularly of the young ladies, who for the first time were seeing themselves as capable of becoming physically fit and beautiful."

Additionally, I have seen Carla impact the lives of her peers, setting a standard of excellence that many emulated. Carla's peers have seen her facilitate doctoral level seminars, present workshops at regional and national conferences, and involve herself in leadership opportunities with upper administration and community organizations, internal and external to the UCF campus.

In many respects, Carla has been the program ambassador, reflecting the high presence of character, integrity, and principles the student affairs profession espouses. It would be fitting for her to continue in her ambassadorship as a recipient of the Graduate Student of the Year Award -SEAHO (Southeastern Association of Housing Officers).

Respectfully yours,

Mia Alexander-Snow

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