January 9, 2009

Southeastern Association of Housing Officers

Awards Committee

RE: Nomination for 2009 SEAHO Service Award

Dear SEAHO Awards Committee:

It is with great enthusiasm that I write this letter on behalf of Amanda Wallace in support of her nomination for the SEAHO Service Award. Upon reading a description of the Service Award, those of us with Housing and Residential Communities at The University of Alabama (UA) immediately thought of Ms. Wallace as a most deserving recipient of the award. I have worked with Amanda since her arrival to UA and I have had the privilege of experiencing the numerous ways she has influenced our campus community.

Amanda is a true “go-getter”; the breadth of her contributions on our campus is one of the first things that stand out to me. She coordinates staff training for approximately 200 Resident Advisors, Office Managers and graduate assistants, and she organizes our staff selection processes. She has led efforts to integrate quality diversity training into our staff training curriculum, and she has attended the National Multicultural Institute to increase her knowledge base towards this effort. Currently, all Resident Advisors at UA have completed Safe Zone training to better serve our GLBTQ students. Amanda also continually utilizes assessment tools to evaluate and refine our training processes.

Amanda also impacts our University by serving as advisor of the Residence Hall Association (RHA). Amanda has worked with RHA for the last 1.5 years, and she has helped develop the leadership of the organization so that it has greater influence on campus. Amanda has stated, “When we started we were at a low point in terms of commitment…It’s neat to see how the E-board has developed since that time.” Brad Lee, a UA student who has worked closely with Amanda with RHA provides the following words regarding Amanda’s work with RHA and other efforts:

Having worked with and for Amanda, I have seen the great amount of time, energy, and thought that she puts into her job and serving the student community here at UA. As adviser for RHA, she has to train and organize a new group of students every year (less than 10% of UA RHA are returning students due to housing limitations and the fact that RA's cannot serve in RHA). She constantly keeps the interest of the on campus community in the forefront of members’ thoughts, always reminding what the purpose of this organization is. Amanda puts forth her time and effort to work with the leadership of RHA to help them grow and make wise decisions. She was especially supportive during Week of Acceptance, a program new to UA which was controversial and ruffled many administrative feathers. She supported our goals and beliefs even though she knew it might make others less than happy with her. As Programming and Civic Leadership Coordinator, she organizes many events within Housing, including the interviewing, selecting, and training of Resident Advisors. For a campus as large as the Capstone, this is a huge undertaking. Even as daunting as this task is, she tries to seek the advice of students and staff and take their ideas into consideration to create the best process and experience for the RAs that she possibly can.

Another way that Amanda significantly impacts our campus is through her programming efforts. She has led our department in redesigning a programming model that promotes resident advisors as agents of social change while relying on larger programming bodies for larger scale events. She has also developed the “Crimson Source,” a programming resource center that provides various material resources, consultations for student staff, and a community programming calendar. Amanda has forged partnerships with other campus departments to provide quality programming for students. She helped coordinate and implement a visiting artist series with the Honors College; she has worked with the Counseling Center on our campus to plan and implement De-stress events and programming for Alcohol Awareness Week and National Eating Disorder Awareness Week. She has also worked with our Student Union to expand programming for the University’s annual “Hip Hop Summit.” Amanda has also co-chaired the University’s Welcome Week committee for the past (2) years.

Amanda’s impact on our campus also stretches beyond her job description. She volunteers extensive time with various University committees for the betterment of our institution. Amanda is a member of Capstone Alliance, an organization that supports faculty, staff and students in the LGBTQ community through such efforts as networking and scholarship for students. Through capstone Alliance, Amanda has worked with the Safe Zone Committee to coordinate Safe Zone trainings for groups throughout the University Community. Additionally, Amanda serves as Chair for the Staff Life Committee for the Professional Staff Assembly, and she is a member of the Campus Violence Prevention Taskforce.

Amanda Wallace makes an impact on our campus through the great work that she does, but perhaps more importantly, she influences others by *how* she does it. Amanda is the consummate professional. She is intelligent, articulate, and creative, and she adds a positive attitude and a caring heart to her many natural abilities. Amanda excels with independent projects, but she is an outstanding teammate. She demonstrates the ability to be a leader as well as a follower. My sincere opinion is that Amanda is an exceptional example of who and what a housing professional should be. Thank you for your consideration of her nomination, and please feel free to contact me at (205) 347-5560 or [jhenderson@sa.ua.edu](mailto:jhenderson@sa.ua.edu) should you need additional comment.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Henderson

*Riverside Community Director*

*The University of Alabama*