Tuesday, October 14th, 2025

To Whom It May Concern,

I'm proud to recommend George Hayward of Hayward Data Science for his impressive work as both a teacher and leader at North Star Academy's Summit program. In my 21 years of teaching, I've rarely seen someone from outside the education world create such a transformative learning experience for students.

My name is Mike Taubman, and I serve as the Director of the Summit program at North Star Academy, part of the Uncommon Schools network in Newark, New Jersey. Uncommon Schools is a nationally recognized charter organization dedicated to preparing students—many of whom are the first in their families to attend college—for academic and professional success. At North Star, the Summit program gives ambitious seniors hands-on experience exploring careers of their choice.

Last year, George designed and taught our first-ever data science course, building a complete curriculum from scratch. He introduced students to data analysis in Google Sheets and taught his students Python. He also guided the school in setting up technical infrastructure that allowed students to code in Google Colab notebooks at no cost. He not only provided rigorous instruction but also mentored students one-on-one, editing code live, reviewing written analyses, and modeling the mindset of a true data scientist. Just as importantly, George coached students on how to present their findings clearly to executives and draft professional-style memos that communicated their insights with confidence. To conclude the program, students presented to George and the rest of the class in person.

The results speak for themselves: every student completed a final project, and several used their work in college applications—including a student whose work with George helped her get off the waitlist and be admitted to Princeton. More profoundly, George helped our students—many of whom are students of color with limited access to such opportunities—see themselves as capable coders and leaders. His impact extended beyond the classroom, as he offered career guidance, coached presentations, and inspired a sense of pride that will serve students in college and beyond. The program was such a success that we've asked George to return this year to expand on what he began.

George Hayward is not only an innovator in data science education but also a role model who shows young people what is possible. I strongly recommend him as both a teacher and leader whose work has left a lasting mark on our school.

Please contact me if you have any questions: mike.taubman@northstaracademy.org.


Sincerely,

Mike Taubman
Director, Summit Program
North Star Academy Washington Park High School | Uncommon Schools

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