January 23, 2009

Social Work Program Admissions Committee:

I have been asked by Celia Cheney to write a letter of recommendation in support of her application for the MSW Program at California State University, Long Beach; I am delighted to do so. I have known Celia for four years; she was a student in my Introduction to Social Problems and Collective Behavior classes, and she was my Teaching Assistant for two semesters. Knowing Celia for four years has allowed me to see her develop as a student and mature as a person. Hopefully, I can share this with you in the letter.

Academically, Celia is one of the most intelligent students that I have had at San Diego State. During the time that I have known her, I have taught approximately 3,000 students, and Celia ranks in the top 1%-2% of those students. She received As in both classes. She did well on the exams, the papers, participated in class discussions, attended regularly, and interacted well with the other students. She also took advantage of my office hours to discuss the ideas and issues raised in class. She performed the tasks of Teaching Assistant well and I asked for her a third semester, but at that point the Department was limiting Teaching Assistantships to graduate students.

I realize that my comments on Celia are not reflected in her overall grade average at San Diego State. And at the time, I recognized a lack of maturity and focus in relation to her other classes. However, it appears that her subsequent work with children has helped her mature and given her a sense of purpose and new focus.

I think that which would be most relevant for her application to the Social Work program would be her ability to interact positively with others. She demonstrated this in her interactions with students, faculty, and administration as my Teaching Assistant. And in both Introduction to Social Problems and Collective Behavior classes her papers demonstrated a genuine engagement with the social problems discussed and an affinity with marginalized groups. I think her strengths are caring and intelligence, and I believe that her new commitment to working with children would make her successful in the Social Work Program and in the field of social work. If you would like anything further from me, I can be reached at San Diego State at 594-5906 or by email [psemm@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:psemm@mail.sdsu.edu).

Sincerely,

Paul T. Semm