

July 13, 2025

Dear Board Members,

I am honored to write this letter of recommendation for Ms. Dejah Cobbs, a remarkable young woman I have known for four years, including one year in which she served as a direct report during her time as a Programming Intern at the Bruce D. Nesbitt African American Cultural Center (BNAACC) at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. In that time, I have come to know Dejah as a standout individual whose hard work, pursuit of excellence, discipline, leadership, character, and conviction are her most salient and consistent traits. I am confident that these qualities will make her an exceptional officer in the United States Air Force.

As Co-Chair of the annual Black and Latinx Summit, Dejah demonstrated unparalleled leadership by guiding a diverse team through months of planning and execution. The resulting event welcomed over 300 attendees and earned the campus-wide distinction of “Program of the Year.” She approached the role with professionalism, thoughtfulness, and grace under pressure. Whether navigating logistical details or leading team discussions, Dejah inspired those around her with her clarity, empathy, and dedication.

Dejah’s commitment to service and personal growth is evident across every aspect of her experience. Her impressive international engagements—through study abroad programs in Costa Rica, South Africa, and Brazil—highlight her adaptability, cultural competence, and eagerness to lead on a global scale. Her contributions to Brazil’s public health system, where she helped create a new triage protocol that was approved for use, underscore both her initiative and effectiveness.

Beyond her achievements, it is her personal character that truly sets Dejah apart. She leads with integrity, shows deep compassion for others, and consistently seeks out opportunities to uplift her peers and community. Her involvement with Catholic Charities, BMO Harris, and other leadership organizations speaks to her desire to serve others, not for recognition, but out of a deep-rooted sense of purpose.

Dejah embodies the values of the U.S. Air Force—**Integrity First, Service Before Self, and Excellence in All We Do**. She has already proven herself as a disciplined leader with unwavering character, and I am confident she will bring honor, strength, and distinction to the officer corps.

She has my strongest recommendation without reservation. Please feel free to contact me should you need any further information.

Sincerely,

Shawn Hampton

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