

To Whom It May Concern,

I am very pleased to be asked to write a letter of reference for Seth Suydam. I have known Seth as a teacher and a neighbor for thirteen years. Over the years, in our K-12 school and small community I have been able to watch Seth grow into the fine young man that he is today.

Seth is a friendly, kind, and conscientious person. As a teacher, I have found Seth to be genuine in his desire to learn, motivated, creative and self disciplined. He is more interested in finding real meaning in what he learns than flaunting the success he has at mastering the material.

Early on, Seth took an interest in writing and would often write of his experiences on his family fishing boat, the F/V Steller. He found his voice early in his writing, and I feel fortunate to have been able to read his work throughout the years. I have enjoyed watching Seth flourish as a young writer and am proud of the accomplishments and awards that he has received.

When Seth decided to play classical guitar, he pursued it with the same quiet enthusiasm that he does with all things. He learned all that he could by himself. Then he learned from an accomplished guitar player in our community. He continued with lessons from a professional in Homer, a boat ride or plane ride away. Then he took lessons from a master guitar player at the University of Alaska in Anchorage, yet another boat ride and a five hour commute by car. Only if you live in a remote location like Seldovia, can you appreciate the commitment that it took for Seth to pursue his dream. Like his writing, Seth's excellent guitar playing has also brought him music awards.

Having taught Seth in first, sixth and tenth grade, I have watched Seth strive and succeed at making the most of his education in our small isolated community. I have admired his creativity and quiet determination which he has used to gain his education, whether it meant taking classes at our K-12 school, or going to Spanish Immersion Class in Spain, or doing home school. Seth's decisions have been thoughtful and deliberate. He has never been one to brag of his academic or personal accomplishments though there are many. He is admired and respected by those who know him in the community.

I know how hard Seth works as a crew member on the family boat throughout the summer. I know how dedicated he has been to accomplishing his goals in school. But most important, I know that Seth, at a young age, appreciates what many young people do not yet understand. Simply put, that you get out of life what you put into it. Seth simply sets his course for his next journey and then goes steadfastly after it, meeting each challenge along the way. He already has a wealth of experiences to build upon as he continues to make decisions about his future. It is a privilege to know a young man of such solid character.

I hope that if you have the opportunity to support Seth in his future endeavors that you will. You will not be disappointed.

Please feel free to contact me if you need further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sherri Otis Burt". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid, with a long, sweeping tail on the letter "t".

Sherri Otis Burt

Tel. (907) 234-7455