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To Whom It May Concern,

This is an open letter of recommendation for Professor Jonas Basom. Professor Basom was recently a teacher of mine at Cal State L.A. in Theater Arts 400: Drama for the Elementary Classroom. This course prepares current and future teachers for meeting the theater arts content standards, for grades Kindergarten through six.

Professor Basom's class was wonderful training for me, and covered various methods for using drama as a teaching tool in all school subjects. I learned how to reach students of different intelligences, learning styles, and language abilities. Before the course I had success using his CD-ROM of lesson plans, teaching theater to adults for a year and a half at a community recreation center. However, I had always found teaching theatre to children much more challenging. Although well acquainted with his course writing and materials, finally having the opportunity to be his student and do his assignments enabled me to grow even further as a teacher. I now know exactly what is required from me to be an effective theatre teacher to children.

Professor Basom was an exemplary teacher in every possible way during this course. His instruction was consistently at the highest level of creative expression, focus, commitment, and intelligence. His extensive personal background in theatre arts showed through in his inventive lessons. Professor Basom had a thorough knowledge of all concepts covered in the course. He was imaginative in the way he taught each one of us individually, and yet created a cohesive group without competition or inequality. He had a sensitive and professional ease in the handling of his students. This is my fourth class in my Masters in Theatre at Cal State L.A., and by far the most informative, interesting, and applicable to my career as a theatre teacher.

Professor Basom clearly had more comfort, experience, and ability as a performer and teacher than any of his students, but he never did anything to make others feel uncomfortable or inferior to him. On the contrary, he was a courteous and patient teacher that continually provided encouragement, compliments, and positive reinforcements to a group of students without a theatre background and very little teaching experience. He was genuinely happy to see many of them come out

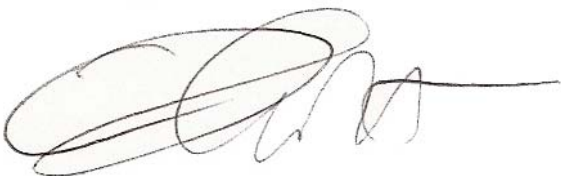
of their shells and gain confidence expressing themselves theatrically during the course. Every week, Professor Basom was prepared, friendly, cooperative, and energetic. He always started each lesson with “the hook,” a very entertaining mini-performance of his that showed us all what to strive for in the teaching of theatre.

Professor Basom receives top marks from me in all aspects of his teaching. He spent several years, and attained a Masters in Education in the process, writing his CD-ROM of theatre games that we used for the course. This CD-ROM was a life-saver for me when I was trying to develop an improvisation class for the recreation center. All the theatre games I had learned in my career as an actor, but had never taught, were neatly laid out in a format of one-hundred, teacher-friendly, one-page lesson plans. Overnight my problems were solved, and I immediately understood how easy it would be to teach my class.

In addition to teaching adults in college, I also observed Professor Basom teaching third graders in my elementary school. He did a fabulous job of combining powerful classroom management techniques with energetic teaching. All of the students were learning in a fun and effective manner, through drama. There was one theatre technique I learned in particular, called Two Lines Facing, in which students say lines from a play as a group to avoid embarrassment, and increase projection and articulation. After learning it from him I was able to go on and teach it to students myself, with great success. After teaching my lesson, students had increased projection, articulation, and understanding of the play. Professor Basom has a gift of teaching with clarity, so students can be teachers and genuinely assume a leadership role with his techniques.

Professor Basom is passionate and dedicated to theatre education, and had devoted fourteen years of his career to this area of teaching. It is clear from the quality of his written educational program that he understands the concepts required to be an effective theater teacher with children and adults. I believe that Professor Basom has the personal skills, creative abilities, dedication, knowledge, and training to be a successful theatre teacher in any capacity.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mr. Conrad Hurtt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mr. Conrad Hurtt  
Elementary School Teacher