

March 18, 2021

WNY Prosperity Scholarship Selection Committee
University at Buffalo

RE: Reference for Mr. Jose Perez

Dear Selection Committee,

My name is Monica Washington, Director of Doctoral Studies and Assistant to the Chair of the Department of Learning and Instruction, University at Buffalo. I am writing to express my enthusiastic support of Mr. Jose' Perez. I believe that he is an outstanding candidate to receive the WNY Prosperity Fellowship award.

I have known Jose' since he applied for the Curriculum, Instruction, and the Science of Learning, PhD program; first taking nonmatriculated doctoral classes in an effort to assess if this program would be a good match for him, and then as a fully matriculated student. As Jose' is first language is Spanish, he wanted assess if LAI faculty and administrative staff would be supportive and willing to mentor while completing his PhD studies.

From our first meeting I realized that Jose' is a very motivated and passionate person who is willing do to what is required to receive his PhD. Jose' believes that possessing the degree will better position him to influence changes in policy that will better reflect the learning styles of many students who are not traditional learners and hence need to be met where they are, with support and encouragement to position themselves to be for their future.

My responsibility as an advisor and mentor is to facilitate the administrative requirements that must be met for a student to have a PhD conferred and I provide guidance, as *life happens while you are a PhD student*. Jose' has always been responsive when I make any request of him. This quality is most necessary in his pursuit of his PhD and the management and development of the foundation he has created.

Jose has been challenged on several occasions throughout his quest to receive his PhD and has been steadfast that he will be the recipient of a PhD in the near future. Jose never gives up attitude and demeanor has served him well. In addition to pursuing his PhD, Jose' started a foundation several years ago in honor of his beautiful deceased parents named [Victor & Francisca Perez Foundation, Inc.](#)

The foundation that Jose' created has the purpose of teaching young people to develop and work with science and technology. Jose' is targeting minority students, however, all students are encouraged to participate. Jose wrote to me when he requested I provide a reference for him: *I want to break with the paradigms of a traditional education where students are in front of a teacher listening and taking notes. I want to develop other types of programs for them.... I want to be a doctor and influence others to develop and implement technological advances in education... I cannot fail God, my parents, or myself; that is one of the main reasons why I never give up.*

It is with great pleasure to write this letter of reference for Mr. Jose Perez. It is my belief that Mr. Perez will represent the University at Buffalo and the Department of Learning and Instruction with extraordinary enthusiasm and will demonstrate is a worthy recipient of the WNY Prosperity Scholarship. With this award, Mr. Perez will have the financial support he so desperately needs to complete his PhD and continue developing the foundation that he is most passionate about. Mr. Perez wants to give back to his community by providing support and STEM education for all young people who want to participated.

Please feel free to contact me if I can provide any additional information in support of Jose'.

Sincerely,

Monica C. Washington

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Black Lives Matter

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