



October 1, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is my personal recommendation for Michael McLaughlin, who has until very recently worked as a contract teacher and writing workshop facilitator for the National Steinbeck Center beginning in March of 2010.

Michael's work was multi-faceted and began with the development of an innovative creative writing curriculum, which aligned with the California State Standards, and which introduced high school aged students to multiple works by John Steinbeck. Surprisingly, the more challenging aspect of the job was to implement outreach to schools and organizations that would allow him access to students to test the curriculum. He made literally several dozen attempts to contact organizations ranging from clubs and small community non-profits to every area high school English Department and government program for youth development. His resourcefulness and persistence eventually paid off and several schools/programs representing diverse student populations signed on for the program. Michael taught advanced writers at Palma, one of the most academically challenging independent schools in the area, as well as marginalized and incarcerated youth at the local continuation school and at Rancho Cielo, a program for first time offenders and everything in between.

His ability to excite a wide range of students in all aspects of writing while maintaining a high degree of professionalism and high academic standards is one of Michael's greatest assets. By way of poetry, prose and screenwriting workshops, Michael empowers even the most resistant young people to use words to express their fears, joys and hopes for the future. I observed a class Michael taught of high school students at the Everett Alvarez High School, a public high school in Salinas, which is known for gang violence and low academic achievement. The students seemed initially suspicious of Michael's different approach. But within fifteen or twenty minutes, students were already sharing their poetry, which was sometimes funny, sometimes serious and often poignant. The trust and freedom that he was able to engender in such a short time was remarkable and the students were clearly disappointed when the class ended. Schools would be so lucky to have someone with Michael's talents and creativity in the classroom on a regular basis.

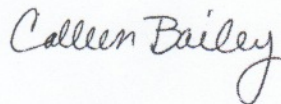
Over the past two summers Michael also worked to support the National Steinbeck Center's largest annual program, the annual Steinbeck Festival, by teaching writing workshops to both students and adults, helping with coordination, lending logistical support to the program director and making recommendations of authors and artists who should be included in the programming. Because of Michael, the National Steinbeck Center has developed a relationship with all of the following:

- Poetic Justice, a theatre group of previously incarcerated actors;
- David Dominguez, a Latino poet and teacher; and
- Luis Rodriguez, a former gang member turned social activist and writer.

In each case, the artists he recommended brought new audiences to the National Steinbeck Center and made the work of the Center relevant to a more diverse audience. In addition, these artists helped spark a community dialogue that is on-going about how to solve current social issues.

Michael would be an excellent Literary Arts Coordinator or Creative Writing Workshop Facilitator for any organization or program that is trying to engage students and/or adults, especially on the far ends of the spectrum, who are not being well served by traditional instruction models. I would be more than happy to answer questions should you wish to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Colleen Bailey".

Colleen Bailey, Executive Director
The National Steinbeck Center
One Main Street
Salinas, CA 93901
(831) 775-4724
colleen@steinbeck.org



February 6, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

I have known Michael McLaughlin professionally for 11 years. In the early 2000s, he worked for me in the Arts in Corrections program at the California Men's Colony, teaching creative writing to inmates in the prison's medium-security east facility.

Our nonprofit program, Poetic Justice Project, serves formerly incarcerated people, as well as those in custody. When an opportunity arose to provide arts instruction at the San Luis Obispo County Jail's Women's Honor Farm, I asked Michael to teach Poetic Justice Project's first creative writing class there.

Michael McLaughlin is a gifted teacher who is passionate about teaching his craft. He is also skilled at working with students who may not have the educational advantages that some of their peers enjoy. Recently some of his students at the jail presented their work at a statewide conference for jail program administrators held in San Luis Obispo. Their articulate, passionate delivery of their work reflected well on Michael's ability to inspire trust and confidence in his students.

Michael is a friendly, outgoing person who is conscientious in his work habits. He possesses an ability to work independently as well as collaboratively. I recommend him for any position that calls upon his considerable skills as a writer and a teacher. Please contact me at (805) 264-5463 if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Deborah Tobola
Artistic Director

Los Ranchos Elementary School

5785 Los Ranchos Road
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
(805) 596-4075

November 24, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

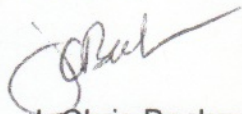
RE: Michael McLaughlin

Michael McLaughlin has conducted poetry lessons through California Poets in the Schools program in my sixth grade class several times over the past five years.

Michael was always prepared, enthusiastic, and extremely creative for every one of his lessons. He instantly took control of the class via his personality, unique delivery, and use of different modalities. He captured the attention of the students by giving them immediate connections to the topic at hand. His insightfulness and creativity engaged the students from start to finish. Michael created an emotional learning environment that motivated students to stretch from their comfort zone and take risks with their writing. He did all of this with only one or two sessions. I can't help but imagine what impact he would have with a class if he had more time with them.

I enthusiastically recommend Michael for a substitute teaching opportunity. His love for life is contagious. What better person to have in front of students!

Sincerely.



J. Chris Becker
Sixth Grade Teacher
cbecker@slcusd.org

Cuesta College
Human Resources Office
PO Box 8106
San Luis Obispo CA 93403-8106

November 3, 2006

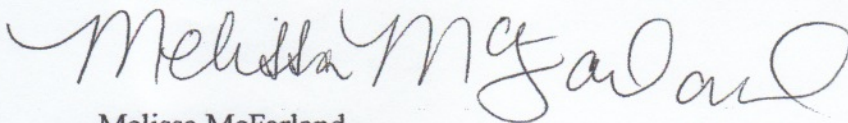
Dear Human Resources Office,

Michael McLaughlin is currently teaching a poetry class at The Village at Garden Creek, a Senior Assisted Living Community in San Luis Obispo. He has been on contract with us for the past few years. Working with frail elderly residents can be a challenge, yet Michael shares his expertise and knowledge generously, and always offers an appropriate selection of material.


Michael has taken the time to connect with each resident, igniting their memories and providing a way for their families to hold on to them. His care and compassion make him an above-and-beyond teacher. Michael is a pleasure to work with and offers an exceptional program to our senior residents.

I am confident that he will provide an extraordinary experience for your students, and I support Michael's teaching skills to the fullest.

Sincerely,



Melissa McFarland
Recreation Director
The Village at Garden Creek
San Luis Obispo CA 93405
805 543-2311 ex. 15
mmcfarland@westpacusa.com



Mental Health

Atascadero State Hospital

MEMORANDUM

TO: Michael McLaughlin
SLO Poet Laureate
Arts in Mental Health

DATE: November 6, 2003

FROM: Executive Director's Office

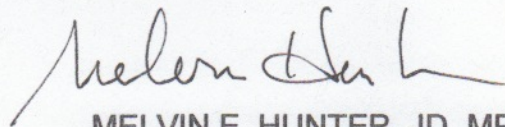
TELEPHONE: (805) 468-2001

SUBJECT: **KUDOS**

I've heard positive things about your work here at Atascadero State Hospital. I was pleased to read the nice article about you in Sunday's Tribune.

Thank you for the creative interaction you offer our patients, providing them a sense of self-esteem through their own creativity with art.

I agree with the patient's comment as quoted in the article, "It's an honor to have you here."



MELVIN E. HUNTER, JD, MPA
Executive Director

c: James Neville
Linda Wargo



DO YOUR PART TO HELP CALIFORNIA SAVE ENERGY
For energy saving tips, visit the DMH website at
www.dmh.cahwnet.gov

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

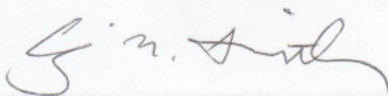
I am writing this letter of support for Mr. Michael McLaughlin who has taught writing workshops for our Youth Authority Arts Program for the past two years. Mr. McLaughlin is an exceptional writer and teacher who has demonstrated a strong commitment to our constituents, young felony offenders incarcerated in the California Youth Authority system.

I have been particularly impressed by Mr. McLaughlin's ability to develop a rapport with our students in a workshop setting. Mr. McLaughlin has received strong results from his workshop participants by setting guidelines for certain forms of writing, giving numerous, rich examples, and then allowing the students to couch their own experiences and feelings within the given parameters.

Many of Mr. McLaughlin's students have continued to write outside of the workshop setting, a strong testimony to the positive influence of his efforts. A number of his students have won awards in local and regional contests sponsored by the Sacramento Bee and the San Joaquin County Arts Council. This type of continued activity and involvement on the students' part is the obvious by-product of Mr. McLaughlin's influence and strengths as a teacher.

Personally, I find Michael McLaughlin to be a straight-forward, amiable individual. In conversation, his concerns for personal work, teaching, and family are evident from the onset. I am extremely grateful for his strong, repeated efforts with our program's constituents. If I can provide other information regarding his work and demeanor please do contact me immediately. He has my full support.

Sincerely,



Craig N. Smith
Artist/ Facilitator, North
Arts in the Youth Authority
(209) 944-6133



July, 25, 2003

To Whom It May Concern,

Michael McLaughlin taught a Creative Writing class to incarcerated adults for the Arts in Corrections' Program at Avenal State Prison until the program was cancelled due to California's budget problems.

I have only the highest regard for Michael's teaching skills. He is an experienced teacher who has an easy, relaxed teaching style. His quick mind and thorough knowledge of his material both challenges and motivates his students and he was always willing to spend the extra time necessary to find and to provide his students with related videos, a personal lending library, and other reference material unavailable in the prison environment. Michael has that special talent of being able to touch a deep inner source in each of his students and inspire them to produce very personal, sensitive writing.

He always acted responsibly toward the job, with it's special security requirements, and toward his students. Michael McLaughlin was definitely an important asset to our art programming at the Institution and I would give him my highest recommendation.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Doug Lawrie', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Doug Lawrie

Program Coordinator
Arts in Corrections
Avenal State Prison
P.O. Box 8, Avenal, Ca. 93204



DR. JOHN A. DAVITT
Superintendent President

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January 14, 1991

Placement and Career Planning Center
Career Development Unit
UCLA
Los Angeles, California 90024-1573

To Whom It May Concern:

Michael McLaughlin has been an instructor in our Credit ESL Program since the beginning of our current fall semester (September, 1990). He has been assigned a part-time instructional load of nine hours per week, including ESL 171 (Level I, Grammar/Composition) and ESL 166 (Level IV, Grammar/Composition). He is very well liked and respected by his students as well as by his colleagues. I had the opportunity to visit his ESL 171 class. I was greatly impressed by his instructional expertise and by the energetic and motivating learning environment he created. The instruction was professional, yet highly human and very lively. His talents in the classroom, although derived from a great deal of training and experience, are largely innate.

Michael has been a pleasant colleague and my office staff and I always look forward to his visits. He is very attentive to detail and pays careful attention to the clerical and administrative responsibilities expected of an instructor outside the classroom. In a program as large as ours, this is greatly appreciated. I recommend him strongly, without any reservation whatsoever, as a candidate for any teaching position for which he might be considered. Please contact me if I can provide any additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Seltzer".

Richard Seltzer
Credit ESL Coordinator

El Camino Real Community Adult School

5440 VALLEY CIRCLE BOULEVARD WOODLAND HILLS, CALIFORNIA 91367

TELEPHONE: (818) 888-1491

LEONARD M. BRITTON
Superintendent of Schools

SHELDON R. SENCER
Principal

November 2, 1989

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to write this letter of recommendation for Mr. Michael McLaughlin. I was Michael's immediate supervisor at the Refugee Employment Training Project, in the Division of Adult and Occupational Education of the Los Angeles Unified School District from September, 1984 to January, 1986. Michael worked as an instructor of English as a Second Language.

Michael is an excellent instructor whom I observed on numerous occasions. He is innovative and uses many varied techniques with his students. He is very concerned that the students succeed and make every effort to help them accomplish this. He is able to handle large classes, maintain a healthy learning environment, and at the same time, gain the participation of all the students.

Michael is personable, very reliable, and conscientious. I have found him to be extremely responsive and cooperative; he involved himself totally with the curriculum and goals of the Refugee Project.

Michael's broad and extensive experience in teaching, together with his other qualifications, would make him an ideal candidate for a teaching position in any school.

Sincerely,



Paul J. Hamel
Assistant Principal

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Fairfax Community Adult School

7850 MELROSE AVENUE, LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90046

TELEPHONE: (213) 653-4085

HARRY HANDLER
Superintendent of Schools
JANICE R. BRITTAIN
Principal

June 1, 1987

To Whom It May Concern:

I am not in the habit of writing "blanket" letters of recommendation for teachers, but I can honestly recommend Michael McLaughlin for a position as an ESL teacher in any school or college. Mr. McLaughlin has been employed at Fairfax Community Adult School for the past three years and has taught all levels of ESL. He is an outstanding teacher who is respected by his colleagues and students. Michael is a totally committed teacher who has a remarkable rapport with his students. He is sensitive to the needs of his students at all times. I am proud to have had Mike McLaughlin as part of the Fairfax Community Adult School Staff. He will be greatly missed by all who have worked with and who have known him.

Sincerely yours,


Jack E. Behrendt

JEB:jw



Stanley Treitel
Executive Director
936-8143



MAIN OFFICE
128 S. La Brea Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90036

Fiscal Office
938-8146
Training & Job
Development Division
936-8148
Handyman & Senior
Secure Division
936-8278



VALLEY OFFICE
12011 Victory Boulevard
No. Hollywood, CA 91606

Training & Job
Development Division
985-7801
877-0293
Handyman & Senior
Secure Division
985-3731
877-0294



WEST LOS ANGELES-
SANTA MONICA OFFICE
1801 Pico Boulevard
Santa Monica, CA 90405

Training & Job
Development Division
450-1818
870-4707
Handyman & Senior
Secure Division
450-8711



VITALIZE FAIRFAX
PROJECT
7951 Beverly Boulevard
Los Angeles, CA 90036
651-4610



HOLLYWOOD ECONOMIC
REVITALIZATION EFFORT
1717 N. Highland Avenue
Suite 707
Los Angeles, CA 90028
463-3171

February 25, 1982

To Whom It May Concern:

Michael McLaughlin was employed by our CETA-funded agency from October, 1980 through January 1982. His position with us was that of Vocational ESL Instructor for our Westside/Santa Monica Division Programs, and he taught an economically disadvantaged group of limited English-speaking adults. Our Program is quite diverse both in terms of ethnic background, and in terms of level of English at entry and educational background in country of origin.

Michael's mandate was to prepare this group of program participants to enter full-time employment through our On-the-Job Training Program in the private sector. He was to accomplish this in a 12-week, 30-hours per week Classroom term. Thus, due to the wide variances in the class make-up and the short time provided to teach them, the position was a very demanding one.

Michael met this challenge with exemplary energy, enthusiasm and expertise. His students rose in their ability to communicate and he was able to maintain their interest, and deal with individual differences and problems effectively. He also established a good rapport with many of the students which proved very helpful in encouraging them to meet the job search process optimistically and successfully. His insight into each student's character traits were invaluable in assisting my Job Counselors to job place appropriately.

I can recommend Michael without qualification to perform with great dedication and to attain the desired goals of instruction.

Sincerely,

Dorothy Eldan, Director
WESTSIDE/SANTA MONICA OFFICE