

January 31, 2014

Re: Jacqueline Lepe

Dear Madam/Sir:

It is a pleasure to write in behalf of Jacqueline Lepe's application for your McNair Scholarship. Jacqueline is an outstanding scholar and person who cares a great deal about improving the lives of people who live in poor communities that are rife with crime, drug abuse and violence. She came from such an environment and escaped, with the help of an amazing high school teacher. She has taken her education very seriously and realized that there are ways she can help people in such communities change their lives for the better.

Jacqueline has taken two courses from me and earned high "A" grades in both. I am very impressed with her as a student and a person. Jacqueline has worked hard to learn in college, and has now excelled in her studies here at the University of California Santa Barbara. For example, she has earned a place on the Dean's Honors list in recent three quarters, which shows a great deal about her and the seriousness with which she takes her work.

The McNair Scholarship would help her fulfill her dream of working with a professor who is doing research on young people living in poor communities and figuring out ways to help them better themselves. She plans to engage in research and manage the research program for a year then learn to speak at organizations where such research can be useful in bringing funding and help to the people who need it so desperately. All of this experience will help her gain the information needed to apply to graduate schools and earn the funding for supporting her graduate education.

Jacqueline has already spent two years working with Dr. Victor Rios in our UCSB Department of Sociology doing things very relevant to her goals. She has helped with his studies on gangs in the more violent parts of our city, collecting data, coding data, presenting findings, and so forth. Dr. Rios has worked mostly with delinquent boys, but Jacqueline wants to study and help both boys and girls, since she once was in a girls' gang that did things that now shock her. She has lived a life that has motivated her to take on this task with a genuine passion that truly impresses me. She has very high standards for her own work and a great eye for detail.

She has outstanding communication skills: She speaks and writes fluently in both English and Spanish. She is creative in solving problems and helping people work together cooperatively. She is a team player who is exceptionally well organized and makes sure that her work and the work of others are done professionally, carefully, and with attention to detail. She is well liked by her peers—and by the faculty with whom she works. Jacqueline is one of the most hard-working, honest people you could hope to know. Jacqueline is a cheerful and positive person with a great personality and I can see her going far in her career. She is a truly amazing person: Her voice and face sparkle with

enthusiasm, and you soon learn that she has risen to many challenges in life, taken many adventures and learned more about life than most people her age.

In summary, I think Jacqueline is a truly amazing person who will make many valuable contributions so society. She will do a stellar job at her research, making her findings visible, and hence in helping countless people in poor communities. Jacqueline is forward looking, with the ability to plan her time and activities to attain long-term goals. In addition to having a keen mind, she is serious, conscientious, hard working and very responsible. She is both an excellent student and a happy, well-adjusted person with whom it is a pleasure to work. Jacqueline earns my highest level of recommendation. If I can be of any further help to you, please do not hesitate to phone me at (805) 967-4995.

Sincerely,

John D. Baldwin  
Professor  
baldwin@soc.ucsb.edu