



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
TOWNSEND HARRIS HIGH SCHOOL
AT QUEENS COLLEGE



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To Whom it May Concern:

When Nodi Khan reached out to me about writing her a college recommendation, I was thrilled to assist such an exceptional student. I have worked closely with Nodi over the course of her four years at Townsend Harris High School, both as her sophomore English teacher and as the director of the school musical. Whether in her capacity as a student in my class or as a set designer for the drama program, Nodi has never ceased to amaze me. She is innately intelligent, exceptionally creative, and a natural leader.

Back in the 2018-2019 school year, Nodi's freshman year, I was tasked with directing Townsend Harris High School's spring musical, *The Wiz*. At the first set-design meeting, Nodi's artistic eye was immediately apparent, as she provided a series of standout sketches for what the Emerald City backdrop might look like. From that point on, I leaned on Nodi more and more (despite her underclass status), and she didn't disappoint, as she helped to select the color palette for Kansas, execute a steam-punk aesthetic for the evil witch's factory using stage foam, and design the Wiz's throne. Over the course of the production, not only did Nodi emerge as a creative force, but her impeccable attendance and collaborative spirit also clued me in on her untapped leadership potential. After the show concluded, I looked forward to working with her on future projects.

I didn't have to wait long, as Nodi was enrolled in my theater-based sophomore English class the following year. As part of the class, I arranged for my students to travel to a local elementary school to put on theatrical performances inspired by animal-based folklore. That

year, I pioneered a multi-media campaign to accompany our performance, and, given her talents (and my inexperience with social media), I turned to Nodi to run it. Unsurprisingly, Nodi went above and beyond; not only did she craft a beautifully designed playbill that the elementary students could interact with, but she also launched an Instagram account for the class, curating posts and stories that generated quite a buzz for our performance.

Though her multi-media contributions were enough to secure her an A on this assignment, Nodi volunteered to help out other departments solely because she wanted to make the production as successful as it could be. When we needed an actor to take on the role of one of the over-the-top villains in our production of "Momotaro," Nodi stepped up, throwing herself fully into the role and encouraging her peers to do the same; when our costume designers needed assistance executing their vision for the lead character, Nodi provided valuable input that helped them clear their mental hurdles. In the end, that year's folktale performance was one of the most successful we've ever had - the elementary school students truly loved it - and that success was largely thanks to Nodi's varied contributions.

This year, we will be performing *The Little Mermaid* for our spring musical; due to the pandemic, this is the first production we've put on since *The Wiz*. We now have a teacher working as the set designer, and after his first meeting with the art students, he reached out to me asking, "Do you know Nodi Khan? She's really impressive." I let him know about our history, and he informed me of the elaborate plans (involving multiple levels and creative use of the cyclorama) for the *The Little Mermaid* that she had already begun to develop. I'm confident that the set for this show will be outstanding, largely thanks to the creative leadership of Nodi. I'm truly excited to collaborate with her on one last creative project.

To this point, I've only discussed Nodi's artistic and leadership acumen; however, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge her academic talents as well. In my sophomore English class, she received high scores on assessments, created in-depth annotations, composed impressive essays driven by probing thesis statements, and moved classroom discussions forward with open-ended questions that went beyond a superficial understanding of the material. Specifically, I'll never forget her performance during a full-class debate on the morality of the main character in Anton Chekhov's "Hush." She argued with such poise and eloquence that the majority of the class was convinced of her point by the time she finished speaking.

Nodi Khan is truly a standout student. She is a creative force, a natural leader, and an innately intelligent student. Though I wish the pandemic hadn't robbed us of a full year of creative, in-person collaboration, I'm so appreciative of the work we have done, and I'm truly excited about the work we've yet to do. I hope you take my sincerest recommendation to accept her into Harvard College, so that you can reap the rewards of her continued creative development. Feel free to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Dunbar". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping initial "R" and "D".

Ryan Dunbar

English Teacher

Townsend Harris High School