



October 6, 2015

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to you on behalf of HEMEN AKLILU who is a current senior here at Mother of Mercy High School. This is my third year serving as Hemen's counselor and I am delighted to have the opportunity to recommend her to you.

As an educator, only once in a great while do I meet a student who truly stands out among her peers: Hemen Aklilu is one of those students. Hemen was born in Ethiopia and at age eight came to the US to live with her mother who came to the US shortly after Hemen's birth. During the spring of 2014, her father and stepmother moved to the US and to Cincinnati to be more supportive during her final years of high school. Hemen's mom has struggled to keep a job and has been a very strict parent who has significantly limited Hemen's ability to participate in school activities. For example, Hemen was elected to student council and was not permitted to participate. According to their cultural patterns, mom has wanted Hemen only to focus on her studies.

With all of that said, in working with Hemen, I have found her to be extremely motivated, endlessly positive and possessing a heart of gold. Wherever she can and whenever mom would allow Hemen has given of her time and talent to service through our student recruiting committee and our Key Club. She has also been a regular summer volunteer and youth intern at Good Samaritan Hospital. While Hemen did not come to Mercy from the strongest grade school or start in our highest-level classes, she is a disciplined and dedicated student who challenges herself and is totally committed to the idea of a career in the medical world if only given the opportunity. I have never met a young person so full of the *desire to be good and to do good works* for the underprivileged people of the world. I believe that standardized tests are not a true reflection of Hemen's ability as they are impacted by the fact that she speaks her native Ethiopian language at home. Amid these challenges, I am firmly confident that Hemen will persevere and reach her goals.

I give Hemen Aklilu my strongest and most enthusiastic recommendation. Again, I am confident she will be successful at reaching her academic and career goals. Please contact me at 513-661-2740 x 308 or at [meyer\\_m@motherofmercy.org](mailto:meyer_m@motherofmercy.org) with any questions you may have about Hemen.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle M. Meyer, Director of Counseling