



May 5th, 2024

To whom it may concern:

Keri Akemi-Hernandez has asked for a letter of support, and I am pleased to write this letter on her behalf.

I have known Keri for five years. In my former role as Director of Chapter Development for AIBL, American Indigenous Business Leaders, Keri was instrumental in the work she did for this organization. She tirelessly volunteered her services to help recruit new AIBL Chapters in California. Keri was a Chapter Development liaison for Napa Valley College, Sonoma State, and San Francisco State Universities. Keri was the one who started each of these Chapters and provided me with advisor contacts.

At our annual AIBL National Conference, Keri was a terrific Guest Speaker and moderator for the Elevator Pitch Workshop. She also was a Business Plan judge for the business competitions from 2019 to 2023. Keri was invaluable in this role. She thoroughly critiqued each submitted business plan beforehand, and come competition time, she asked students thought-provoking questions and gave them sound advice on their plans. She was an outstanding judge on the panel and received rave reviews. Keri also brought students with her to our last conference together to get them interested in starting their own AIBL Chapter.

As a supporter of AISES (Advancing Indigenous People in STEM), where I am currently employed, Keri continues to be involved with our students and community. She will be volunteering her time by attending one of our AISES Adventure Community Events.

Keri is extremely passionate about helping students and her community. A highly active leader, she will do remarkable things in her new role as the founder of Bear Root Resource Center. In closing, I highly recommend Keri for any resource or support you can give her. She will work tirelessly on your behalf for all those involved.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for further information. I can be reached by phone or email. Thank you for this consideration.

Best:

Kathy Sharbono

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