

August 5, 2020

FROM: Randy L. Gray

RE: Letter of Recommendation/Position of CEO

As the retired President and CEO of MARC Community Resources over the past 40 years, I have been asked to compose numerous letters of reference on behalf of individuals for honorary positions and appointments. The honor of recommending Justin Ogburn ranks as one of the most significant letters of endorsement I have ever written.

I have known Justin on both a personal and professional level for over 15 years. Indeed, it was during my employment tenure that Justin was hired in a leadership position, culminating in his appointment as President of MARC upon my retirement.

Justin possesses vision, passion, and foundational knowledge of the disability movement. Prior to his appointment as a MARC employee, Justin served as a volunteer member of the MARC board and other non-profit organizations, including Cortney's Place—an organization that served individuals with pronounced intellectual impairments and physical disabilities. These experiences enabled Justin to acquire significant knowledge of management information systems, encompassing strategic planning, outcome evaluation, and market-based planning, to highlight a few. As the director of business development for Fry's/Kroeger, he acquired a high degree of financial acumen.

Resource development and management of human capability and motivation is one of Justin's most cogent strengths. Personnel at all levels are drawn to Justin because of his ability to listen and mutually resolve issues. Justin gains a high level of recognition and acceptance, not only because of his competence, but because of his core values and accountability that include compassion, honesty, empathy, fairness, respect, and trust—values that have shaped the foundation of his professional life. In conjunction with these personality attributes, Justin's various leadership roles have allowed him to interface with significant community leaders and to pursue financial support from civic leaders, as well as third-party grants and foundations.

Justin's ethics are beyond reproach and he has truly demonstrated to this profession and to the community a high regard for professional standards. Of course, this approach postulates that people who have disabilities are the best experts regarding their individual needs and should be actively engaged in designing and promoting better solutions for their challenges. Based upon my association with Justin, I can truly say that no individual possesses more capacity to engender open communication, listening skills, mutual trust, and management of human differences and use of leadership skills. He brings a contagious and tireless energy in regard to advocacy and enhancement of

independent living skills. His strong sense of integrity and enthusiasm have always galvanized the dedication of others towards purpose and mission. While some might quip that leaders administer, Justin engages employees to be team players. While some leaders imitate, Justin originates; while some leaders accept status quo, Justin challenges it; and, while some leaders might say “something must be done”, Justin always says “I must do something.”

Obviously, this letter of recommendation is more lengthy than most. But my level of understanding of the disability movement and personal association with Justin offer the confidence level to highly recommend Justin Ogburn.

Sincerely,

Randy Gray

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