

1000 Warrior Way
Mount Pleasant, SC 29466
February 9, 2017

Ms. Leslie Dennis, Director of Scholastic Media Organizations
South Carolina Student Press Association
USC School of Journalism and Mass Communications
800 Sumter Street, Room 118-E
Columbia, SC 29208

RE: Mr. Mark Maddaloni – Wando High School, Mount Pleasant, SC

Dear Leslie,

It is my pleasure to write to you today about Wando High School senior and senior Tribe Talk News Director Mr. Mark Maddaloni who is competing for the title of SCSPA Journalist of the Year. While I have known Mark for the last two years as one of the driving forces behind Wando's award-winning broadcast program, Tribe Talk, this year I'm also happy to have him as a student in one of my sections of Advanced Placement Literature and Composition. It is during this class that I have further been fortunate to witness Mark's strengths as a class leader.

As a college-level class, much of our time in AP Literature and Composition is spent in seminar or class discussions. Since August 2016, I have watched Mark take leadership roles as either the facilitator or moderator of our various discussions. Not only does he frequently volunteer to lead seminars, Mark consistently demonstrates the ability to - fairly and in an unbiased manner - juggle the participation of 25 classmates which can, at times, be no small feat! Mark's skills as a reader, writer, and analytical/critical thinker are consistently put to the test in AP Lit and Comp, and he has never failed to rise to the occasion.

In addition to watching Mark come into his own as a class leader in AP Lit and Comp, I've had the happy opportunity to observe his growth as a leader of the Tribe Talk staff. It's clear that Mark is well-liked by his peers and adviser; I frequently see him as something of a Pied Piper as he trails eager staffers in his wake, teaching them new techniques to apply to the show and heartily encouraging them every step of the way. One of Mark's most impressive qualities

relevant to Tribe Talk is his sheer and sincere *enthusiasm* for the show. This manifests itself not only in the leadership and assistance he provides to fellow staffers, it is also noticeable in his high levels of creativity such as the ever-entertaining “Cooking With Mark” segments in which he has been known to emerge – with his ever-present smile - from an oven or refrigerator before leading viewers on a culinary excursion. It is also important to note Mark’s tenacious drive to ensure each broadcast is as close to perfect as possible, as evidenced in the hours (above and beyond the school day) that he devotes to Tribe Talk. Notably, on a recent teacher workday (no students on campus) Mark spent six hours in the studio finishing an episode. Clearly, this show is more than just a class or a grade to Mark; I would respectfully suggest that it is one of his passions and he is driven to deliver excellence

Thank you for your kind consideration of Wando High School senior Mr. Mark Maddaloni as a recipient of the SCSPA Journalist of the Year Award. I have every reason to believe he will represent SCSPA and the award in the most stellar fashion possible!

All the best,

Cynthia A. Lawson, MA, MAT

Advanced Placement Literature and Composition

Creative Writing I and II

Key Club Faculty Adviser

Wando High School, Mount Pleasant, SC