



THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-FLINT

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March 30, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

It is an honor to write a letter in support of Janet Haley, Assistant Professor of Theatre in the Department of Theatre & Dance.

I have had the pleasure of knowing Janet as a teacher, a friend, and now a colleague. As a new member of the faculty in the Theatre Department, I am grateful for the advice and support Janet has offered me during my first year of teaching. Although I have never officially asked, I consider Janet a wonderful mentor who makes time to nurture my professional development and encourage my own artistic endeavors.

Last year I had the privilege of working alongside Janet on the *Glen-Wood: Restoration of Spirit* project. As an admirer and advocate of community-engaged, devised work, I am pleased to see that Janet also recognizes the potential for this type of work not only for our students, but the greater Flint community. The *Glen-Wood* project was truly an ambitious one, and could only be successful under the careful and sensitive leadership of an artist such as Janet, who recognizes the importance of the 3-D experience in an age of digital reality.

Having observed the success of the *Glen-Wood* project, I was motivated to develop my own community-engaged theatre project working with students to create a piece of verbatim theatre that examines the impact of arson on the people of Flint. I am indebted to Janet for her support in developing this project, from her advice on collaborating with community partners, grant writing and budgeting, and much more. I am thrilled that this project has recently been awarded a fellowship from Arts of Citizenship, the same funding body that supported the *Glen-Wood* project, resulting in two consecutive fellowships awarded to the Flint campus and the Theatre Department. As someone new to the academic community, I could not have achieved this without the support and encouragement from Janet and as I continue to work on this project I am confident Janet will continue to encourage me throughout the process.

As a teacher, Janet has high expectations of her students and is able to nurture them in becoming not only confident and capable performers, but also sensitive, engaged-citizens who are able to recognize the importance of theatre and it's transformative power. Janet's aesthetic is clear in her recent production of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which presents a mortal world in a period of strife and uncertainty; much like our own post-industrial city. This production demonstrates how Janet is able to take a classic text and present it in a way that is accessible to students and community members, bringing local and cotemporary issues to the stage.

Janet consistently makes bold choices with the work she chooses to direct. She recognizes the importance of presenting work that not only challenges our students, but also challenges audience members and raises important questions about the world in which we live. Her decision to direct Deborah Breevort's *The Women of Lockerbie* as part of next year's season is a brave choice. I anticipate this production will present many difficult questions relating to US foreign policy, and observing the current political climate of Libya and other North African and Middle Eastern countries, I feel this play will be incredibly relevant and encourage much needed dialogue on the complex issues surrounding this "age of uprisings."

It is a pleasure to work alongside Janet and I am truly grateful for her continued guidance and leadership. I share Janet's passion for creating theatre that is relevant to our students and the larger community, and I look forward to working with her to encourage our students to create work that is innovative, engaged, and ultimately prepare them for a life onstage and off.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "AM", written over a horizontal line.

Andrew Morton
Lecturer, Theatre & Dance