Governor's Scholars Program
2020 Community Recommendation Form
(for Character Reference)

MUST BE TYPED
(Once completed, please return to student or school)

Recommender's Name **Jenny Smith** Applicant's Name **Angela Taylor**

Recommender's Position & Organization **Human Resources Specialist, Technical Company**

Recommender's Phone: **502-555-5555** Email: **jenny@abc.com**
(Confidential and only used if needed)

How long have you known this applicant? **Approximately 10 years**

In what capacity have you interacted with this applicant? Initially, I got to know Danielle, her mother, father, stepfather and four brothers and sisters as neighbors and friends. Over the years, our relationship has grown and expanded as I've interacted with Danielle through numerous community service, church, and academic activities. I've watched Danielle's level of involvement and impact grow in these pursuits over the years by leaps and bounds. Danielle has become more than just as neighbor and friend; I consider her like one of my own children

Please check the number that represents your experience with this applicant as related to the qualities listed below. 5 represents the highest score and 1 represents the lowest score.

Willingness and ability to contribute to the community	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☒5
Cooperation, social and emotional maturity	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☒5
Character, integrity, and honesty	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☒5
Consideration for and attitude toward others	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☒5
Flexibility, willingness to adapt to new situations and accept changes	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☒5
Motivation, initiative, and self-starting ability	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☒5
Willingness to pursue visionary ideas	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☒5
Self discipline, responsibility, and dedication to following through	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☒5
Creativity and originality of thought	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☒5
Inquisitiveness, interest in a variety of topics and issues	☐1	☐2	☐3	☐4	☒5

As you respond to the following questions, please be sure to include specific details and examples. Brief responses that lack specific information do not provide the selection committee with sufficient information and will result in a lower score.

1. What do you consider to be the most relevant strength and weakness of this applicant as a member of the community?

   Although several considerable strengths stand out when I think of Angela, undoubtedly her most prevalent strength is her overall level of integrity. She is honest and forthright, and has an inscrutable sense of trustworthiness. Her words and actions are always straight forward and genuine; what you see is what you get with her, which is refreshing in our somewhat "artificial world" where integrity is not valued nearly enough. Angela is above board and highly conscientious. She is the most trustworthy young person I know, and she understands how valuable having a reputation as a person of integrity is.

   I have entrusted her with responsibilities that are usually reserved for people much older than she. A great example of this is Angela's work at a residential facility for developmentally challenged adults. Many of these people have a multitude of mental as well as physical disabilities. A standout amongst our volunteers, Angela worked tirelessly and compassionately with the residents and staff members. I could always rely on her to "roll up her sleeves" and take on even the most daunting tasks. She has humbly and cheerfully served in whatever capacity that was asked of her, and she worked closely with me to improve

the process/life experiences of each of these challenged adults. Without any hesitation, I know Angela will do what she says she will do, and she can be relied upon in a crunch. Being a teenager with this depth of integrity and sincerity takes a great deal of courage, and Angela is clearly driven by a strong inner moral compass. I believe this is derived from her unfailing compassion and concern for others.

Angela quickly demonstrated leadership potential while working with me. She has the ability to make sound, timely decisions in stressful situations. She is very analytical, and can rapidly understand how work needs to be done, and communicated this well with the rest of the volunteers. Always keeping the greater good of the residents in mind, she helped empower them to be more self-reliant, removing barriers where she found them, and solved problems many of us with more experience missed. For Angela, it wasn't simply enough to just "show up" or be pleasant to the people she served, she actually brought new ideas to the table that improved their overall experience. She created a positive, energetic environment where everyone's ideas were valued, and the residents understood they could trust and depend on her. A specific example of this was the need to provide resiliency within our volunteer staff. The level of attention amongst the volunteer population was growing year by year. It became more and more challenging to find trustworthy, reliable volunteers. This was a huge problem, as the residents did not adapt well to constant change. The never ending line of new faces was traumatic and unsettling for these residents, and a swift solution needed to be found. Angela had suggested that we more heavily recruit young adults/high school ages people to serve as volunteers. This began as a mail endeavor, but once she communicated the need within her school and church community, our volunteer population quickly grew, and became more stabilized as the rigor of work was more evenly distributed. New and profound relationships struck up between the residents and the young people, and it was a win/win for all participants.

Furthermore, Angela was able to build not only the trust and respect of the challenged adults, but also the team of volunteers we worked with. She built a positive work relationship by consistently making good decisions, keeping her commitments, treating others with respect, and adhering to high ethical standards. She wanted to be certain she did a great job, and openly sought out coaching and feedback in order to make adjustments and improvements. Her questions were very detailed, as she wanted to confirm she had the best course of action, and clearly understood the short and long term picture.

Another solid example of Angela's leadership potential is her ability to think outside the box and creatively solve problems. I am a Human Resources Specialist and at one time I was a Training Specialist. I had just been promoted to Senior Training Specialist. I have always worked in these positions form home, within the "Virtual Contact Center". Angela has observed what I do, and has always taken a special interest in what I do. I was preparing for a new class of 196 late one Saturday night, and all of the sudden my computer crashed. I was supposed to log on at 8:00 a.m. the next day, and start training. Long story short, I had a spare laptop, which I could use for the job, but did not have any of my documents that I needed, and was in full blown panic mode. Angela happened to be visiting at the time, and she immediately sprang into action to lend a hand-- actually she saved the day.

Angela suggested I create Excel Spreadsheets instead of the out-of-date rosters/performance Word Documents that I had already used for my training classes. After a few fact finding questions, Angela began creating resources, most of which I still use today. She created several spreadsheets, and trained me on how to use them in a few short minutes. Next, she created a dazzling PowerPoint display that was a huge success with the trainees, and my coworkers the next day. Angela's quick thinking and technological expertise resolved my issues, and saved me tons of embarrassment. She has the ability to quickly and thoroughly assess a problem situation, and dives in immediately to fix it.

2. Based on your experience with the applicant, what would you expect the single greatest contribution of this individual to be at the Governor's Scholars Program?

Angela has a plethora of strengths, talents and wisdom well beyond her years. I would expect her contributions to the Governor's Scholars program to be varied and plentiful. Angela has an incredible love of learning; she is curious and persistent in her quest to explore new subjects. She always has a repertoire filled with interesting facts and tidbits that she shares with her firmed, colleagues, and acquaintances. She seeks to become a modern day renaissance women, becoming eclectic in her knowledge. Her goal is to at least have an elementary knowledge in a vast amount of subjects. She can always pull out an interesting quote she has committed to memory from an ancient philosopher or author. Her intellect and zest for learning are impressive, and no doubt will go far in this world. The reason many of us grow to hate learning is because of the way we are accustomed to learning. To most of us learning is a chore, something that is forced upon us, and that is why we stray from it once our formal education ends. This is not the case for

Angela; she is a persistent self-educator and always has a project in the works that helped her learn something new. She understands curiosity is the beginning of a thrilling journey, not a task to be dreaded. She sees the joy and fun of learning, and that positive attitude spreads to others automatically. She constantly challenges and pushes her own boundaries, and never shies away from a tough area of study. This constant self-improvement/intrinsic learning style she possesses is contagious, and she will serve as a strong role model for her peers in the Governor's Scholars Program. Past performance predicts future performance, and Angela's level and depth of contributions as a mentor and scholar will be extraordinary for this program.

3. In your view, what is the potential of this individual as a future leader in his/her chosen professional field?

   The topic of career choice has been one that Angela and I have addressed often, especially as she approaches her senior year of high school. She has told me she finds deep fulfillment in her volunteering and desires to take that interest to the next level. She has noticed in her interactions with the residents the calming and therapeutic effects of creating art and wants to combine this observation with her own passion for artistry into a career. We have researched together the different paths she can take and whichever Angela chooses will be very lucky to have her. I know she will bring the same life-seizing tenacity and compassion to art therapy as she has to every other aspect of her life. I can see her making great strides in this field of study. Perhaps, one day I will be using her methods with my own residents. The beauty of all this, besides Angela's unceasing passion for life, is that I did not know she enjoyed art until we started having these conversations which just further reiterates the richness and complexity of her as a person. More than all her accomplishments and what she has to give others, she is assuredly herself. Any field, and any program for that matter, will benefit and blossom through her involvement and leadership.

4. What is most unique about this applicant? If you are aware of any hardships/conditions (social, emotional, or otherwise) that may impact this applicant's participation in the Governor's Scholars Program, please note them here. If information that you feel is important is not included elsewhere in your recommendation, please feel free to include it here also.

   What is the most unique feature of Angela? That's a tough question to answer, since she is amazingly dynamic and truly unique in many ways. From a very young age, I've observed Angela to be extremely curious, and she had an absolute hunger for learning. She is a voracious reader, and often times we discuss at length the books we are currently reading or want to read; we borrow from each other's personal libraries. She has the ability to absorb and apply abstract principles, and transfer these points of learning to other fields and applications, which, as an educator, I believe is a relatively rare ability. She encourages me and my family to read more often and on a broader level.

   Additionally, Angela understands that she is in charge of her own learning outcomes; she takes ownership of her academics and obligations. She works independently and pushes herself to not only get her work done, but to excel at it. She constantly raises the bar for herself, and her enthusiastic attitude about learning is catching. She's a magnificent role model for my own daughter who is one year younger than Angela. My daughter admires her greatly and sees Angela as a mentor. These are astonishingly unique traits for anyone, but given the fact that Angela is a sixteen-year-old, these are truly remarkable characteristics.

   It is important to know that Angela understands her words carry weight, and she is extraordinarily dependable. Others take her seriously. Because Angela is such a trustworthy and reliable young person, she is oftentimes asked to take on responsibilities and tasks that are out of her scope; carrying burdens that are not necessarily hers to bear. If she has a "weakness," it's that she does not set limits to the workload she is willing to take on, and the people around her have super high expectations of her abilities as a natural result of it. She manages superior volunteer work, a rigorous academic life, work, family, and social interactions with amazing ease. Whatever challenge is in front of her, she eagerly tackles it. She has time management and organizational skills that most people much older than she have not even come close to managing. Occasionally, I would like to see her take some downtime; say "No, I won't be able to do that for you," or have just some plain and ordinary time for herself. She's an exceptional young lady, so of course she has exceptional ways. I personally believe that is this inner drive and true dedication to all that she does that makes Angela a wonderful candidate for the Governor's Scholars Program.