

LAFAYETTE COLLEGE

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To the Members of the Selection Committee,

Please let this letter serve as my most enthusiastic and heartfelt recommendation of my colleague Mary Toulouse for The ACTFL/Faculty Development Programs of Cengage Learning Award. A longstanding director of our Foreign Language Resource Center as well as a beloved instructor of French language and culture, this outstanding administrator, educator, and language technology thought-leader truly exemplifies the Award's criterion of "excellence in the integration and use of technology in foreign language instruction at the post-secondary level."

"Madame Toulouse" is a driving force in teaching innovation in our department here at Lafayette College. As an expert in technology-mediated language learning and teaching, she herself has either developed or shepherded the creation of numerous student projects, workshops, and course programs in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Hebrew, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, and Ancient Greek and Latin. She has also acted as the chief steward of LaFolio, our department's innovative electronic portfolio for the demonstration and assessment of communicative cultural competence and intercultural citizenship. This instrument along with a set of unique digital badges we have created for the recognition of student achievement have been widely recognized here on campus and by colleges and universities across the country as an impactful, cutting-edge ecosystem of broad significance, and it exists in no small part because of Mary.

Through her work with LaFolio and, in general, with tech-based learning and teaching in the Foreign Languages & Literatures Dept. and across campus, Mary has played a pivotal role in fostering inclusive dialogue through one-on-one discussions, group workshops, and campus-wide presentations with numerous departments and programs with the goal of finding and strengthening curricular common ground using diverse technologies. For the past several years, she has also written successful grants to the French Ministry of Culture in order to organize and present a French Film Festival here on campus. Toward this end, Mary does a careful study of the latest French films, selecting those that resonate most closely with our campus' concerns and those of our nation and our world. She then invites speakers from amongst our College faculty and students to discuss the films with all viewers. Students and community members far and wide have attended the festival here on campus and through both real-time and online blog-based dialogue have become partners in a far-reaching community of learners who explore cultural identity from a panoply of perspectives.

On the national stage, Mary is also a sought-after, highly respected proponent of electronic portfolios for deep learning and teaching in world languages and cultures, and as such, through the numerous workshops and conferences to which she has been invited to share our work, she has put Lafayette on the "e-Map" as a front-runner in this important ecosystem. I'm proud that our co-authored article "Of Proficiency, Prochievement and (e)Portfolios: A Blueprint for Deep Language-Learning and Assessment" was published in the *Bulletin of the Association for Departments of Foreign Languages* in 2013, and our most recent essay "Electronic Portfolios for Language Learning and Assessment" just appeared in the 2016 volume of *Encyclopedia of Language and Education*. With these works and others

currently in the pipeline, Mary makes a lasting contribution to the scholarship of language teaching and learning in the digital landscape.

In terms of her character, Mary's gentle demeanor and her unfailing kindness and supportiveness foster an environment of collegial pedagogical inspiration both here at Lafayette, at colleges and universities across the nation, and in our wide-ranging digital learning community. She facilitates discussions, coaxes us all to participate in workshops, takes active interest in what each of us are doing in our classes and then researches, purchases and trains herself and our students and us in technologies that will help us to create unique, exciting, content-based language and culture projects of the highest quality. As a result our programs, our students, and we the faculty, have achieved proud levels of productivity and innovation well worthy of pride. Indeed, Mary's consummate professionalism, her collegiality, her talent as an educator and an educational innovator, and her unstinting devotion to the best and most forward-thinking practices in teaching and learning are emblematic of what makes Lafayette one of the nation's finest institutions of higher learning. She is richly deserving of recognition and praise, and I cannot recommend her highly enough.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Mary', written in a cursive style with a large loop at the end.