

May 4, 2012

To Whom it May Concern

I am writing to provide a recommendation for Justin Hanks who has just completed his undergraduate degree in Computer Science with a minor in Mathematics at Xavier University. I have known Justin throughout his undergraduate career both as one of his professors and as his advisor. During his tenure at Xavier, Justin was enrolled in 6 courses for which I was the instructor. In each of these courses, Justin earned either an A or a B, including the program's senior capstone seminar experience; a self-directed research course where Justin earned the only A of the class.

Three areas where Justin really shines are success in group work, personal creativity and a mature dedication to task completion. I suspect that Justin's success in team activities is enhanced by his extensive work with Xavier's theatre program (acting and directing). Both of Justin's team projects within the last three semesters (electronic ride board, and an operating system construction project) were successful and exhibited enviable team dynamics. Justin also possesses a unique creativity. I don't recall the specific problem posed, but I do recall my reaction during Justin's first semester (CS I) when he rather confidently suggested an unusually creative solution to a rather mundane introductory problem. Additionally, Justin's Discrete Mathematics paper (students need to write at least one paper in each course I teach) is the only student paper I have ever saved in 22 years as a professor! It was simply the most original and creative piece of writing ever submitted to me.

I am also deeply impressed by Justin's work ethic and dedication to task completion. These qualities were demonstrated during his senior capstone project; he simply figured out on his own what needed to be done, and then set out to accomplish it. By the end of the semester, Justin had succeeded in crafting a rather convincing ChatterBot. Similarly, when the successor to his on-campus job was named and wanted to begin work, Justin continued to work diligently at the job since he was "not yet done."

Not only was Justin a very successful computer science major, a mathematics minor, a deeply immersed member of Xavier's theatre programs, but he also found the time to anchor the computer science program's weekly voluntary outreach program at a local elementary-middle school. I believe that some of my favorite moments with Justin was watching him interact with 4th through 8th graders as he helped them learn computer programming with the Scratch programming language. The program's success this year is due in very large part to Justin.

In light of Justin's mastery of the fundamentals of computer science (3.5 in major GPA), his mathematical maturity, overall creativity, self motivation, and ability to complete self-directed work I wish to convey a very strong recommendation for Justin. It is my opinion that Justin possesses both the interpersonal and technical skills to succeed in your organization. I am confident in recommending Justin Hanks, for I have no doubt he will quickly become a very strong asset to your organization.

Sincerely,



Michael Goldweber
Professor of Computer Science and Mathematics