

SUPPORTING ADVISING DOCUMENTATION
CAA Primary (Experienced) Academic Advising Award 2021 Nomination
Serena Christianson

Table of Contents

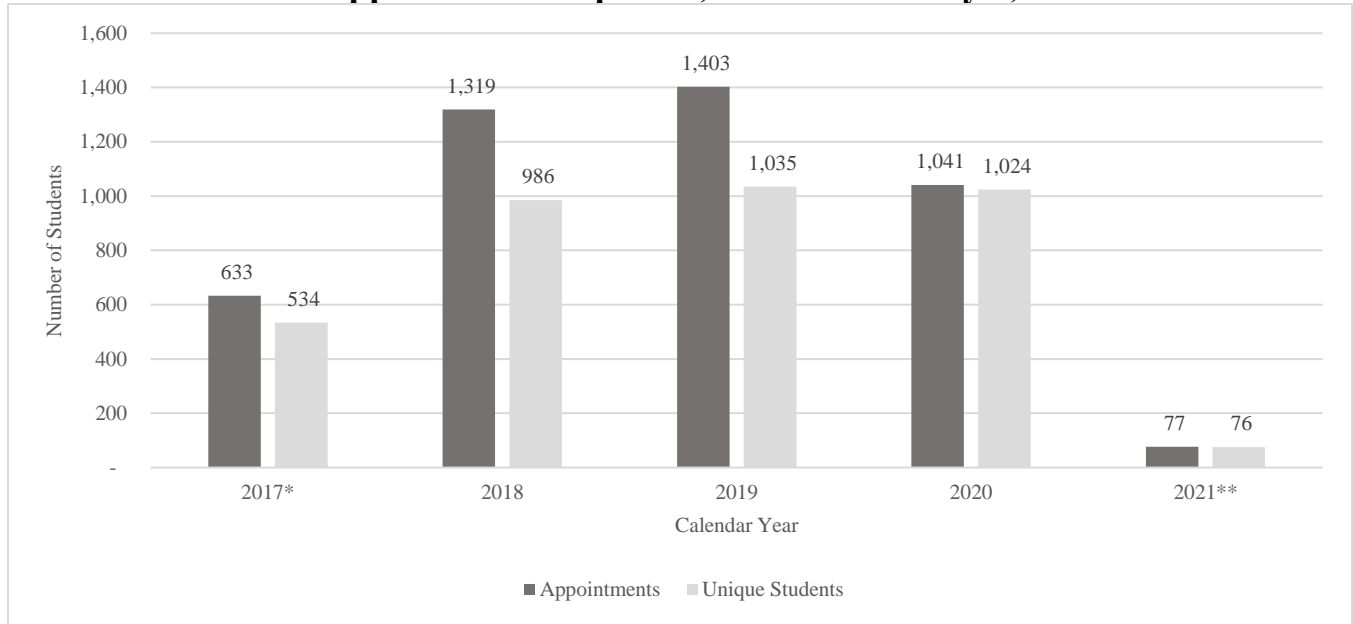
Number of Student Appointments: April 21, 2017—February 8, 20212

Student Survey Results: September 27, 2017—February 8, 2021..... 2-5

Letters of Support 6-5

- Letters from Colleagues/Peers 6-10
- Letters from Students 11-35

Number of Student Appointments: April 21, 2017—February 8, 2021



*First day of employment in SOLS and ASU was March 6, 2017; the first student appointment completely independent after the conclusion of training was April 21, 2017

**Data shown through February 8, 2021

Student Survey Results: September 27, 2017—February 8, 2021

Q1 relates to the performance of the front desk staff and was not germane to this report.

Q2: The advisor listened carefully to what I had to say**

Scale	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Quantity	193.00	9.00	1.00	0	0	203
Percentage of Total	95.07	4.43	0.49	0	0	100

Q3: The advisor was knowledgeable about my degree program/requirements, and university policies.

Scale	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Quantity	179.00	22.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	202*
Percentage of Total	88.61	10.89	0.50	0.00	0.00	100

**one student did not provide a response to this question*

Q4: The advisor helped me connect with campus resources and services.

Scale	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Quantity	176.00	23.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	201*
Percentage of Total	87.56	11.44	1.00	1.00	0.00	100

**two students did not provide a response to this question*

Q5: If the advisor did not know the answer to one of my questions, he/she made an effort to connect me with someone who does.

Scale	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Quantity	151.00	27.00	24.00	1.00	0.00	203
Percentage of Total	74.38	13.30	11.82	0.49	0.00	100

Q6: I feel confident in the info and advice I received from the advisor.

Scale	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Quantity	182.00	20.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	203
Percentage of Total	89.66	9.85	0.49	0.00	0.00	100

Q7: The advisor reviewed my DARS (Degree Audit Report System) and as a result, I feel confident utilizing my DARS.

Scale	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Quantity	173.00	17.00	10.00	1.00	0.00	201*
Percentage of Total	86.07	8.46	4.98	0.50	0.00	100

**two students did not provide a response to this question*

Q8: Based on your experience, do you have any recommendations or comments for the advisor?

- (very first survey Serena received): After 5 years of advising at my previous university and advising appointments from visits to several other universities, this was concise, incredibly informative, and I truly feel comfortable reaching out to Serena with any follow up inquiries.
- Serena is an amazing advisor! I left feeling more confident moving forward for what I need to do to be more successful.
- Serena is awesome!! Thanks so much for being so quick with email responses!
- Serena was extremely helpful!!
- Serena is brilliant!!
- Ms. Serena Christianson is a friendly and helpful advisor! I feel like I had all my questions answered during my meeting, thank you!
- Serena is always so helpful!

- Serena is always so helpful and encouraging. She is probably one of the best advisors
- The advisor was amazing, I really felt like I got help and I'm confident in moving forward :)
- Serena was amazing, she answered all the questions and explained everything clearly
- Serena is amazing! I feel more confident in knowing I am taking the right classes ever since I started seeing her regularly for my advising appointments. She really listens and encourages me to attend and try new events on campus that will further my career and degree. I am thankful for all the work she puts into the success of her students.
- Serena was wonderful and I look forward to meeting with her again in the future!
- Very knowledgeable and helpful, would absolutely return to her for advice.
- I went in thinking that I had no chance in getting into something for next semester without it getting in the way of school. She completely answered any question I had and made me feel more confident in the decisions I've been making.
- Amazing advisor who really cares about the student and is there for the student's best interest.
- Ms. Serena is perfect!
- None, She was Awesome!
- Thanks for asking me so much about my own life! You were so friendly and I felt like you were genuinely interested in me and my future.
- Serena is awesome! Every time I leave her office my fears are gone and I have a renewed sense of confidence.
- The best advice I've ever received. Super friendly, helpful and put me at ease with all my challenges. Thank you!
- Serena is awesome!!! Very nice and thorough
- She's amazing!
- I really appreciated that she went through DARS with me and explained it thoroughly. I have always been hesitant running DARS by myself, but now I am confident of using it myself.
- Nope. She was Perfect. :)
- Serena did an amazing job assisting me with my academic questions! Not only did she answer all the questions I had, she made a conscious effort to ensure I was on track with my career goals.
- I truly appreciated my experience with Serena. She was helpful and explained what she was doing and what my course load will look like in the future. I appreciated having everything she was doing explained to me.
- I love Serena , she is always so nice and helpful. Very happy to have her as an academic advisor.
- Keep up the good work. I really appreciated your assistance 😊 More availability. It's sort of inconvenient that we have to wait almost a week or two before even speaking to someone.
- She was incredibly sweet and helpful!
- I am thankful that she allowed me to voice myself.
- Serena was very helpful!; they were very helpful.
- The advisor was very clear about explaining my DARS report. Now I have a better understanding of how to navigate the class search according to the DARS report.
- I find her extremely available and helpful
- Serena was very helpful and kind.
- Serena is an amazing advisor. Every time I meet with her, I feel reassured and confident in my academics and ASU experience. In the last year, Serena was essential for my organization and success at ASU. Serena puts her all into our advising appointments and goes the extra mile to help me with anything I need.
- I had a great experience, thanks!

- Keep up the amazing work, great job
- She was great and helped me so much!
- Very kind and listened to what I have to say. Only interrupted when needing clarification.
- She is awesome. I appreciate her patience and insight.
- Serena was great! She helped me feel much better about the semester and gave me options that I was not aware were available.
- I feel that my advisor was well versed and knowledgeable. I had a wonderful experience with the Advising Office and do not have any feedback.
- Serena is great! She is super friendly and welcoming and remembers so many of us and our little details. She goes above and beyond!
- I love my advisor! She has been the first that's made me feel like she's really listening to me and helping make my dreams of being a college graduate come true! I love this advising office! I'm very pleased with the strides it's making in personalizing the advising process. It's very helpful to first generation college students such as myself.
- Just keep on doing what she's doing!!
- She is amazing. She is inspiring and incredibly helpful.
- Thank you so much Serena for being so helpful and for getting back to me quickly.
- I'm very happy with Serena as my advisor!
- I really enjoyed our conversation, it was great being able to talk through different options and paths. I also really appreciated the additional resources I received through email after. They definitely made me feel more confident in what we discussed during our meeting.
- Always a pleasure to work with her!
- No, I think she was perfectly knowledgeable and helpful.; No, I didn't really interact with anyone from the office, and the online portal worked well for me.
- Just keep doing what you're doing!
- Serena is always incredibly kind and helpful with all my questions!
- I love Serena! She has helped me so much throughout my education.
- Serena is always very helpful and encourages me to take my education even further than I myself think I will go :)
- None. Best advisor experience at ASU

February 2, 2021

Dear CAA Awards Committee,

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter in support of Serena Christianson's nomination for Primary Advisor of the Year. I have been Serena's colleague in the School of Life Sciences (SOLS) for over three years.

As the second longest-serving advisor currently employed in SOLS's on-ground team, Serena has mastered the complexities of the SOLS curriculum across ten majors, and has grown some of the closest student/advisor relationships I have seen from *any* advisor in our department. Her transparent and honest advising style allows her students to trust her, which keeps them coming back time after time. Prior to COVID-19, many would even stop by her office next door to mine just to say hello. Before we began an assigned advising model in Fall 2020, Serena always had a consistent caseload of returning students that specifically requested to meet with her. One of our ASU Online students in particular, Brianah, was able to develop such a close relationship with Serena that she flew across the country to present at the annual SOLUR Research Symposium so she could also meet Serena in person. When I met Brianah at the symposium back in 2019, I will never forget her saying how much of her academic success she owed to Serena. Brianah is now a PhD student at ASU.

Serena has gone beyond the call of duty on numerous occasions, most recently with assisting Dr. Carolyn Compton on a project in BioDesign's COVID-19 testing lab. A group of Barrett students is working collectively on a film to tell the story of the testing lab through the lens of biomedicine, business, technology and law. With Dr. Compton already incredibly busy teaching and running the COVID lab daily, Serena stepped up and assists with continuous student questions surrounding the project. She is the liaison between the students, Dr. Compton, and other interdisciplinary faculty involved in the project, often holding meetings in the early evening after work hours. Her ability to develop strong, reliable relationships with faculty is top-notch due to her confident demeanor and strong communication.

Serena has been pivotal in affecting change for how we think about advising STEM students in general. After working on numerous innovative career events, Serena has been an advocate for students to think outside the box in regards to careers. She has been the strongest advocate for encouraging advisors to have more conversations surrounding careers in their advising appointments, and to bring up the various directions one can take in different scientific fields. Her career events have not only opened up the students' minds about pathways in the life sciences, but our advising team's minds as well.

I believe Serena is an extremely strong candidate for this award, and please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,



Emily Vedder, M.Ed.
Academic Success Advising Coordinator
(480) 965-2282
esvedder@asu.edu

February 10, 2021

Dear CAA Awards Committee:

I am very pleased to write this letter of support for Serena Christianson for the honor of CAA Academic Advising Primary Role- Experienced.

I have worked with Serena since her first day in SOLS Advising. She brought great ideas and energy to her new role and has been delightful to work with from the very beginning. I would like to tell you a about my colleague, Serena Christianson, and address the specific competencies you seek in a candidate.

The kindness, compassion, and insight Serena displays in meetings with students is one reason her calendar is always full with student appointments. She is equally accessible to her colleagues and always the first to reply to an email plea for assistance. Serena's communication skills are superb. She communicates clearly and in a timely manner. She has an uncanny ability to send just the message at just the right time. She has truly mastered the art of student engagement; her events always have greater participation than one might expect. This demonstrates her ability to connect people with opportunities and motivate staff and students alike to participate. Community building has been a real challenge this past year and Serena has led the way - showing us all how to stay connected and support one another and our students.

Serena's network is vast and she is respected by everyone for her knowledge and professionalism. She is loved for her kindness and support. She is always the first to adopt new ideas, processes, and techniques. She patiently helps folks like me, who have a harder time with change, adapt. She mentors each new advisor and trains the entire team in career advising, believing that all advisors should have the knowledge and skill to have career conversations with students. She has changed the culture in SOLS Advising around this. Before Serena was hired in this role, Career and Internship advising was the purview of one advisor on the team. Few advisors had much knowledge of career paths other than health professional school or graduate school. Her "Science of ..." series has been wildly popular with students and advisors alike. She has forged partnerships with other Schools and Colleges, which has led to increased opportunities for our students and a more diverse understanding of what you can do with a Life Science degree.

Serena is inclusive in her practices, always recording events she holds for those who cannot attend and making sure those recordings are available on the SOLS website. She is a champion of inclusive practices for online students. She was the first in our school to invite an online

student to present in a research symposium, which was a game changer in what we now perceive as possible for this very important and growing group of students.

Serena always knows who can help in any situation. Whether it is referring a student in distress or connecting colleagues working on similar projects, she is quick to facilitate connections. She manages difficult conversations with ease and without judgment. She is equally adept at following up and making sure there has been resolution. She just doesn't let students (or colleagues) fall through the cracks. Reading her advising notes actually gives you a sense of the person, not just what classes that student is taking. Some notes you might find from Serena "Met with Ivanna briefly... putting on list to make note to get to know her more" or "big personality, confident, sells puppies" makes it very clear that she takes the time to get to know students and develop relationships. Intrusive, developmental, whatever the advising style, Serena adeptly shifts her style to suit the student and the situation. She created a Notable Students document in our office to make sure we can all nominate students when opportunities arise. This has provided opportunities for students to shine!

Serena's dedication to students, our advising team, and the whole ASU family is unquestionable. It is for all these reasons that I am confident Serena exceeds all the criteria for Outstanding Academic Advisor in a Primary Role. Please don't hesitate to connect with me if you have any questions. I am happy to talk.

Very kind regards,

Ivy Esquibel

Ivy Esquibel

Academic Success Coordinator
Career and Internship Lead – Online Programs
School of Life Sciences

Arizona State University

Mail Code: 4701
P.O. Box 874701 Tempe AZ 85287-4701
Tempe AZ 85287-4701

email: ivy.esquibel@asu.edu

web: <http://sols.asu.edu>

February 4, 2021

To Whom It May Concern,

I am pleased to recommend Serena Christianson for the CAA "Primary Advisor" Award. I serve as an academic advisor in the School of Life Sciences at Arizona State University and have been working closely with Serena since I was hired this past summer.

One domain in which Serena stands out is in her willingness to help novice advisors. When I joined the team, I shadowed Serena's advising appointments and she reverse-shadowed mine. This was an invaluable experience. Serena took time after each session to answer my questions in often extraordinary detail, and was unhesitating in her willingness to share email templates, useful links, and access to other resources. Even among the more senior advisors, she is regarded as a font of wisdom. I feel comfortable coming to her with the most idiosyncratic questions, confident that she will be both eager to help and correct in her suggestions. Conversing with her in this way is like quizzing an expert who enjoys being tested on her knowledge. I always come away learning more.

In my time shadowing Serena's appointments, I also saw firsthand the personalized attention she gives to her advisees. I could feel immediately that Serena did not just see her students as degree-seekers, but had succeeded in getting to know them as individuals. I remember one advising session that started off simply enough; a student wanted to know Serena's opinion on Pass/Fail grading. Serena not only talked him through this grading option but soon had him opening up about the additional responsibilities he faced serving as a student representative on the Arizona Board of Regents. Serena deftly wove together her knowledge of his extracurricular activities with his dual-degree in Neuroscience and Innovation to recommend he look into a graduate program offered by ASU's School of Management that had only recently come online. I'm not sure how many of our other advisors would have thought to mention it, or even known about it. In any case, I remember being impressed by what an apt suggestion it was given the student's academic interests and career goals. I witnessed several times Serena's ability to anticipate students' needs based on her capacity to connect with them first as people.

Finally, there is no one in the department who does more to facilitate our advisees' transition from student life to the career world. Not only does she run the on-campus team's internship program, but she also teaches a course on Career and Professional Development in the Life Sciences. She helps students explore the array of opportunities that exist for Biology and Microbiology majors by bringing in guest-speakers from diverse fields and organizing events. These events (which have included, for instance, a beer-tasting for upper-classmen to show the role of microbiology in brewing) open students' eyes to off-the-beaten-path career options in the life sciences. I have spoken to multiple students who have raved about her course, saying it gave them space to explore career options they had not previously known existed. Serena is constantly developing and implementing ideas for how we can make the degree more relevant for our students.

For all these reasons, I am delighted to recommend Serena for this award. Please feel free to reach out to me with any further questions.

Sincerely,

Evan Wladis

Evan Wladis, M.A.
Academic Success Advisor
School of Life Sciences
Arizona State University
(774) 766-7033
evan.wladis@asu.edu

ASU SCHOOL OF
Life Sciences
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

Dear Council of Academic Advisors (CAA),

Please find this strong letter of recommendation for Serena Christianson to receive the Academic Advising "Primary Advisor" Award. I came to know Serena nearly four years ago, and it is a pleasure to watch her grow academically, and professionally.

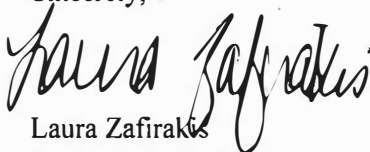
Serena is arguably the strongest Academic Advisor in the School of Life Sciences (SOLS). I can say with confidence that Serena is a hard-working, dedicated employee who is also committed to her educational passions, including earning an EdD while simultaneously working full-time.

Serena stepped into a challenging situation when initially hired because our Advising team was in the middle of exponential growth to accommodate our student enrollment growth, and as such, the department was a little discombobulated. They were reactive rather than proactive. Serena played an essential role in organizing her team's objectives by taking over career services opportunities for our students, managing the undergraduate student newsletter, and taking on additional advising appointments, among other responsibilities. She's always suggesting better ways to streamline processes, staying abreast of enrollment totals and course projections (she frequently reaches out to me for data that shows historical and current trends), she is one of the lead trainers for new staff, and because she's a knowledge resource and her input valuable, her opinion is often sought by leadership. People on her team look to her leadership, skills, and knowledge when in need of assistance.

I admire Serena's versatility, her initiative, and her natural ability to lead. These personal and professional qualities translate well for her in her profession as an Academic Advisor. Since working with Serena, I have been impressed with her ability to ascend in our department's staffing; she has accepted all additional responsibilities and side-projects that come with her role as a coordinator, rather than a specialist. If there's anything that I need from Advising, I go to Serena because she always comes through.

Serena is greatly respected by her peers, and has become an indispensable piece of our staff for our massively growing undergraduate student population, and is known as one of the hardest working members of her team. In summation, I can't stress enough how much I recommend for Serena to receive this award. She is the type of motivated yet socially sensitive scholar and employee that is a valuable asset to her team, department, and students. I hope you will give her serious consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,



Laura Zafirakis
Business Analyst
School of Life Sciences
Arizona State University
E: Laura.Zafirakis@asu.edu
P: 480-965-3572

February 8th, 2021

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing in support of Serena Christianson to be the recipient of the Council of Academic Advisors award for Academic Advising-Primary Role. As a student and advisee of Serena for nearly four years, I cannot recommend her highly enough for the recognition of the Outstanding Advisor Award.

The first time I met with Serena was over the summer of 2017. I had encountered unique difficulties with my schedule as an incoming freshman and was having trouble communicating my needs over email with the office, so I decided to drive 40 minutes to campus and seek assistance. I arrived just as the advisors were leaving to conduct orientations for the rest of the day. I still distinctly remember Serena turning to the other advisors, letting them know that she would catch up soon, and unlocking her office for me. Within 10 minutes, all of my questions were answered, and I cannot describe the amount of relief I felt as a young college student who had been listened to, understood, and advocated for. When I got home, my parents were impressed that she had gone her of her way to help me and told me to hold on to her business card; I still have it in my box of college memories.

Serena's advocacy only became more apparent over the semesters. Regardless of whether my questions pertained to life sciences, my career goals in pre-health, or my minor in music, she would immediately supply me with the resources I needed or refer me to the exact individual in other departments that could help. At many of our earlier meetings, I would start crying because of how overwhelmed I felt, but I would leave every appointment with newly instilled self-confidence due to her knowledge, guidance, and compassion. When friends and classmates were struggling, I would suggest they make an appointment with Serena, and they always came back describing that same feeling that comes with being heard, respected, and provided all the resources that one could need to be successful.

The greatest help from Serena came shortly after I had begun treatment for a mental health disorder. I had begun to feel a little more capable in my field, and I was considering altering my career path to pursue an MD. The notion was exciting but terrifying. When she asked what had led me to change plans, I was afraid to disclose my diagnosis because it made me feel weak; still, I decided to tell her because of the trust we had built. Her response was filled with warmth, understanding, and positivity, and for the first time in my college career, I did not feel weak, but strong enough to pursue the path that I was passionate about.

Ms. Christianson is absolutely capable at running graduation requirements, assembling schedules, and distributing career information, but the way she cares for her students, goes out of her way to get answers outside her department, and exceeds beyond expectations to know her advisees and meet their individual needs sets her apart. I believe she is the highest standard of an academic advisor, and I cannot imagine a more qualified candidate than Serena Christianson.

Sincerely,
Jillian Wright

February 10, 2021

Council of Academic Advisors
Office of the Executive Vice President and Provost of the University
Arizona State University
330 E University Drive, Suite 420
Tempe, AZ 85281

RE: Serena Christianson's Application for the CAA Spring 2021 Advising Awards

Dear Council of Academic Advisors:

I am writing this letter to strongly recommend Serena Christianson for the CAA Advising Awards for the Spring 2021 term. I had the pleasure of having her as my academic advisor for over two years while completing my undergraduate degree at Arizona State University.

During my first two years of college, I was constantly jumping from one advisor to the next without forming any real connections. It was not until I met Serena that I was able to truly form a genuine, open relationship with one of my advisors. Instead of sitting behind a large desk, she chooses to sit directly across from you, which makes her much more approachable from a student's perspective. Serena actively listens to what her students have to say and takes a true interest in their academic endeavors. When presented with difficult challenges, she is able to cultivate a positive attitude and simplify complex problems for her students. Serena values and employs the decision-making process where both the input of the student and advisor are respected and acknowledged. Most importantly, she creates an environment where students can feel comfortable to express themselves openly and honestly without judgement. Serena's unique advising style is one of the many things that led me to choose her as my academic advisor moving forward. I wanted to continue leaving my advising meetings with a renewed sense of confidence knowing that I can achieve my goals despite any issues I may face.

Over time, Serena has become much more than an academic advisor for me. She has also become a role model and a mentor. One of the characteristics I value most about her is that she always presents her true self and she kindly encourages the same transparency from her students. I was thrilled to learn about her passion for teaching dance through her studio business and her academic journey towards getting her doctorate in education. Her willingness to share her own personal goals and achievements with her students promotes an environment of trust, understanding, and inspiration. Apart from her refreshing candor, Serena is able to illuminate any advising session with her warm smile, helpful attitude, and cheerful personality. Further, she knows how to effectively monitor student progress and recognize when students are struggling or falling behind. During these difficult moments, she demonstrates her expertise in intrusive advising by conducting student check-ins and offering proactive support as students navigate through their academic or personal challenges. Serena truly serves as a repository of knowledge and she encourages her students to use her as a resource for any need such as career opportunities, course scheduling, or networking. I certainly took advantage of this opportunity to connect with the head of my undergraduate degree program or network with people in the community to enhance my professional and academic experiences.

Despite me graduating from college, Serena and I continue to build on that genuine, open relationship that we started during our first advising meeting together. She has watched me grow into the person I am today and continues to be one of my biggest supporters towards my goal of becoming a physician one day. Her guided support and kindness helped me to persevere through my highs and lows of college and for that I am thankful. She truly embodies the desired qualities of an outstanding academic advisor as she goes above and beyond to help all those around her.

Academic advisors are at the forefront of student success and I feel certain that you will find Serena to be a true leader in this field. As a first-generation college student who is immensely grateful for her continued support and guidance, I strongly encourage you to consider her for this award. Please do not hesitate in contacting me with any questions that you may have and let me know if I can provide any additional information in support of this deserving academic advisor. You may reach me at rbravo5@asu.edu or 562-457-9705.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Randy Bravo', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Randy Bravo, BS
Science of Health Care Delivery Graduate Student
College of Health Solutions, Arizona State University
Research Aide at the Action Nexus on Homelessness
Watts College of Public Service and Community Solutions, Arizona State University

February 5, 2021

RE: Serena Christianson's Application for the CAA "Primary Advisor" Award

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing this letter to strongly recommend Serena Christianson for the CAA "Primary Advisor" Award Program. I first met Serena at the freshman student orientation session way back in July 2017, and she has been alongside me ever since. Serena and I have a unique relationship in that we really grew into our professional goals over the course of four years.

Serena works with hundreds of students a day and somehow, she has made me feel like her only advisee. Through her role as an academic advisor, we have learned so much from one another.

Her commitment and dedication to her students is unparalleled to any other counselor at SOLS.

With ease, I opted to continue seeing Serena as my preferred advisor. She was the first and only advisor I have met with throughout my college career at ASU.

From the moment I met her, I could see that she was intelligent and understood the structures of medical education systems. She immediately acknowledged the importance of transparency and courage in my future career. Serena knew the importance of communicating upcoming resources such as internships, research opportunities, open job applications, and graduate programs. Not a single week goes by without her emailing a variety of possible opportunities to advisees catering to their professional goals.

I am forever grateful for Serena for my emotional, mental, and professional life. Over the years, I struggled with multiple medical issues that directly impacted my performance as a student. With every obstacle Serena was there to remind me that I can do anything I set my mind to. Her

resilience carried me through my first two years in college when I struggled with my illness the most. She completed countless forms, multiple appeals, and wrote a recommendation letter for my graduate program applications. I have great respect for her dedication and hard work. Serena is unlike any counselor, mentor, or advisor I have ever met in my academic career.

I strongly recommend her to be considered for the CAA "Primary Advisor" Award. Serena is a selfless, committed, hard-working advisor. I am confident all her advisees can verify her capability as an advisor at ASU. If there is anything more that I can provide, please do not hesitate to reach out. Thank you for your time and consideration. You may reach me at maboalam@asu.edu or 623-302-8819.

With Great Pleasure,

Mae Aboalam

Arizona State University

February 4, 2020

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing to recommend Serena Christianson for CAA's Primary Advisor Award with great confidence and pride. I had the pleasure of initially meeting Serena at my freshman orientation and she has been much more than an advisor since.

She has been my most valued resource in my transition from highschool to undergraduate education and now onto graduate school. As I struggled with the impending worries of my search for internships, creating my schedules, and facing my personal obstacles- Serena was there every step of the way. Even if my concerns were not within her area of expertise, she made sure to go above and beyond to help me with great efficiency and accuracy. She has provided me with countless resources and even directed me to her personal connections to maximize my success. Her referrals have opened several doors for me, from studying abroad, to interview achievements, and even interpersonal skills. Whenever I reach out to Serena for help, I am certain that she is working towards my best interest and that my success is prioritized.

Serena's passion for her job and genuine care for her students is visible from a mile away and whenever I have the opportunity, I always make sure to recommend her to other students. Usually, I am very good at staying in contact with Serena and setting up quarterly meetings. However, sometimes things can get overwhelming and I do not get the chance to reach out to her first. This is when Serena's attentiveness and support truly shines- I have not gone more than a semester without her checking in on me and providing me with all of my advising needs. She even takes the time to check in on my well-being and provide me with resources for my graduate school endeavors.

Rarely in life do you encounter people who truly care for your success and with Serena, her happiness is beyond evident everytime I move forward in life. I always cherish our conversations and make sure to keep up with news of her successes as well. She is a diligent individual with countless aspirations from her job, to her education, and even her hobbies.

With her passion for advising, genuine care for students, consistent outreach, strong referral skills, and her need to go above and beyond- I feel that Serena is undoubtedly the right person for CAA's Primary Advisor Award. Over the years Serena has not only become my go-to advisor, but a mentor and friend that I look up to. Please feel free to contact me at ahibrahi@asu.edu if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Aseel Ibrahim

Biological Sciences (Biomedical Sciences), BS
Transborder Chicana/o and Latina/o Studies (Community Development and Health), BA
Barrett, the Honors College

To whom it may concern:

As a student in the School of Life Sciences (SOLS) at ASU, I am writing in support of Serena Christianson for the Council of Academic Advisors Primary Advisor Award. As a junior studying biology, I have not met an advisor as diligent and thoughtful as Serena. I have known Serena for over one and a half years. In that time, I have had my fair share of uncertainty: what approach should I take to prepare for graduate school? What opportunities exist in this school for an underrepresented minority like myself? And how will I begin to comprehend the sea of paperwork that stands between me and graduation? The answers to these questions and more are made clear every time I finish a thorough and enlightening advising appointment with Serena. I often schedule appointments with Serena, at least twice a semester. At my convenience, she is readily available to talk about my plans for the future. For example, we recently discussed the possibility of pursuing a concurrent degree in biochemistry. I showed her an outline of my planned courses and the obstacles I must overcome to succeed. Serena pointed out potential hinderances with the schedule arrangement and formulated a backup plan for a biochemistry minor in the event something goes wrong. She also directed me to a couple other advisors who can help me with enrolling in classes outside our school, like mathematics. Immediately after our meetings, she sends a very helpful email detailing my next steps and the contact information for referrals.

Given the complexity of obtaining a degree, I frequently need help navigating the lexicon and formalities of paperwork and applications. I send Serena any and all paperwork, and within minutes, they have either been processed, approved or redirected to the appropriate recipients. I have talked to many other students (including some outside my field) and what I hear is always the same: "I sent my override application and it still has not been approved!" How fortunate am I that paperwork afflicts no worry on me. Serena also sends me informative emails that point out new research/volunteering opportunities and scholarships, many of which I have applied to. Serena has carefully monitored my progress towards graduation during and outside of our meetings and makes sure to bring up any complications upon detection. That to me shows a level of commitment to students unparalleled.

It is also fun talking with her during the meetings. I can go on and on talking to her about my aspirations of becoming a virologist, all the while she actively asks questions that provoke more thought on the subject. She is a great boon to my professional life and has helped me in pursuing academic excellence overall. She inspires confidence that she will support me to the end of my degree and beyond. I am very happy to have Serena as my academic advisor and I highly recommend her for the CAA Primary advisor award.

Bruno La Rosa
School of Life Sciences Student, Arizona State University

ANGELINA FUNG

555 Tenth Avenue
Apt 32H
New York, NY 10018
(310) 431-6061
ANGELINAF1997@ME.COM

February 11, 2021

Dear Sir/Madam,

Serena Christianson is, down to her very core, an outstanding and exceptional academic advisor. As many would recognize, Arizona State University stands as one of the largest universities in the nation. Within the University, at the School of Life Sciences (SOLS) alone, there are approximately 3,000 students currently enrolled within the on-ground programs for SOLS. Among those thousands of students, there are merely nine academic advisors to guide the population. One could presume that this becomes more of a quantitative game as opposed to qualitative, with the incredibly high student to advisor ratio. I could not say with confidence that it isn't the case for other advisors, but I could guarantee that with Serena, it's all about the quality of her time with her student.

I still remember vividly the first time I stepped into her office. The infamous Serena Christianson, whom I've been receiving Weekly Update emails from because of her additional duties of managing communications to the undergraduate population at that point in time. Prior to our appointment, I recall having some concerns and worries as to how friendly and frankly, helpful Serena would be, considering the number of students she would have to oversee. I came from a small private high school where it was obscene for an advisor to have over 15 advisees, so imagine my surprise when I learned that Serena was not only kind and helpful, but she was extremely talented with her emotional intelligence, and her interpersonal skills. We bonded off of our passion on personal training, our love for biology, and all things health and wellness related. We went on and on and somehow Serena was able to guide our conversations back to important topics on the agenda that we needed to cover. She has extreme attention to detail, as well as an empathetic outlook and attitude towards advisees.

While she is an extremely busy advisor, she always manages to make time to respond to her emails in a timely manner. She will always work around her advisees' schedules to make sure she is able to accommodate them to the best of her ability. She never fails to make any of her advisees feel special. I was one of the outliers within the School of Life Sciences who studied Biological Sciences but wanted to pursue something more corporate or venture related, as opposed to going through the steps to become a medical student. Once I expressed my interest, my rationale, as well as my plan as to how I am going to utilize this degree to my advantage, Serena did nothing but support me in the best possible way that she could. She not only monitored my progress towards my academic success, but she also would serve as wonderful guidance for me whenever I have any questions with regards to my career. She would also go above and beyond to make sure that we found the best solution that is not only compliant with the University's policies and procedures, but also a plan that would set me up for success.

Her diligence stretches even beyond the confines of the university; I had reached out to Serena as an alumnus for her assistance in drafting a recommendation letter in my application to Columbia University for a Master's program. She responded enthusiastically, promptly, and wanted to do anything she could to support my endeavors. After chatting and catching her up to speed with how she had set me up for success, she produced a letter-- one of two recommendations I had submitted, and it was well-received. I am now an M.S. Nonprofit Management candidate at Columbia University.

I truly cannot think of a more deserving candidate to be awarded the Council of Academic Advisors award as a primary advisor. Serena has dedicated a lot of time and effort just to ensure the success of her advisees and has always followed through with her actions. I am so grateful to have had the opportunity to work with Serena through my college years. She made the nation's largest university feel like home. Please place serious consideration on her candidacy for the CAA Advising Award as a primary advisor, as she wholeheartedly deserves it. Should you have any further questions surrounding Ms. Christianson's candidacy, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at my contact information listed above.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Angelina Fung

Dear Council of Academic Advisors:

I am pleased to write this letter on behalf of Ms. Serena Christianson. I highly recommend her for the CAA Primary Advisor Award. As her former advisee, I have known her for over four years, and in this time, I have had the opportunity to get to know her as a primary advisor.

In her role as a primary advisor, Ms. Christianson actively supports her students in achieving their career goals, regardless of the path they wish to pursue. With students pursuing careers in healthcare, conservation, microbiology, and other life science professions, it requires her to support the development of a diverse and broad set of skills. As a student who came in open to multiple professions, I have personally seen the benefit of this. She has helped me develop skills in communication, leadership, and advocacy through her intrusive advising.

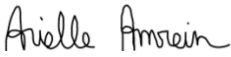
I was lucky to have Ms. Christianson's phenomenal advising administration skills to guide me in the correct academic direction. As a 4+1 student, I had the unique situation of taking undergraduate and graduate courses at the same point in time. To make situations difficult, I had a limited amount of time to ensure all courses for my last two years at ASU were planned before the start of the fall semester. Fortunately, Ms. Christianson's well-rounded understanding of ASU's procedures, policies, and regulations ensured successful and easy degree transitions.

Her support for her students is resolute. When her students, including myself, came across obstacles within our research, courses, or programs, Ms. Christianson has gone above and beyond sticking up for us and supporting our rights as students. Students can always rely on her being a source of encouragement. To ensure student satisfaction in their degrees, she frequently contacts her advisees on their academic progress. Specifically, I had the honor of her being my primary advisor during a summer internship. She was constantly emailing me ensuring my experience was satisfactory and was always there to listen if I had any concerns. Always interpersonal, Ms. Christianson has ensured every student is on the path of excelling in their field and monitors student progress toward academic and career goals.

Embodying NACADA's core values, she has had advisees from around the world on the Tempe campus and has truly ensured they are treated with respect and integrity. Ms. Christianson's mentees have gone on to succeed in a multitude of career paths as researchers, leaders in industry, healthcare workers, and many more at prestigious institutions. She maintains relationships with previous students, offering advice if students need support or praise for students who have achieved great successes. I especially appreciated her support when I found it difficult to seek out a job during COVID-19.

Serena Christianson continues to inspire her students through her advocacy, strong interpersonal skills, and open-mindedness. She challenges her students to learn new skills while also praising their accomplishments. It is my sincere hope that you will choose her for the CAA Primary Advisor Award.

Sincerely,


Arielle Amrein

Student Recommendation for CAA “Primary Advisor” Award for Ms. Serena Christianson

To Whom it May Concern,

It feels as if I have known Serena Christianson for quite some time, however, it has only been two years -- two years since she helped me navigate the transition into a new major, provided me with resources to assist the transition & excel in the new major, and kept in touch by helping me with all of my small questions throughout the rest of my college career. Of all the professors, teaching assistants, and students associated with the School of Life Sciences (SOLS), Serena was the first person to make an impression on me from SOLS, and her warm and engaging advising was able to convince me to make the switch to the new school.

Since we've met, Serena has helped me navigate through scholarships, fitting study abroad credits into my major requirements, internships, helping me add a minor & a certificate (and later helping me drop my minor), enroll in a 4+1 program, and finally, graduate one year early. I can safely say that without Serena's prompt & precise answers to my several pages of email questions, I would not be as accomplished as I am today. I would often ask questions to see if I could find and apply the synergies of my college career together to “double-dip” into certain requirements in my major, and in the way she answered my questions, she made me feel like anything was possible. She approached every one of my problems with an optimistic attitude, and even when she didn't know the answer to my question, she would do the research herself to find it or connect me with a more appropriate resource. Her advising mentorship is so inspiring to me, and I can only wish to give as much support to others as Serena has done for myself.

I remember a specific time where our bond went beyond advisee-advisor. I was studying abroad in Costa Rica in Spring 2020 and about to complete an internship abroad. In order to receive credit for my internship, I enrolled in Serena's internship course to her advice, as she informed me that it fit perfectly with my major requirements. COVID-19 threats increased, and I

had to go through the hectic process of trying to find a flight out of Costa Rica whilst keeping up with all my courses, and I just wasn't able to make some of the deadlines for Serena's internship course. After reaching out to Serena personally and explaining my situation, I was met with such warmth and understanding that brought me a bit of stability during this turbulent time. As we agreed to accommodate for late assignments to concentrate on booking flights, her reliability & responsiveness even across countries and time zones was such a comfort to me.

I can honestly say that being able to work with Serena through all of my questions and issues and everything in-between has been a highlight of my college career. I have even connected with other classmates just over our mutual love for Serena, and we would have whole conversations about our personal experiences with her during advising sessions. I would highly recommend her for the CAA "Primary Advisor" Award, as I believe her exceptionally prompt advising, strong interpersonal dynamic, and bright personality is deserving of such an honor.

Sincerely,

Erin Azuma

eazuma1@asu.edu

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Jillian Leaver. I'm a senior at Arizona State University (ASU) double majoring in Molecular Biosciences/ Biotechnology (MBB) and Neuroscience. I'm studying to be a doctor and healthcare policy analyst. In many ways, my chosen career path has been quite difficult and complicated in both expected and unexpected ways. That's why I am glad to have had an advisor like Serena Christianson, and why I'm writing this letter of recommendation for the Council of Academic Advisors (CAA) award as a primary advisor on her behalf.

Serena is the best advisor I've ever had. I know you don't know me as a person, but I do not say this lightly. I've had multiple advisors before landing with Serena and to be quite frank, I used to think advising was useless before I met her. I was told by multiple advisors that I would never get into medical school and that I should do something else. I was repeatedly made to feel discouraged by multiple other advisors and I began to question myself and my abilities. My first time meeting Serena I needed her to help me enroll in research credits before my senior year, otherwise I would not be able to graduate on time. The problem was that the application was past due.

I was dreading my meeting with Serena because I thought I was going to be chastised for my late application. But, I couldn't have been more wrong. Serena worked with me to get into the class, and not only that, but when the professor who would be supervising my research was unresponsive at multiple points, she helped me keep him on track. I earned an A in the course, a course which was so vital to my undergraduate curriculum I would not have graduated on time without Serena's help.

Serena's helpfulness didn't stop there. In fact, quite the opposite. She has always been helpful, kind, and compassionate every time I come to her for help. Most advisors would never even respond to my emails unless I had an appointment, but I don't recall any email I have sent that has not received a response from Serena within 1-2 days. Serena genuinely cares about the people she advises, and that is beyond obvious from how she treats us. She persistently sends out career opportunities available for ASU students. One of these opportunities, conducting research at the Translational Genomics Research Institute (TGen), actually landed me my first paid research job, and helped me gather the experience I need for my current research position at Mayo Clinic.

There are so many things I could say about Serena, but I would leave you with this. During my last meeting with her, I had a question about graduation and making sure I was on track. Serena asked me how things were going with me and when I told her about a nonprofit organization I run, she was genuinely interested and we had an amazing conversation about it. She recommended I reach out to a similar organization at ASU called Rotaract, which I have done, yet another way Serena has helped me. She is more than deserving of this award, and I know you will see that too.

Yours Truly,
Jillian Leaver

February 4, 2021

Rebecca Matadamas
ASU Biology & Society Undergrad
rmatadam@asu.edu

RE: Serena Christianson CAA Primary Advisor Award

Dear Council of Academic Advisors,

It is my pleasure to be writing this recommendation for Serena Christianson and her incredible attributes as an academic advisor. When ASU's School of Life Sciences office began changing advisement by assigning students to specific advisors at the beginning of this school year, it was a relief to know my first and only choice, Serena Christianson, would remain my permanent advisor. Her amazing interpersonal skills and caring attitude have made my time at ASU without much stress as she has always been easy to talk to.

I often find myself struggling with scheduling or meeting my degree requirements, but Serena has always found multiple avenues for me to try while meeting my academic needs. It seems no matter what academic scenarios I attempt to pursue, Serena knows everything that will work. If I want to major in biology, but minor in Chinese, she will sit and plan out a schedule with me so that I can achieve my goals. I have thrown many wild ideas out there regarding my college career. Jumping back and forth between different ideas, I am thankful for all of her patience and respect. Last semester, Serena had noticed my interest in certain classes and mentioned a specific certificate ASU offers that I had no idea about. Now I am pursuing that certificate and expect to complete it by the time I graduate in May. She has shown amazing initiative and clearly shows real care for her advisees. Never once when meeting Serena have I ever thought my goals were impossible. Her professionalism is clear, but not dismissive. In almost every email she sends, a comforting smiley face is added, which always feels genuine and welcoming.

I have never once heard a bad word about Serena from any of the other students or faculty, and I know that she is by far the best advisor I have ever worked with. Her office availability has been wide, but I am also thankful to be able to contact her through email. She is always ready to help students when they express concern, and she ensures success with every plan she suggests. Serena brings comfort and joy to ASU'S SOLS academic advising and I know incoming students at ASU who work with Serena will be relieved of stress just as I was. After looking over the NACADA's core values, it is true Serena possesses each value and allows it to shine through her work. Serena has done an amazing job as an academic advisor and I believe is incredibly deserving of this award. I know she will continue doing great things throughout her career.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Matadamas

February 3, 2020

To whom it may concern:

I am beyond honored to nominate Serena Christianson for the Council of Academic Advisors award as a primary advisor. Serena served as my academic advisor for 2.5 years with the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences at Arizona State University. While the college was extremely accessible with all students having access to all advisors, I personally made it an effort to repeatedly use Serena as a resource in my undergraduate career.

Even in my loyalty to Serena, it was always incredibly easy to make an appointment with her to discuss any topic, whether it be a full major change or just a personal visit for support. Especially in the days where her schedule was filled to the brim, she would always make special time for her students, all while managing to make us feel we were indefinitely welcomed in her space. In my undergraduate career, I was able to juggle receiving majors, minors, and certificates from three separate colleges with Serena's assistance. I would always come into an advising appointment with a completely new task and I was completely trustworthy of her knowledge of the logistical process at ASU. Even more importantly, when Serena was not completely sure of the successful way to go about one of my tasks, she would lead me to the appropriate people, assist me in communicating what needed to happen to lead me to my goal, and follow up to ensure that my goal was met. As an example, when I was inquiring about adding a minor in a separate college, she recognized that she could not solely help move forward with my goals alone. Within minutes, she had another social sciences advisor on the phone leading her through what needed to happen to reach my goal, all while explaining the process in a way that I could understand the series of events. In the end, I was able to add three separate programs onto my degree all while being blessed with never having to worry about if I was not being taken care of by my advisor.

In my last year at ASU, the COVID-19 pandemic affected my ability to make in-person appointments to plan an early graduation. The advising office adjusted almost immediately to these issues and I was able to meet with Serena almost weekly through email and Zoom. Fully knowing that I was being a high needs student, not once did Serena make me feel as if I was a burden, even encouraging me to keep her updated on my day-to-day activities. Even after our educational planning had been successful, Serena continued to be involved in my education all the way past my graduation. She attended my honors thesis defense (and even helped spread the word for increase my attendees!), nominated me for the Dean's Medal of my graduating class, and served as a reference for my journey of finding employment after graduation. I have since found employment in my field and am reaping the benefits of her involvement in my personal and professional success. I am beyond grateful for Serena's presence in my life.

Based on our experience together, I can strongly and confidently nominate Serena for the Council of Academic Advisors award as an advisor that fulfills the mission and goes beyond the call of duty of providing exceptional academic advising with respect, leadership, and care.

Sincerely,

Sofia Vine

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sofia Vine', with a stylized, cursive script.

February 6, 2021

Dear Evaluation Committee,

It is an absolute pleasure to nominate Ms. Serena Christianson for the 2021 Primary Advisor Award. She has been my advisor for the past three years and I have always found her to be compassionate, knowledgeable, and proactive.

Throughout the time I have known her, Ms. Christianson has repeatedly demonstrated strong interpersonal skills. In 2018, I decided to leave Arizona State University's nursing program with the desire to go to medical school instead. When I met with her to discuss switching majors, I was not met with doubt- she was perfectly enthusiastic and supportive of my new endeavor.

During the Summer of 2019 I was accepted as a Research Assistant at a local regional burn center for the Surgical Undergraduate Research Fluency+ Program. I was also accepted as Spanish interpreter for St. Vincent de Paul's medical clinic in Phoenix, AZ. Ms. Christianson helped me navigate both programs with ease, and was able to help me apply those internship hours as credits towards my degree. Ms. Christianson has been instrumental in helping me develop professional skills. Thanks to her, I was able to effectively communicate with my various mentors. She encouraged me to periodically hold interviews with them which gave me the opportunity to build rapport, learn more about their diverse experiences, and gain insight on how to continue improving my own performance. She emphasized the importance of keeping track of and reflecting on those professional experiences- habits which I have even transferred to my personal life.

Beyond supporting my academic and professional goals, Ms. Christianson was there for me during a time of grief and loss. A close friend of mine passed away at the end of Summer 2019. I was feeling burnt out, confused, and angry all at once. Around the beginning of Fall semester 2019, I had a routine advisor meeting set with Ms. Christianson where I was met with reassurance and guidance during a time where I felt unnerved and lost. She kindly mentioned that I could seek therapy if I wanted to, which I eventually did. I made it through that low point in my life and now I am in the final semester of my undergraduate degree in the process of applying to medical school. Ms. Christianson has played a significant role in my academic, professional, and personal development for the past three years. I know that she is a person who consistently goes above and beyond what is expected of her, and she always has the intention of helping others become the best versions of themselves. Ms. Christianson is the embodiment of the type of caring, resourceful, and dependable leader I hope to become.

Again, it is with great pleasure that I respectfully submit this nomination letter for Ms. Serena Christianson to be recognized with the Primary Advisor Award.

Sincerely,

Soraya Smith

Rachael Harper
10608 N. 40th Ave
Phoenix, AZ 85029

To Council of Academic Advisors:

Serena Christianson has been an exceptional advisor and I am grateful to have her on my side as a student. When I was in a bad motorcycle accident in the spring of 2019, I found myself unable to complete my courses and playing catch up in fall of 2019 and this spring 2020. Before the semester began in fall, Serena was able to meet with me over the phone and in person. She knew I had suffered a head injury, as well as being unable to walk for months, and took extra steps to make sure I understood her and my options to ensure my graduation. Everything we talked about was written out for me so that I could reference it if I should forget.

Later, when I was well enough to walk and attend class in the fall, Serena met with me and helped me workout my spring schedule. Serena exhibits such kindness and patience when speaking with anyone around her. She never rushed me or made me feel like she didn't have time to help me. I felt renewed in my excitement to complete my degree and sure of my path. Serena has been the most influential person in the advising department, and she is exceptional in her work.

Just before spring semester 2020 began I received an email stating I would be dropped from one of my courses. I contacted Serena and she responded in a timely matter to correct this issue. If it were not for Serena's kind and efficient work, I don't know if I would be graduating this year. Her interpersonal skills made our meetings more akin to a coffee break with a friend. She is a blessing and I cannot overstate her positive impression on my life.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Rachael Harper', with a long, sweeping underline.

Rachael Harper

Recommendation for CAA “New Advisor” Award for Ms. Serena Christianson

To Whom It May Concern:

I had the pleasure to meet Serena Christianson several years ago when I was still bouncing back and forth between which advisor I wanted to see as I went through my academic journey at Arizona State University. Up until the day I met her, I did not seem to have a bond with any of the other advisors that I met with. Serena has been advising me on my pre-medical journey and if it was not for her, I may not be on this path anymore. I feel that my personal life during my undergraduate years have been some of the most trying times and this effected my academics to the point where I feel like other advisors may have written me off. Serena was much different and made me feel confident in my abilities, and got me back to being a competitive candidate for medical school. Not only has Serena has been there for me as my advisor, I value her as a trusted friend who has my best interest at heart.

According to the School of Life Sciences at Arizona State University, there are more than 3,300 students that are enrolled and there are 8 advisors on staff to help these students. To schedule an appointment, students go to scheduling portal where you can choose which advisor has available time slots. Every time I log in to schedule an appointment, I check for Serena and Serena only, and I am certain I am not the only one who does this as she is almost always booked for several weeks out. I am certain this is a combination of her knowledge as an advisor, and the relationships she builds with the students that she assists. When she is booked though, she has walk in hours for students who were not lucky enough to get a formal appointment with her, so she is consistently available for students to meet with her. There have been instances where I needed to meet with Serena to discuss various topics and her schedule was booked entirely, and

after a quick email exchange, she somehow seemed to have an appointment open up. This is just one instance of her going out her way, but the consistent going above and beyond sets Serena so far apart from any other advisor I have met.

Knowing the challenges that I faced, and how I needed to do as well as possible academically, Serena would pass on expert knowledge about courses to me that would allow me to choose the correct class for me based on my learning style and curriculum interests. Serena was able to do this because of her complete understanding of Arizona State University's courses, what the requirements were for Arizona State University, and what medical schools were looking for. As many people are aware, being a competitive medical school candidate encompasses many things, and academics are just one part of this. Serena would constantly be sharing opportunities when we met to help differentiate myself from other medical school candidates. She would give advice such as which clubs to join, how to get involved in different research opportunities, and we even spoke about several medical schools and how I could potentially boost my success rate of acceptance for each school.

I think that my personal performance since I've been meeting with Serena is perfect evidence of her success as an advisor. When I met with Serena for the first time, I was going into the Spring of 2018 term and had chosen my courses already. I was just meeting with an advisor because I was required to at that time, little did I know how happy I would be that I met Serena. This term ended up being one of my worst semesters academically due to external factors and course load. That semester, I finished with a 2.02 GPA and a cumulative GPA of 2.54. The following semester, after meeting several times with Serena, and working with her one on one – my GPA for the semester was a 3.06 and my cumulative GPA jumped to a 2.75. I had one setback during the Fall semester in 2019, but through my consistent meeting with Serena, my

academic performance has improved greatly. As my academic career as Arizona State University has come to close, my performance improved drastically with Serena's help. As I stated earlier, I met Serena with a cumulative GPA of 2.54, however I view my story as a success story as I graduated with a final cumulative GPA of 2.96 in only a few short semesters. I whole heartedly believe that my turn in a positive direction was a direct outcome of the passion that Serena has for helping students as well as the friendship that she fostered with me to provide the gentle push to help me reach my potential. Serena has been one of the key reasons for my recent success and I know she is an incredible asset to any student. I know that there are countless students who struggle just as I did, and it is invaluable for any organization to have a staff member that is as capable at their profession as Serena is. It truly makes an immeasurable difference to students to have a resource as profound as Serena in their corner aiding them on their journey through their undergraduate courses.

I believe that Serena absolutely deserves recognition for her abilities as an advisor. She possesses all of the qualities that students look for when seeking help on their academic journey – she is honest, invigorating, knowledgeable, respectful, passionate, and most importantly, she is incredibly kind. Please thoroughly consider Ms. Serena Christianson for the CAA “New Advisor” Award, as I believe she is definitely worthy of receiving such an honor.

Michael Martin

Mmart161@asu.edu

February 2, 2021

To whom it may concern:

It is an honor to recommend Ms. Serena Christianson as a candidate to be recognized as a Primary Advisor for the Council of Academic Advisors.

Beginning my sophomore year, I had the pleasure of meeting Ms. Christianson for the first time through SOLS walk-in advising. It took only a short time for me to notice Ms. Christianson's attentiveness. As we discussed, the focus was on creating a plan for achieving not only short-term academic goals, but also how these goals would translate into my professional career goals. As a pre-medical student this was very important to me. This provided me with the opportunity to discuss variations of plans for a range of timeframes with a knowledgeable and experienced advisor. This experience encouraged me to assign Ms. Christianson as my primary advisor for the remainder of my undergraduate career.

I was also impressed with Ms. Christianson's communication of a variety of academic and career opportunities. Even throughout our transition into virtual learning, Ms. Christianson has regularly kept in contact with various opportunities. I would also like to mention Ms. Christianson's availability. Whether stopping by during walk-in advising or scheduling via email, I have been able to contact Ms. Christianson and schedule meetings in a timely manner.

Most notably, I would like to highlight Ms. Christianson's support and guidance. During our meetings I have always felt that there was an honest support for my endeavors. As a student who struggled transitioning into college, Ms. Christianson's support was vital in encouraging me to become the confident and hardworking student I am today. This confidence came from the structure that Ms. Christianson was able to provide for me. Ms. Christianson was able to alleviate a majority of the overwhelming avenues of pursuing medicine by helping me to find continuous obtainable goals that would serve to keep me on track for pursuing my dream of becoming a physician. Continuously going above and beyond to help me achieve my goals has really set Ms. Christianson apart from those that I regularly interact with. I have implemented her strategies in my daily life as well as in my approach when mentoring younger students. I highly recommend Ms. Serena Christianson to be acknowledged and awarded the Primary Advisor for the Council of Academic Advisors.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Braxton J. Smith". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "B".

Braxton Smith

To whom it may concern,

I am honored to recommend Serena Christianson for the Council of Academic Advisors Award. As an honors undergraduate student with two majors aspiring to be a physician, I can truthfully say that Serena has been the most influential person in my academic career. Without the valuable resources she shares, her breadth of knowledge, and truly caring support for all her advisees, I and many other incredible students would not be as successful at Arizona State University without her. Serena Christianson is the first and only name I mention when I hear of new and existing students that need guidance because she has had the answer to every question I have thrown at her for the last four years. As much of a rollercoaster ride my undergraduate career has been, I could always rely on Serena to provide me with such wise guidance and support to keep me on track to accomplish my goals.

With full sincerity, I can say that I have never met an advisor as easy to get along with than Serena. An important part of that includes her being available to all her students within a moment's notice. Not only does she always find time to be there for her advisees, but she gives us a safe space where we can feel comfortable seeking her guidance on so much more than just academics. From the first day I met Serena, her presence always felt like so much more than an advisor, but a friend. At a university with thousands of students and faculty, I have always felt that I had a supportive friend in Serena, a friendship that will last a lifetime, and you really cannot get that type of support anywhere else. She keeps in contact with all her advisees frequently, and that is also part of how she is able to build such strong relationships with so many students. I do not know how she does it, but she has such an amazing ability to really connect with anyone she meets. These deep connections are what allow her to remember so much about each advisee and also keep track of each of her students' progress towards their academic, career, and life goals.

She has helped me develop as a student, scientist, leader, and most importantly, human being. Serena's passion for guiding students through the most important time of their lives is unmatched. Her bright and joyful personality is contagious and relieves so much stress that students face throughout any given semester. There is no other advisor more deserving of the Council of Academic Advisors Award than Serena Christianson. She absolutely exceeds every criterion for an Academic Advising Nominee and has been such an influential figure in the lives of so many students, including myself. I cannot thank Serena enough for the impact she has had on my life, and I cannot imagine a more perfect nominee for this award.

Sincerely,

Santiago Logan-Robledo

February 09, 2021

To whom it may concern,

It is an absolute pleasure to write this letter of recommendation on behalf Serena Christianson as I strongly envision her as an ideal and exemplary candidate for the 'Primary Advisor' award sponsored by the Council of Academic Advisors. She is an advisor who has shown her commitment to the longitudinal excellence of students and has shown her aspirations in challenging diverse intellectualities.

I have had the privilege of receiving advising services from Serena since my first year at Arizona State University in 2016. She warmly welcomes and encourages students to schedule appointments with her; whether its curriculum related or just an opportunity to gain a more holistic perspective of the students and overall conglomerate student population that she serves. Her professionalism coupled with her warm and inviting energy made me feel comfortable bringing both my worries and excitements to her as I navigated University as a first-generation college student. She was able to effectively make me feel heard and prepared me to undertake the ever-changing nature of an undergraduate education.

I have since graduated in the Spring of 2020. However, Serena's commitment to serving her students has no bounds. Post-graduation, she has been a mentor in helping me navigate post graduate life seated within the everchanging circumstances of the country. She has read countless essays of mine in helping me apply to medical school and has helped me prepare for successful interviews at schools such as Brown, Cornell, and Albert Einstein. Her interpersonal skills and her seamless support have made her someone that I email regularly the second I receive good or bad news. Regardless of the outcomes she openly expresses her support and pride that she has in me as a student. Without a doubt, I know that my trajectory and success up to this point would look wildly different without her supportive practices.

She has additionally been an advocate for diversity and inclusion and relates to students of diverse backgrounds. Serena seamlessly tailors her services and interactions to each individual student, exemplifying nothing short of impressive understandings of others and love for her profession. I have seen her advising practices change over the years, as she is constantly looking for ways to improve the educational opportunities of her students. She is constantly looking for ways to supplement students' education and I am confident that Serena's commitment to her advisory role is unparalleled, making myself and others feel privileged in having the opportunity to work alongside her in our educational pursuits.

It is with great admiration and no reservations that I write this letter in support of Serena's pursuit of the Primary Advisor award. I am wholeheartedly confident that wherever she goes, she will leave a lasting impact on those she advises and will always selflessly drive the improvement of students and faculty around her. I freely advocate for the utmost example of character and love of people Serena possesses, so please do not hesitate to reach out at any time should you feel so compelled.

Sincerely,

Hillary Polk

Arizona State Alumnus

(480) 450-2628 | hepolk@asu.edu

Letter of Recommendation – Serena Christianson

To the Council of Academic Advisors, and others To Whom It May Concern:

As an advisor, Serena Christianson has consistently gone above and beyond what is expected in order to ensure her advisees succeed. I've had Ms. Christianson as an advisor for three years, and I struggle to think of a time when she wasn't enthusiastic about helping me and my fellow students. In many ways, an advisor can either make or break a student's experience in college. I can confidently say she has made her advisees' time easier, more enjoyable, and more opportunistic during their time at ASU.

I came to Ms. Christianson multiple times each year for one-on-one meetings to discuss topics like minors, switching majors, extra programs, and study abroad opportunities. I never had a meeting where she was underprepared for my questions or concerns. I was presented a plethora of opportunities, insight, and options that were all tailored to my own needs, and I often left with more than I expected. When it came to academic performance, she was always able to answer my questions about my major, courses, and extracurriculars while steering me in a positive direction. More importantly, she was able to do this in a way that made me see my academic goals as reachable. There were many points where I was doubting my abilities, but meetings would always allow me to refocus myself on my goals and find ways to achieve them. I know from personal conversations with other students that I am not alone in these sentiments.

This does not include discussions on career goals. Early in my college career we met to discuss my desired career, its likeliness, and my options in pursuing it. She was able to connect me with a prior advisee of hers that is currently walking the path that I hope to walk. That connection alone has been invaluable in my current pursuit and would not have been created had Ms. Christianson simply given a general answer to my question. It also speaks to how seriously she takes each student's success. She not only needed to know my own goal, but she needed to remember the path of a student she advised multiple years ago. To Ms. Christianson, every student has unique needs that need to be attended with careful planning. As such, she works to ensure each of her advisees had access to as many resources as possible.

Consistently and very frequently, students receive emails from Ms. Christianson talking about career opportunities, research openings, networking events, seminars, and more. These are often very comprehensive and contain notes from Ms. Christianson about how it could be helpful or how it may open up other opportunities. She has single-handedly been the greatest source of information and resources through these emails alone, with the sheer volume of these emails outpacing newsletters, announcements, and notifications from the College itself. A student with Ms. Christianson as an advisor is never lacking for information, is always encouraged and pushed to achieve their goals, and will always have a helping hand in achieving them.

The easiest way I can sum up my experience outlined above is this: It's a big relief to know that there is someone in our corner to truly help us when it can feel like everything else is working against us. Someone who isn't afraid of digging deeper into an issue and learning about their students to find a solution that fits their needs. I can't say that about everyone, but I can say that with confidence about Ms. Christianson, and there is no one I feel deserves the honor of the Council of Academic Advisors award more than her.

Regards,
Curtis Mathis, current advisee of Serena Christianson.

To whom it may concern,

It is with much enthusiasm that I recommend Serena Christianson for the Council of Academic Advisors (CAA) "Primary Advisor" award at Arizona State University.

Serena was my primary advisor in the School of Life Sciences (SOLS) beginning in 2017 through my graduation in summer of 2020. As an ASU Online student, full-time employee, and military spouse I required a level of flexibility due to the nature of my life and Serena never hesitated to reach out or be available outside of the department's hours to assist me. She was instrumental in my success as an undergraduate student at ASU and provided me with resources or opportunities that would help me achieve my career goals and pursue my passions.

Serena encouraged me to participate in university events such as BioSci Southwest to present my research and pushed me to apply to PhD programs at top universities to further my career. She was supportive of helping me find a way to participate in an internship at Harvard Medical School and through her knowledge of courses offered at ASU, I was able to receive credit for my time at HMS. She wrote me multiple letters of recommendation and connected me with faculty in SOLS that ultimately resulted in my acceptance to the Molecular and Cellular Biology (MCB) PhD program at ASU. Outside of her role as my advisor she always made sure to check in on me personally throughout the semester and offered to be a listening ear if I even needed it.

I can not think of a more deserving person to receive this award. As an out of state online student, I had the opportunity to visit ASU last fall and Serena took me to brunch and showed me around the area. She has truly shown what it means to care about the students you work with and how to build strong relationships with advisees.

She is knowledgeable in the institutional regulations, policies, and procedures at ASU and that was evident by her ability to problem solve and plan my degree map over the 4 years I spent at ASU. Serena made ASU feel like my educational home and she was a large reason I chose to stay for my graduate degree.

It is my absolute pleasure to reiterate my support of Serena for the Council of Academic Advisor (CAA) "Primary Advisor" award. If any additional information is needed in regards to her qualifications or my experience working with her, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Brianah McCoy
MCB PhD Student
bmccoy6@asu.edu
Life Sciences E 319, Tempe Campus