



The State University
of New York

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Dr. Lisa A. Stephens
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Re: Letter of Support for Mr. Achintya ("Ash") Pillai

By way of background, I have served for over 20 years at the University at Buffalo as both an Adjunct Assistant Professor in the Department of Communication, and in a variety of professional roles supporting IT and academic technologies. I currently serve as Senior Strategist for Academic Innovation SUNY-wide.

At the University at Buffalo, I work directly with senior level engineering faculty to envision and pilot projects with the intent of scaling-up successful outcomes in service of teaching, learning and research.

Mr. Achintya Pillai ("Ash") has proven to be an extremely competent collaborator in supporting a recent initiative involving use of Minecraft gaming to engage middle and high school level students in STEM education. As an engineer, his thought process is admirable. He consistently identifies challenges and offers suggestions to mitigate potential problems before they occur. He demonstrates an "unflappable" personality under pressing deadlines, with a grace and maturity not often found in students. He is fun to work with, while being respectful and sensitive to office decorum. He is a "team player" and knows how to offer suggestions to faculty and colleagues in a professional manner.

I greatly admire our international students in general, but Ash arrived with insight which is uncommon for students in his age range. He clearly had some professional experience prior to deciding to attend our University, and I expect this is what enabled him to be so successful in his leadership role with the Minecraft initiative.

I would welcome the opportunity to further discuss Ash as your search progresses. Please don't hesitate to call upon me if I can be helpful to your efforts.

Warm Regards,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lisa A. Stephens".

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To Search
To Serve

the Power of The SUNY logo, featuring the word "SUNY" in a bold, sans-serif font inside a blue circle.