

Martha M. Hyde
1423 Old Highway 601
Mount Airy, NC 27030
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To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to recommend Dr. Laurie A. Ramirez as a professor. In preparation for my master's degree in Middle Grades Education, I had to take Dr. Ramirez's class *Advanced Topics in Diversity*. The topics addressed in this class have profoundly changed the way I view my students and the world as a whole.

Dr. Ramirez was masterful in facilitating the stretching our ways of thinking by exposing us to different viewpoints and at times even gently questioning our beliefs. Instead of demanding we view the world differently, or as she did, she encouraged us to discuss challenging topics involving diversity and choose a subject that we, as individuals, felt was important to explore. She empowered us to make a change in the way we viewed the world by having us "step outside" of our comfort zone. She carefully asked questions like, "why do you believe that?" and "have you ever thought of it from this point of view...?". She supported us in personal and professional growth by conveying the importance of philosophies similar to the quotation by Oliver Wendell Holmes, "the brain, once stretched by a new idea, never regains its original dimensions".

My life and the lives of my students will be forever impacted by the growth and insight from Dr. Ramirez's class. She embodies what a professor should be and I feel blessed that she entered and influenced my life.

Sincerely,

Martha M. Hyde