

NOTE TO RECOMMENDERS

IMPORTANCE OF LETTER CONFIDENTIALITY

Although students may retain their FERPA access rights to letters of recommendation that are submitted to Post Graduate Planning and Experiential Education, it is strongly encouraged that letters be submitted confidentially by having the student waive such rights. Selection committees tend to view confidential letters as having greater credibility and assign them greater weight. They place less value in letters that the applicant has seen, as it is assumed that the author is less forthcoming than if the reference is confidential. Not only can this be true in regards to letter-writers withholding potential concerns, but some authors feel less inhibited in their praise of students in confidential letters. Furthermore, many admissions officers have stated that they find a confidential letter a display of confidence on the part of the applicant.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING AN HELPFUL LETTER OF RECOMMENDATION

Letters of recommendation are a critical component of the admissions process for the graduate school applicants. VaYU wants letters from individuals who are in a position to judge the student's ability to be successful in their programs, which includes academic capabilities and accomplishments, but also personal characteristics and skills. If you feel you do not know the applicant well enough to write about his/her attributes and accomplishments in a helpful manner, it may serve the student best to decline the request and suggest he or she ask someone else who knows him/her better. To the extent you can include specifics on any of the areas listed below, it will help the professional health school admission committees evaluate the student's readiness and fit for their programs.

RELATIONSHIP WITH THE APPLICANT

- Length of Time Known
- Depth of Knowledge about the Applicant

ACADEMIC COMPETENCIES

- Desire to Learn and Intellectual Curiosity
- Distinctive Contributions to an Academic Enterprise
- Presentation Skills—Written and Oral
- Research Competencies
- Overall Academic Excellence and Ability (particularly if at variance with academic performance)

NON-ACADEMIC COMPETENCIES

- Integrity and Ethics
- Reliability and Dependability
- Service Orientation
- Social and Interpersonal Skills
- Teamwork
- Capacity for Improvement
- Resilience and Adaptability
- Cultural Competence
- Oral Communication

Please scan and attach this form to an email and send your evaluation directly from your official email to apply@VaYUusa.org | **Phone:** (747) 228-2987 | **Web:** www.VaYUusa.org