



Women's Studies Department

50 Phelan Avenue, Ocean Campus, Office 402C Cloud, Mailbox C21, San Francisco, CA 94112 (415) 452-5825

September 19, 2016

Dear Supervisors Cohen, Mar, and Tang,

I am writing to strongly recommend Leslie Simon to serve on the Safer Schools Sexual Assault Task Force. As Women's Studies chair at City College of San Francisco, I supervise Ms. Simon in her position of coordinator of Project SURVIVE, the college's sexual violence prevention and healthy relationship promotion program. Ms. Simon founded the program in 1994, and since that time over 200 peer educators have presented more than 5,000 workshops to nearly 100,000 students. They visit a range of classrooms at the college including English, ESL, Health Education, Human Sexuality, Psychology, Sociology, and Learning Assistance. They visit all 9th grade Health Education classes in the San Francisco public high schools through the Project SURVIVE program and community collaborative, Expect Respect SF. Though other prevention programs existed at four-year colleges and universities at that time, Project SURVIVE was one of the first of its kind at a community college in the nation.

The core of the program is prevention education, which includes not only workshops to City College and SFUSD students, but also non-credit self-defense classes open to the community. Each academic year Project SURVIVE also offers multiple awareness programs to our campus community throughout the year, especially during Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October and Rape Awareness Month in April. These events include bystander intervention trainings, poetry and theater performances, and art installations. Although Ms. Simon offers short-term crisis counseling to survivors and has helped many of them heal from their traumas, she has dedicated her career to the field of prevention education and will be able to bring to the Task Force what she has learned training peer educators in "The Politics of Sexual Violence" and "Ending Sexual Violence: Peer Education"—both credit classes at City College.

Ms. Simon also coordinates the Sexual Health Educator Certificate at the college, which has enabled numerous students to gain employment in local prevention and intervention agencies and to transfer to four-year universities where they have majored in psychology, sociology, and health education, still dedicating much of their academic careers to sexual violence prevention. We are proud that a number of them have now received social work and public health master's degrees, and one of them is even a practicing attorney who has served as an advocate for a sexual violence victim.

During the 20th anniversary celebration of Project SURVIVE (PS), to which Congresswoman Jackie Speier sent a video greeting and at which Supervisor Jane Kim distributed awards to members of the PS community, I described Leslie Simon as a visionary. She is no less than that and will bring a hopeful, innovative, creative—as well as disciplined—voice to the work of the Task Force. I enthusiastically recommend her to you.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Maggie Harrison
Chair, Women's Studies

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