
December 10, 2023

Re: Student Doctor Erika LaBelle

To Whom it May Concern,

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of recommendation for Student Doctor Erika LaBelle as she applies for the student position on the American Medical Association's Governing Council, Minority Affairs Section. I am the chair of the Osteopathic Principles and Practice (OPP) department as well as the course director for the 1st, 3rd, and 4th year OPP courses at Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine (RVUCOM) in Colorado. At RVUCOM I have had the honor of working with outstanding students as part of our curriculum, including Student Doctor Erika LaBelle. I have worked with Erika for the last three years and have found her to possess traits I feel are necessary for a successful future physician. Those traits I have observed, and will discuss below, are intelligence, leadership, compassion and empathy.

Erika is excelling at Rocky Vista University. She came to Rocky Vista University to pursue an Osteopathic education after graduating Cum Lauda from Texas A&M University with a Bachelor of Arts, International studies, Spanish. Currently she is in good academic standing, receiving honors status in clinical courses: Family Medicine and Surgery, and preclinical course: Microbes and Infectious Disease. I have interacted with her in Osteopathic Principles and Practice lab on several occasions throughout her 3 years on campus and find her to be bright and enthusiastic about her career in medicine, possessing an above level ability in critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

Erika's leadership skills are excellent. She leads with a quiet confidence that inspires those around her. Her leadership skills started before coming to RVU, and have continued while navigating our curriculum. She has spearheaded numerous volunteer projects in an attempt to increase patients' quality of life and served her peers as a student tutor for both 1st and 2nd year students. In performing her duties as a tutor, Erika not only must master her own rigorous curriculum, but also master the previous year's curriculum to help struggling students understand difficult and complex material. Erika has also led in the club setting, holding leadership positions in the RVU Medical Spanish and Global Medicine Outreach Clubs. She also represents our University as the Social Media Officer for the American College of Physician-Colorado chapter. I believe these attributes are rare in a medical student at this level, and demonstrate the leadership potential she has. I am confident these leadership skills will not only grow with time, but flourish into the type of physician our school would be proud of.

Community is definitely important to Erika, especially the Colorado community which she has embraced as her own. Erika has shown she has the necessary empathy and compassion for all patients regardless of the setting, a trait needed to be a great physician. Starting in 2014, she has been active in her community, giving back to those in whatever capacity she could. From being a volunteer at Texas Children's hospital to coordinating and working at 365 health fairs, she ensures all patients are given the opportunity to have quality health care. These are not singular events, as she has also volunteered at Abode Hospice visiting patients to brighten their remaining days. As an Anatomy High School Outreach tutor mentoring high school students and providing guidance, her volunteerism presents a model of academic success they can emulate. This willingness to give and put others first I find honorable, and this philanthropic morale will serve her well in the future.

I whole-heartedly recommend Student Doctor Erika LaBelle for the student position on the American Medical Association's Governing Council, Minority Affairs Section. She has proven to be reliable, competent, compassionate, and a valuable member of a team and community. I look forward to having her as a colleague and would not hesitate to have her care for my family and friends.

Sincerely,



Christopher M. LaFontano, DO

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