



**Information Systems
Program**

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To whom it may concern,

This letter is in enthusiastic support for Eileen Chen's candidacy for the Carnegie Mellon Women's Association (CMWA) award. I have served as Eileen's academic advisor in the Information Systems (IS) program since the summer of 2017 and she has been one of the most pleasant and positive students that I have ever worked with.

Eileen is extremely hardworking and one of the top students in the IS program. She has a 4.0 cumulative GPA and has made Dean's List with High Honors in four of six semesters. She has always been committed to giving her best effort in everything she does. She is pursuing an additional major in Human Computer Interaction (HCI) and a minor in Business alongside her primary major in Information Systems (IS).

While she has continued to excel academically throughout her time at CMU, she has also been heavily involved in extra-curricular activities that focus on the advancement of women in their academic pursuits. The first that comes to mind is Eileen's involvement in the organization and development of the newly created Women in IS Peer Mentoring program. The program is designed to *"provide mentorship and foster connections for first-year women in the IS program...provide support and resources...and to empower women in the program to realize their full potential at CMU and beyond through facilitating mentorship relationships, providing opportunities for networking and leadership development and contributing to personal and professional growth."* Eileen serves as a mentor to two mentees and is a part of the leadership team that spearheaded the initial planning and implementation efforts for the program and continues to help come up with program and event ideas that will benefit the mentees and mentors including virtual social events and panels involving women alumnae and faculty. Despite having to plan and communicate virtually due to the raging pandemic, Eileen has remained committed to creating a safe and open space for underclassmen. In Eileen's words, *"As women are still a largely underrepresented community in the tech industry as well as in leadership, I want to instill in my mentees a sense of pride and confidence...I encourage them to not only pursue their passions, but also to become leaders in their respective fields. I am constantly inspired by my mentees' drive and pursuits and we strive to help each other overcome imposter syndrome and acknowledge that we worked hard to be where we are today."*

Outside of Women in IS, Eileen leads by example whenever she can. Whether she is serving as a panelist for a CMU Turn Tartan Overnight event involving prospective students, celebrating women in technology by attending and networking with other students and professionals at the annual Grace Hopper conference, getting involved with the Taiwanese Students Association, or sharing her Pittsburgh Summer Internship Program experience with Dietrich College prospective students and families, she always felt that it was vital to foster more voices of woman empowerment in the student body. As a first time Teaching Assistant (TA) in her sophomore year and current head TA in her senior year, she's had several experiences working in a male-dominated space. Because of this, it's been Eileen's goal to *"to show that gender norms should never define how far you can take a passion or career. And more than that, just because your colleagues are all men does not mean that your voice should be diminished or less important."* She does whatever she can to ensure that her opinions are heard and that she provides representation to the rest of the women in the IS program.

Even in her coursework, Eileen thinks about how to further women in the workplace and foster environments for women to achieve equally. Some of the questions she has pursued in various courses include: "How do you create a psychologically safe workplace for all peoples?" and "How can we utilize crowdsourcing to gather women's reproductive health data?"

It has been a pleasure working with Eileen over the past few years. She is personable, open-minded, enthusiastic, and eager to learn. She has always been positive and brings great energy to every meeting. The Associate Director of Undergraduate Education, Gary DiLisio writes, "the IS program is stronger than ever before because of students like Eileen Chen. I will personally be forever grateful for the time and effort that she has put into building the Women in IS program from the ground up. Her passion for wanting to empower and inspire women throughout their academic journey and beyond is truly remarkable and I'm honored to have crossed paths with her". Upon graduation, she plans to work as a Software Engineer for Capital One where I have no doubt that she will still continue to seek opportunities to advance herself and other women in the field. For the commitment that she has already demonstrated to the advancement of women in their academic pursuits, I am strongly recommending her for the CMWA award.

If you have additional questions or would like to know more about Eileen, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

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