



COLLEGE OF HEALTH SCIENCES AND HUMAN ECOLOGY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

July 1, 2013

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to write a letter of support and recommendation for Dr. Barbara Rogers Bridges. Her personal qualities of creative innovation, persistence and grit and the ability to design curriculum for marginalized students have resulted in her nationally recognized status as Arts Educator of the Year on two separate occasions. It is this strength, creativity, and scholarly approach that provides great depth to Barbara's art and its societal impact.

My first professional association with Dr. Barbara Bridges was in 1996 when she agreed to join the faculty at Bemidji State University. Barbara created a partnership teacher licensure program with Metropolitan State University which she transformed from a struggling small program to a healthy 200-plus teacher licensure program.

In 2001, Barbara and I co-authored a program that placed Bemidji State University at the forefront of digital programming in Minnesota with the first online teacher licensure program in the nation. The DLiTE (Distributed Learning in Teacher Education) program won several national awards. Barbara, as the director and major author, spoke at several at national and international conferences. Her persistence and grit was illustrated as staff and faculty previously resistant to online curriculum delivery were convinced of the effectiveness and quality of the online DLiTE model. Other departments at Bemidji State and other universities now use DLiTE as a model to take their departments online.

In 2001 Barbara submitted a proposal to create an artwork focused on the new digital curriculum delivery model –Technology and Communications. The work she created, *Onion*, hung at the Wells Fargo building for over a decade and has been admired by many.

As Barbara moves into her early retirement from Bemidji State University and her academic life, she has created and exhibited an art work, *Ode to Gluten*, a work that promotes social discourse on the topic of gluten intolerance. See bridgescreate.com to view information related to this project. It has already been viewed by thousands at the 2013 Art-A-Whirl where she collected data on gluten intolerance questions from over 350 viewers.

As is her tradition as an arts educator, she does not start the discussion from a specific position but instead asks the Socratic questions, inviting and empowering all voices to be heard. She plans to create large public art works and drawing upon her 20 years as a K-12 art teacher and 15 years as a curriculum developer in higher education, she hopes to facilitate public discourse on a variety of contemporary topics of interest to our K-12 students.

Sincerely,

Dr. Patricia L. Rogers
Dean, HSHE and the School of Graduate Studies