



WVUMedicineChildren's

**WVU Medicine Children's Neurodevelopmental Center
201 Bakers Ridge Road, Morgantown, WV 26508**

Dear College of Creative Arts Committee:

I am writing this enthusiastic letter in support of Emily Budik's application for the 2024 College of Creative Arts Mentored Research Award. I am an Associate Professor and Director of Pediatric Neuropsychology in the Departments of Pediatrics and Behavioral Medicine at West Virginia University and the Director of the WVU Medicine Children's Neurodevelopmental Center. Emily has been working with me on her Psychology Senior Capstone project in my pediatric neuropsychology research lab for the past two years. Our program specializes in assessment of children with a variety of neurological and developmental conditions. My clinic lies within the WVU Neurodevelopmental Center, which serves children from birth through age 18. My research program is examining the relationship of motor skills and cognition in children with developmental and neurological disabilities.

Emily sought me out due to her interest in the field of NeuroArts or Neuroaesthetics. NeuroArts is the transdisciplinary study of how the arts and aesthetic experiences measurably change the body, brain, and behavior and how this knowledge is translated into specific practices that advance health and wellbeing. As a new area of study, there is little existing literature on this population. Emily has shown great initiative in helping me to bring this project to fruition. Emily's project with me is examining the use of dance as a therapeutic intervention for children with neurodevelopmental disorders. In partnership with the AWeSOME lab in the Department of Engineering under the direction of Dr. Stephen Cain, we have developed an assessment protocol that will use multimethod assessment of movement, cognition, and social-emotional skills to demonstrate improvement after participation in an adaptive ballet class. This data will provide much needed empirical evidence to support inclusive programming for all children.

Throughout her time with me, Emily has been an absolute pleasure. She is extremely reliable and well-prepared. She is eager to learn new things. She has been diligent and thorough in her work. On a more personal note, Emily is a true delight to work with. She is enthusiastic and motivated. We are very excited about this project, and I am eager to share with the world this groundbreaking work for all children with disabilities.



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