

January 4, 2020

Dear Selection Committee,

It is my pleasure to write this letter of recommendation to nominate Ms. Claudia Mandekic for the Prime Minister's Teaching Award of Excellence. I have known Ms. Mandekic for just under three years. My son was one of her students enrolled in Uchenna Academy for Calculus. She also tutored him in Grade 12 Functions and Relations as well as Data Management courses. Moreover, Ms. Mandekic tutored my son in university math courses such as Managerial Statistics for Business Students.

Ms. Mandekic encourages students at all skill and grade/postsecondary levels of mathematics. She meets students at their current skill levels and facilitates them to feel empowered about their studies and to trust their intuition.

Her interactive lessons in which she uses smart board technology, whether teaching in person or remotely, foster students to build confidence in their mathematical abilities. Ms. Mandekic breaks math problems into their step by step components in the simplest terms so that students learn to follow the logic not just memorize. Consequently, they build upon their math skills in a gradual methodical manner leading to students' measurable successful outcomes.

Upon completion of Grade 11 Functions and Relations, my son did not enjoy math and his confidence in the material wavered. Within a few weeks of being taught and tutored Grade 12 math subjects by Ms. Mandekic, he started to look forward to his classes and tutoring sessions. In fact, he truly had fun learning the math concepts and did extra learning with Ms. Mandekic in the summer following completion of grade 12! His academic achievement was reflected in his newfound positive attitude and keen interest toward mathematics courses. Subsequently, now in second year of a business program, my son takes various maths in statistics, finance, and accounting. Fortunately, Ms. Mandekic continues to be his tutor as needed by reviewing course content and going over practice exam study tools, despite my son living/studying out of town. Ms. Mandekic's support has proven to be even more critical during the pandemic whereby all the university courses are taught online and there is limited professor virtual office hours, decreased teaching assistance, and fewer virtual group study sessions available.

In addition to teaching expertise, Ms. Mandekic is an excellent and responsive communicator. She makes herself available to students outside of the classroom by providing an email address and cell phone contact. She is prompt to reply and set up lessons and tutoring especially ahead of tests and exams. Ms. Mandekic gives feedback with a quick turnaround time so students know how they are doing throughout the course. Report cards are sent to parents in a timely fashion as dictated by Ministry of Education timeframes/deadlines. Communication and open dialogue are encouraged and transparent among students, parents and Ms. Mandekic.

I have recounted numerous examples of how Ms. Mandekic has made a powerful impact on my son's passion for learning mathematics at the high school and university levels. Without a doubt she has helped countless other students. I can attest to this as my son recommended other friends to enrol in her courses offered at Uchenna Academy. They too gained a newfound love of

learning mathematics that has seen them beyond high school courses and into business math courses in postsecondary education. I sincerely hope that you will consider Ms. Claudia Mandekic as the epitome of a most worthy candidate to receive this prestigious teaching award.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Beth Rossen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a blue color.

Beth Rossen, RN, MSc (PhD candidate)

Parent of one of Ms. Claudia Mandekic's math students at Uchenna Academy

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