

**WAGNER COLLEGE**  
**DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND SPEECH**

October 19,2018

To Whom It May Concern

I've known Ashley Burger as a friend and as a colleague since I first began teaching at Wager College in 2014. Students who study with Ashley are brilliantly alive while practicing their process. I've seen in her students' work a consistent application of active choice that is grounded in physical behavior and connected to the breath. She stimulates students' courage and their curiosity. Her teaching leads actors toward their unique and profound physical connection to the material.

I first met Ashley when I joined the faculty at Wagner College in 2014. A fairly recent alumna, Ashley was hired as a professor in our dance division as well as a choreographer for our production season projects. Ashley's breadth of knowledge in Ballet, Modern and Musical Theatre Dance as well as her certification in Movement Analysis through The Laban and Bartenieff Institute of Movement Studies and her study of Kinesthiology makes her one of the most diverse and highly credentialed professors in the program at Wagner. While I was working on an important project off campus I called upon Ashley to step in for me as a co-teacher. She excelled admirably designing curriculum that exceeded the expectations of my lesson plan. Her classroom contributions to the coursework for beginning movement for the actor highlighted her areas of expertise and inspired the students and me.

Ms. Burger's curriculum influenced our students' playing in every area of their study. The intellectual and physical connections the young performers made in classwork, rehearsal and production is directly affected to dance technique and Laban Movement Analysis and Bartenieff Fundamentals. Performers' understanding of "stakes," physical commitment and truth telling was directly attributable to their work with Ashley. She has a knack for explaining each of her classroom goals with clarity. Ashley's students practice their craft by applying all of their tools to the task at hand to see which combination of techniques works best; they continue to dig deep into their hearts to find new connections throughout the process; they deepen their understanding of the value of thorough rehearsal. By applying the rare combination of skills and practices studied in her class, Ashley's students make the crucial connection between the physical, emotional, and intellectual demands of acting. She enjoys challenging her students to work beyond their self-imposed limits.

She is my all-time favorite of my brilliant colleagues at Wagner College; she is unfailingly collegial, a wise and able leader who is purposefully engaged and collaborative. She is kind, wise and funny. Her intellectual and aesthetic acuity combined with her instinctual and emotional depth ennobles her teaching. I am certain that Ashley Burger will be a valuable asset to any company and institution that is fortunate to employ her.

Sincerely,



Theresa McCarthy  
Assistant Professor