



December 7, 2001

Consulting Service
Georgia Center for Nonprofits
50 Hurt Plaza SE, Suite 220
Atlanta, GA 30303-2914

Letter of Reference for Ellen Mazer

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing to recommend Ellen Mazer enthusiastically as a consultant for nonprofit organizations. I have known her work for many years and have sought her valuable advice in the areas of resource development, strategic planning, and personnel recruiting.

Starting in June 2001, The Epstein School engaged Ms. Mazer to conduct a search for a Director of Advancement. She undertook the responsibility to meet with the school's lay and professional leadership to be sure she understood our goals, the structure of the department, and the work requirements. Her patient questions greatly helped us refine our own thinking. When we were all clear what we needed, Ellen wrote a clear job description, then created and implemented a comprehensive search, writing and placing ads, searching the web, and using her own professional networks to find candidates. We all expected the process to be complete by August, but, in fact, interested candidates were scarce and it took until the end of November. Ellen stayed on top of this project long beyond our original request, interviewing any likely prospect, checking references, and generally exceeding all reasonable expectations in her dedication to our school's needs. When I despaired of finding the right person, Ellen assured me, "I won't let you down. We will find a good match for your needs."

During the course of this process Ellen not only found us a ~~find~~ Director of Advancement, but she also identified another talented professional to serve as Director of Annual Fund and Alumni. Ellen took a big picture approach to our needs, looking at the operation of the whole department and, indeed, the whole school. This breadth of vision allowed her to make many useful suggestions during the search process and to help us engage two great staff people.

Last June we also asked Ellen Mazer to write a proposal for a foundation grant to support faculty professional development. When gathering the information for the proposal, Ellen challenged our staff to state clear goals for their program and to plan carefully for its evaluation. She brought our work to a higher standard, educating us not only on what a good grant proposal should contain but also teaching some new elements of excellent program design. All this she achieved through positive questioning and encouragement.

Among Ellen's many strengths I must mention her deep understanding of nonprofit management and governance, her ability to listen and advocate, her keen intelligence, her diligence, her timely attention to details and follow-through, her wonderful writing, her tremendous integrity and honesty. I find her a delightful person to work with, one who infuses collegiality with friendliness while maintaining a tone of mature professionalism.

I would recommend Ellen Mazer without reservation for any work she feels herself prepared to do. We look forward to asking her back to help us at Epstein and feel lucky to be able to call upon the expertise she employs as doer and facilitator of nonprofit excellence.

Sincerely,

Cheryl R. Finkel
Head of School