



To Whom It May Concern:

Creative, instinctual, insightful, and imaginative are some of the words that describe Sameer Shah's teaching. From the moment I saw him teach his demo lesson at Packer Collegiate Institute, I knew there was something special about this young man. As his department chair, I had the unique privilege of working with him over the past year. During that year, I was impressed by his preparation and his ability to create his lesson plan around key essential questions. The skills that he displayed within his first year superseded my expectations; more importantly, his level of expertise fits a teacher with 20 or more years of experience. Because I hold him in such high regards, I recommended him for the Collegiate School Teaching Institute (CSTI). This two-week program is designed to assist teachers of color assimilate into the independent school culture. It also focuses on other areas of teaching such as lesson planning, comment writing, learning differences, and implementing technology into the curriculum.

At the beginning of the two-week period, we, the faculty members of CSTI, ask the fellows to take risks and to work on areas or on a lesson that they feel is an area of weakness. Sameer wanted to work on assessments and on perfecting two different lessons. The first lesson focused on logarithms and the second on matrices. Both were creative, imaginative and, to put it bluntly blew me away. Myself, and the co-director of the program, who happens to be an experienced math teacher, both feel his presentation of matrices and Facebook, a social network website, should be perfected and presented at National Council for Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM). Because he is an intellectual and has tremendous vision, Sameer can connect mathematical topics to real world applications. Moreover, he is able to identify real world scenarios that students can relate to and grasp.

His passion for the subject and for teaching is well received by his students and by his peers. Students are comfortable with him and gravitate towards him. At CSTI, each fellow is required to teach three classes, which are made up of students with different abilities. Sameer was able to assess their skill level and to modify his lesson to accommodate the students in the room. More importantly, he was able to establish an excellent connection with the students within the first few minutes of the class. Students were so captivating that they worked on the material on their own outside of class. This development was incredible because it was summer and these students were not currently enrolled in school. One can only imagine what would have happened in a school year.

Sameer is a gifted teacher with an incredible future ahead of him. It was a great pleasure for me to be his department head and mentor. In fact, I think I learned more from him than the other way around. I would, without any hesitation, hire him again. Any school would be lucky to have him in their community.

Sincerely,

Antonio C. Williams

Advisor/Mentor

Collegiate School Teaching Institute