

February 28, 2017

Dear Flyin Ryan Hawks Foundation Staff,

I have known Kelly Kate for the past 5 years, since the summer of 2012 when she participated in a special program of the California Conservation Corps, the Backcountry Trails Program of which I was program manager. Our participants live and work in a backcountry wilderness setting for 22 weeks straight. Members perform physically demanding manual labor and live as an active part of a tight-knit and diverse community. In addition to trail work, members participate in regular camp chores, trainings, physical training, daily curriculum and education, environmental awareness, cooperative living skills, and exploration of surrounding wilderness areas.

I had an opportunity to observe Kelly Kate both on and off the clock. Members spend the duration of the season together and although this can present stressful situations, Kelly Kate's participation in the success of the work she did and contribution to her community was impactful. This is evidenced by her willingness to lead classes in the evening, take on extra tasks, and developing a personal relationship with each member on the crew. Kelly Kate was quick to adapt to the program. She strived to go above and beyond.

Since her season, Kelly Kate has spent every summer working in a backcountry camp with our crews cooking for them. Her passion for the program goes beyond the kitchen, the camp cook is the heart of a camp and the task at hand is not just simply putting delicious food on the table for hungry trail building corpsmembers. They manage the kitchen, food orders, cleanliness, hygiene, food safety and nutrition. They are also a confidant, a counselor, an ear, a shoulder, a voice. The dedication that Kelly Kate put into every aspect of this position is un-matched. Her meals are amazing and she provides the solid ground upon which members can excel at their goals.

I am excited to see Kelly Kate in this new adventure of the PCT. Once again, she is not selfish in this desire. She is dedicating her hike to help raise money for one of my programs, Women in the Wilderness, a program to support first time backpacking trips for women.

I would be happy to discuss any further questions regarding this candidate.

Sincerely,
Agnes Vianzon
760-935-3877
<http://www.easternsierracc.org>