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Dear Flyin Ryan Hawks Foundation,

I am pleased to have this opportunity to recommend Farid Noori for a Flyin Ryan Adventure Scholarship. I have enjoyed reading the materials on the Foundation website, and was both inspired by what I read and encouraged to write a recommendation on behalf of Farid. I have known Farid for the past three years, and first met him when he reached out to ask for advice regarding his cycling aspirations. I have since become very close with Farid, and am supportive of both his personal mountain biking aspirations, as well as his larger vision of improving life in his native Afghanistan through outdoor activities such as mountain biking and skiing.

A typical citizen of the United States may only be able to conjure up images of war and tragedy when one hears "Afghanistan". My views on this changed after my first cup of coffee with Farid, and I am confident that despite massive challenges he is on the path to affecting positive change in his country. Farid's vision of adventure sports taking place in the beautiful landscape of Afghanistan is a bold challenge, but one he is willing to undertake and one that I believe is worth the effort and risk. I have never hesitated to connect Farid with anyone I know who has connections to mountain biking or cycling, or who may be otherwise interested in supporting him in any way. Whenever I write or call a friend to introduce Farid, I say something to the effect of "You may think that I am asking you a favor, but after you meet Farid you will know that I am doing you a favor by bringing him into your life." His spirit is joyful and he exudes a quiet, positive charm that belies the challenges of his journey and that of his family. As a graduate of Middlebury College with an Economics degree, Farid could pursue a gratifying, challenging and well-paying job on Wall Street, a path that would be encouraged and supported from those at home, but his mission and passion would not be satisfied with this path. The path he has chosen with Mountain Bike Afghanistan and his Olympic dreams has no precedent and many obstacles, yet this is the path he has chosen.

I hope that Farid's story, aspirations and mission are inspiring, but I would also note that in addition to the challenges inherent in Afghanistan, he faces significant financial challenges. For example, when Farid moved to the Northeast Kingdom in the summer between semesters at Middlebury to train on his mountain bike, I was thrilled to see that the New England Mountain Bike Championships were being held in the area where he was living. When I asked if he was planning to race, he indicated he could not afford the entry fee. I was slightly hesitant to ask the cost, thinking that perhaps since it is a big race the fee would be quite steep. The fee was \$100. I was glad to help connect him with some people involved with the race in order to support his entry fee, but this has kept me mindful of his level of need.

Thank you for your consideration of Farid's application. I am certain you will join the rest of us who have become friends with and followers of Farid if you are able to support him with a scholarship. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Erin C. Quinn

Erin Quinn
Director of Athletics