

June 24, 2022

To Whom it May Concern,

I write to you today on behalf of Anne Penner to show my unyielding support of her promotion from associate professor to full professor.

Anne Penner is one of the most brilliant, dynamic, honest, and supportive directors/professors I have ever had the privilege of working with. Anne has supported me through three of the most challenging roles I have ever been cast in, each time holding me gently and finding joy in discovery together. Further, she was an outstanding help as a mentor while I prepared for graduate school auditions. This was an absolutely daunting process, but Anne's confidence in me and her guidance in my audition prep helped me get to where I am now: two months away from starting my MFA in Classical Acting at the George Washington University.

One of these challenging roles was a young woman named #00, from the play *The Wolves* by Sarah DeLappe. After a devastating loss, #00's narrative shifts and she becomes the vehicle for her soccer team's grief. Alone on stage, she does her best to cope, but the scene culminates in an agonizing scream. It is a gut-wrenching scene for actor and audience alike. Staging this scene was early in the process, and it was my first show directed by Anne, and I won't lie, I was terrified. But Anne is so patient and does all her creating with such love and care, I felt completely supported through the whole process. She was open to hearing what I was physically capable of doing and pushed me as an actor and as a person. Not only did we create an amazing show, but Anne showed me what a positive, functional, and uplifting rehearsal process should be like.

In theatre, and in improvisation specifically, we have a rule: you never say "no;" you always say "Yes, and." This is to establish that all ideas are worthwhile, and that all suggestions

are welcome. I think Anne is the embodiment of “yes, and.” She makes everyone feel like they have a seat at the table. She is the most brilliant collaborator I know, and we as an institution would be unbelievably privileged to have her as a full professor.

I hope that you will take my experience into consideration.

My best,

Rachel Sanderson