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## Sports for People with Special Needs

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March 30, 2016

To Whom It May Concern

This is a letter of recommendation for Melissa Marie Wilson. I started this sports program for children and young adults with special needs over 25 years ago as a small program in central New Jersey under the name of Challenged Youth Sports. My goal is to grow the program through colleges and universities. I started that with a program at my alma mater, Bowling Green State University, in October of 2014. Melissa Wilson was a Sophomore at that time at BGSU, and she eagerly stepped up to volunteer her time for this special population. When the young man, Luke Sims, who was running the program, graduated in May 2015, we needed someone to run the program, and Melissa, in May 2015 agreed to become the Director of RallyCap Sports at BGSU for this, her junior year. Under Melissa's guidance, our program at BGSU has flourished! She held a successful kickoff event in the fall of 2015, attracting over 40 participants with special needs from NW Ohio to the BGSU campus. This was followed by a four-week Soccer session, and a four-week basketball session, and Melissa coordinated every event with over 150 student volunteers. She and her friends then worked the concession stand for the BGSU/UT football game, so they could earn money to help fund the RallyCap Sports program. I never asked Melissa to do this; she did it because she passionately cares about EVERYTHING she undertakes. She then went on to create a Boo-Bash Halloween event for this special population, and a Christmas party as well. She has now single handedly organized a Football/Cheer program for this group of special needs children, to be held on the BGSU campus this Spring. Melissa approached me about a summer internship for RallyCap Sports for this upcoming summer. When I told her I didn't have the funding to offer a paid internship, she offered to take classes on her own time to learn about grant writing, thus, showing me that she planned to "pay us back" for her paid internship. I completely agreed with her plan, and I recently offered Melissa a 10 week paid summer internship for this upcoming 2016 summer, and she will once again learn a new skill as she continues to finds ways to help others, yet in a very entrepreneurial manner.

I know that, in addition to running our RallyCap Sports program at BGSU (and she is signed-on to run it again her Senior year), she holds at least one part-time job on campus, and is involved in many other campus endeavors in leadership positions. Melissa is an extraordinary human being who totally "gets it". I am encouraging Melissa to continue her hard work, and if our program grows the way I hope it will to other colleges and universities (in large part thanks to Melissa!) during the next 12 months, I plan to offer Melissa a full time job upon her graduation from BGSU in May 2017.

I built a company for 35 years as owner and CEO of SFERRA ([www.sferra.com](http://www.sferra.com)) and I have rarely come across someone, who at such a young age, so completely understands the concepts of organization leadership, while at the same time sincerely cares so deeply about this population who she so selflessly serves. She is to be commended, and in my opinion, is SO deserving for any scholarship that she is applying for. Should you need more information, please email me at [pjhooker@sferra.com](mailto:pjhooker@sferra.com) or call me on my cell at 848-218-2395

Sincerely,

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