Writing a Mitchell Recommendation Letter

Letters of recommendation play an important role in a student’s application for the Mitchell Scholarship. If you feel that you cannot write an unequivocally supportive recommendation letter, please decline to write the letter.

When asking for a recommendation letter, the student should provide you with:

- Information about the Mitchell Scholarship (www.us-irelandalliance.org/scholarships.html);
- His/her personal statement, proposal of study, and details about his/her extracurricular activities;
- An outline of why he/she is applying for the scholarship;
- A list of the types of things he/she would like you to remember about them when writing the letter of recommendation.

Suggestions on how to write a letter of recommendation:

- Comment on the student’s leadership goals and his/her leadership skills in general.
- Give details and/or examples to back up any claims you make.
- Discuss the student’s personal characteristics and intellectual ability (the scholarship is looking for well-rounded individuals).
- Only make true statements that you can validate.
- Do not give class ranking, unless the student is first in a class.
- Please send me a copy of your letter of recommendation for my files so that I may help the student prepare for interview questions. (I will not reveal the contents of the letter, but rather inform the student of things he/she should review before the interview.)

Items you should address in a Mitchell recommendation letter:

- Demonstrated record of intellectual distinction, leadership, and extracurricular activity;
- Honesty, fairness, and unselfish service to others that indicates future leadership potential and contribution to society;
- Adequate preparation for the proposed course of study.

Also, I will be happy to review letters of recommendation and make suggestions.

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