

UBC ARTS CO-OP PROGRAM

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October 23, 2008

SOTY Adjudication Committee
UBC Arts Co-op Program
Buch C121, 1866 Main Mall
Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z1

Re: Arts Co-op Student of the Year Award Nomination for Kath Blair

Dear Committee Members,

I am very pleased to nominate Kath Blair for the Arts Co-op Student of the Year Award (2008). Last year, Kath was the runner-up for the SOTY Award, and I believe she is even a stronger candidate for this honour this year. Kath has consistently exhibited exceptional performance throughout her involvement in the co-op program and it has been my great pleasure to have the opportunity to act as her supervisor during the Summer 2008 term.

As the main project lead for our website redesign, Kath was instrumental in facilitating a collaborative development process that integrated the feedback we received from our employer and student stakeholders. The final result is a dynamic site that shares the stories of our success through student and alumni profiles, statistics outlining our growth, and pertinent information necessary to meet the needs of a diverse audience. It was a hugely challenging task, and I was extremely impressed with the level of professionalism, maturity, and enthusiasm Kath demonstrated on a daily basis. She took ownership over the project and led us through our timelines with the tact and adaptability of an experienced designer.

The new co-op website is a vital communication tool that acts as our primary marketing strategy. Kath helped us to understand the importance of navigation, and balancing content to ensure that we engage our stakeholders effectively through ease of use, visual design elements, and technical features that I won't even attempt to try to describe. Kath has a knack for communicating technical jargon in a way that seems surprisingly accessible for a group of non-techies. But most importantly, Kath was able to navigate the challenges of dealing with various stakeholders, interests, and differing opinions in a logical, well planned, and articulate manner.

I am especially impressed with Kath's willingness to go the extra mile, and for her commitment to co-op. During the final week of the website project, Kath faced delays and competing timelines, but willingly stepped up to the challenge by working extra hours and ensuring that we could launch our site before the new term. The feedback we have received on the site so far demonstrates the value that Kath's attention to detail, technical expertise, and creativity had in helping our program develop a website that achieves our goals of engaging students, employers, alumni, and faculty. We are truly grateful for her tremendous efforts, and especially for the final product.

Kath's commitment to co-op goes beyond her work this summer. She is always eager to offer her time to in support of our program and I have often heard her promote the value of co-op. Whether it is mentoring junior co-op students and peers, coordinating activities and web development through the Arts Co-op Students Association, or speaking at our recruitment and networking events, Kath continually embodies the qualities we seek in all of our co-op students: career motivation, accountability, and initiative. In fact, we have often called upon Kath to volunteer her time with our training and workshop activities. Most recently, Kath, along with some co-op peers, helped to develop a workshop on transferring academic and extra-curricular accomplishments in relation to career development called, *Holy Accomplishments Batman!* This workshop was presented at the *Get Learn'd Conference* was geared towards first year students as a way of helping them maximize and transfer the skills developed through on-campus



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involvement. We were so impressed with the content for this workshop that we have asked this group of students to present at our upcoming pre-employment training for co-op. In addition, Kath has agreed to assist me with presenting the interview and portfolio component, along with another student. Being able to rely on the strengths of students like Kath is a tremendous asset to our program, and goes a long way in achieving our goals for peer to peer engagement.

A few weeks ago I asked Kath to speak at one of our Undergraduate Information Sessions geared towards recruiting new students into the program. It was extremely rewarding to listen to Kath speak about her experiences in co-op and the impact co-op has had on her professional career development. I felt a great sense of pride as I thought back to my first meetings with Kath when she was initially admitted into the program. At the time, she was a young, inexperienced, and slightly anxious student without a clear direction for her future. But hearing Kath speak now was truly heart-warming. She spoke like a confident, experienced, and thoughtful professional with great optimism about her long-term career goals.

In addition to the demands that co-op has placed on her academic life, Kath has also had to balance several other commitments. As a Visual Arts major, Kath is actively involved in her department through the Visual Arts Students Association, and managing a full course load while maintaining high academic standing. In addition to receiving several scholarships, Kath has been inducted into the Golden Key Honours Society, and she was recently nominated by her department for the prestigious Wesbrook Scholar award. She is also busy planning for a Student Directed Seminar, *Practical Experiments in Contemporary Art*, which she will facilitate during the January to April academic term. She also volunteered to develop a workshop on resume writing as part of the *Work Your BA* series presented by Career Services in partnership with the Centre for Arts Students Services (CASS). Kath co-facilitated this workshop with her previous co-op supervisor from Business Objects, Doug Savage.

This list of Kath's accomplishments, contributions, and achievements shows that she is truly deserving of the SOTY Award. I am truly proud of Kath, and grateful to have her as a student in our program. She is a great ambassador for our program who continually demonstrates the spirit of co-operative education.

If you have any questions regarding this nomination, please do not hesitate to contact me directly at 604-827-5194 or coby.fulton@ubc.ca.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Coby Fulton
Coordinator, UBC Arts Co-op Program

