HOWARD UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN
DEVELOPMENT AND
PSYCHOEDUCATIONAL STUDIES

February 3, 2023

Norfolk State University
Ethelyn R. Strong School of Social Work

Dear Promotion and Tenure Committee,

As a Professor in the Howard University Department of Human Development and Psychoeducational Studies, I am writing this letter to support Dr. Sharon Alston's application for promotion to Associate Professor with tenure. I have known and worked with Dr. Alston for more than ten years; since she was a doctoral student at Howard University in the School of Social Work, and I was a junior faculty member in the School of Education. We met while working with the Learning Communities for STEM Academic Achievement (LCSAA) program headed by Dr. Orlando Taylor, then Dean of the Howard University Graduate School. I was the Co-Project Director and Sharon was a Graduate Assistant for the program. Together, we organized and facilitated meetings and summer conferences with faculty members from four different HBCUs who were implementing learning communities in their STEM classes. We also conducted and presented research on the model, implementation, and effectiveness of the program. Sharon is a leader and a team player, and she helped to make the LCSAA program a success. Since I first met Sharon, and still to this day, I am impressed with her professionalism, collegiality, intellect, initiative, and commitment to disenfranchised communities, especially African American, poor, and homeless people.

I served also as a member of Sharon's dissertation committee. Her study of the psychological and academic development of 182 African American youth living in public housing was high quality and set the stage for her research career. Since then, Sharon and I have collaborated on research and service projects, and often discuss new research and service projects we want to do together. In addition, Sharon and I have talked frequently about her courses and teaching experiences, and I know she is a dedicated and competent educator. We discuss teaching research courses in particular and share resources and ideas about different and effective ways to teach social science theories and methodologies to undergraduate and graduate students.

In summary, I am sure that Sharon has contributed significantly to the Norfolk State University programs and students in her time there so far, and I expect that her career will only continue to grow. I value and enjoy greatly having Sharon as a colleague and friend, and I hope to continue working with her for a long time. You are fortunate to have Dr. Alston as member of the faculty at Norfolk State University.

Sincerely,

Kimberley Freeman

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