

P.O. Box 39317, Ninilchik, AK 99639

Thursday, March 31, 2022

June Nelson Memorial Scholarship Committee

1111 W 9th St,

Juneau, AK 99810

To whom it may concern:

Since I was young, I've always wanted to help others and have loved art. During my sophomore year of high school, I was given the opportunity to teacher assist for our Kindergarten-First grade classroom, this is something that is only offered to Juniors and Seniors at Ninilchik. Also, in the same year I was asked to teach a dance class to our 4/5/6 class, unfortunately both opportunities were cut short due to COVID and not have been offered since under the circumstances. Despite that I still had a longing to do something in that realm. When deciding what I wanted to do with my future there were only two things I could clearly see myself doing. Art and teaching. I began looking into what it would take to pursue a career in art education and if I would want to pursue it through higher education or wanted to consider options through a community resource. After looking doing some research and looking at all my options, I thought back at my teachers and all that they have done for me, the hours they have spent with me, and their dedication, I decided that's what I want with my life. I want to be able to offer students what I was given by my teachers, I want to be able to be a sense of stability for someone who might not have that. In the fall I am planning on pursuing Secondary Art Education to do just that and hope to be what I had and more.

I am also a member of the LGBTQ+ community and I am neurodivergent. Growing up I didn't see many people like me and felt as though I would never be accepted for who I was even though I was a person like everyone else. As a teacher I want to be the person that my students can go to no matter who they are and what their background is to be able feel seen and heard unlike I was. Over the years I have been an advocate for my self and others within my community. Because there wasn't anyone who identified similarly to me once I reached high school I somehow quickly became "mamma gay" to those younger than me. All of those around me, no matter how they identified, would come and continue to talk to me about how they feel and what they think in their lives. I assume that is because I try to look at everything with an open mind even if I don't agree with them and if I don't have an answer at that moment, I do my research and get back to them. I believe that everyone should have a chance to live as they want as long as it doesn't harm another being and I want to make people feel comfortable in doing so.

Sincerely,

Olivia B. Ferguson