



3/19/09

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of Emily Vickery, whom I first met over twenty years ago when she was a classroom teacher, and I was a newly appointed administrator at Carver Senior High School in Montgomery. It did not take me long to recognize Emily as a stand out among a field of over seventy other teachers. She was fresh and innovative in her approach to teaching, and she related so well to the students that they vied to gain access to her classes each year. She was using technology as a teaching tool before technology became accessible and before it was an accepted means of delivering instruction, and the students loved it!

Carver High School was the site of a magnet arts school-within-a-school, and while most of the Carver High School teachers had little, if anything, to do with the magnet program, viewing it as intrusive and competitive, Emily embraced it. She initiated working collaboratively with the magnet teachers and discovered ways in which her students and those in the magnet classes could benefit mutually from working together. And what a magnificent marriage it turned out to be! Both groups of students grew artistically, academically, and culturally as a result of her efforts, and many friendships were fostered across racial lines that never would have been realized had it not been for Emily.

In 1994 I was asked to design seven magnet schools for the Montgomery Public School System, which were destined to become the first all day magnet schools in Montgomery. I was also tasked with writing a grant to fund these schools for the first three years of operation, which would have been a daunting task had I tried to tackle it alone. However, my first thought was to assemble the brightest minds in the field of education and challenge to them to design state-of-the-art schools that would win us the required funding.

Because of the many fine leadership qualities and the educational expertise she possessed, Emily was the first person who came to mind, so I asked her if she would help me spearhead the effort. Together, we invited forty of the school system's best teachers to work in teams to conceptualize the seven magnet schools, and Emily infused the technology that would be necessary to support the curriculum.

Emily also requested that I include in the grant a professional development requirement so teachers would properly trained on how to utilize technology to support the curriculum, regardless of the subjects they were teaching. Additionally, she brought into the process the finest minds available to guide us in developing budgets that would ensure proper installation of equipment that would support the technology for many years into the future.



After working on the project for approximately one year, the grant netted the Montgomery Public School System over \$7,000,000. The end result is that the schools have not only endured, but they have become even stronger. Because of Emily's leadership, much of the technology that was in place when the schools were opened in 1996 is still operational today, even though many years have elapsed. Equipment has obviously been replaced and upgraded, but the basic elements of the technology plans in each of the schools are still viable.

From Carver High School, I left to become principal of the Booker T. Washington Magnet High School in 1996, and Emily left to become one of my teachers. Two years later I retired from public school service, and Emily has since moved to a position in an independent school. And, she continues to make a positive impression on students and administrators wherever she goes.

Emily is a prime example of a life-long learner. She may not yet possess a Ph.D., but she remains abreast of the latest information in so many areas of interest that she has the equivalent of a Ph. D. in a number of areas. For example, Emily became interested in school bullying, so she began researching the topic, which led to her position as a consultant to the U. S. State Department in Serbia to develop anti-bullying policy in schools (K-12).

One would have a difficult time finding another classroom teacher who has been extended more invitations to deliver presentations on educational technology at local, state and national conferences than Emily has. I have observed her on numerous occasions, and she does an outstanding job, both in her preparation and in her delivery. She also handles herself well in difficult situations in which she is challenged. I have often marveled at how well she has triumphed during those rare instances in which she has been attacked by those whose beliefs about using technology in the classroom have differed from her own.

I am currently the executive director of Leadership Montgomery, a position that affords me opportunities to provide seasoned leaders a more in-depth study of the city of Montgomery and to teach leadership skills to the young professionals between the ages of 22 and 40. I must say that of all the leaders I have met in my many years with Leadership Montgomery, I have yet to meet a leader any stronger than Emily Vickery. I highly recommend her for any position she is seeking.

Please feel free to contact me if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cheryl Carter".

Cheryl Carter, Ed.D., Executive Director