



3 April 2025

To whom it may concern:

It is an honor to write this letter of recommendation for Deena Richter, an **exceptional** Administrative Professional who works in the Registrar's Office. Deena has been an instrumental ally on campus, especially for our veteran students. The Office of Academic Advising works closely with her to maintain and remain up to date with registrar processes.

Deena Richter is detail oriented and has strong communication skills to improve all services. One of our most recent projects is ensuring that all advisors are using the same note taking format when submitting Enrollment Verification for Veteran students. She is passionate about the work she does and is cognizant of how it impacts students. She shared with my advising team how students receive funding and how it can impact their aid. Any changes that occur she will draft an email with FAQ's and include all respected parties that support students in their VA process. I attribute Deena to being a great liaison for our campus and reputation with our community, a great reason as to why we have a strong admission of veteran students enrolling on the Tri-Cities campus is due to the connections and her support.

Deena has demonstrated great knowledge of processes and will assist in improving processes. We connect once a semester to establish Registration dates and align with other academic dates that support the enrollment of new and current students. Ms. Richter is an essential in many committees, one being our Commencement committee, in assisting with deadlines for students to register for graduation and commencement to maintain the integrity of deadlines for ordering programming materials and regalia. If there is a question or concern, I have, Deena is on the top of my list knowing that she can assist or point me in the right direction.

Deena is a great role model for staff on our campus overperforming on tasks and maintaining integrity of deadlines and processes. She leads our WSU community in an undeniable way to support others. Thank you for your consideration.

Warm regards,
Karina Aispuro



Karina Aispuro
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I am writing to encourage you to select Deena Richter as an exceptional Administrative Professional employee for her outstanding service and contributions to Washington State University Tri-Cities and the WSU system.

I am the School Certifying Official (SCO) on the WSU Vancouver campus and work closely with Deena to serve our veteran and military-affiliated students (VMAS). Deena is dedicated to the VMAS population in Tri-Cities, working tirelessly on their behalf to ensure their benefits are awarded promptly.

Within the last year, Deena has successfully navigated a VA compliance review, worked closely with the Washington State Achievement Council (WSAC) to have the WSU catalog approved, and participated in events to connect with veteran and military-affiliated students.

Between being the Assistant Registrar and her SCO duties, Deena is also a member of the Administrative Professional Advisory Council (APAC), serving on the APAC Professional Development and Events Committee. She also serves on the WSUTC Commencement Planning Committee, serving as Lead Row Monitor.

Deena is dedicated, efficient, and a team player. I know I can count on her when I need to process something, find answers to questions, or work through a problem. She is an integral part of our system-wide SCO team. Her dedication and commitment to WSU Tri-Cities is commendable.

Jaylene Wecks – Veterans Coordinator, Washington State University Vancouver

It is my pleasure to nominate Deena Richter, Assistant Registrar for WSU Tri-Cities, for the 2025 AP Contribution Award. I have been Deena's supervisor for four of the eight years that she's been with WSU and I value her willingness to learn new information, support her colleagues, provide service to the WSU and WSU Tri-Cities communities, staff recruitment events, score scholarship applications, and seek opportunities for professional development.

One of Deena's responsibilities is to serve as the WSU Tri-Cities School Certifying Official (SCO) and certify Veteran Administration education benefits. There are several different types of benefits that student veterans and military affiliated students might qualify for, and the rules and regulations around each type vary widely. Deena confidently guides students through the application process, knows the compensation rates and enrollment requirements for each benefit, stays current on federal and state legislative changes, and WSU policies related to tuition waivers and residency requirements. She uses this knowledge to support WSU Tri-Cities students and to support SCOs on the other WSU campuses when there have been unexpected staffing shortages.

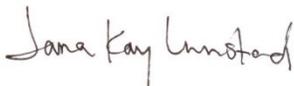
The impact of administrative errors in certifying VA educational benefits is significant. Mistakes can delay students' funding and lead to financial hardship, create debt for the student and the institution, and jeopardize the campus' authorization to disburse hundreds of thousands of dollars in VA benefits each year. Deena has done a tremendous job of accurately maintaining records, tracking payments, and collaborating with other campus SCOs to streamline processes. She has led two VA compliance surveys and has had zero findings. In fact, in both surveys the compliance specialists recognized her skills in the exit interview and asked if they could use her work as an example to share with SCOs at other institutions.

In addition to working with student veterans, Deena takes the lead on records and registration processes for campus. She is known as a go-to person in the System to troubleshoot employee tuition waiver processing errors and to verify that tuition adjustments are calculating correctly. She is a productive and supportive colleague who is a good steward of University funds.

Deena serves on the committee that reviews petitions for exceptions to academic calendar deadlines. She consistently demonstrates her understanding of Academic Regulations that drive decision making, while keeping an eye toward equity and compassion for individual student circumstances. Whether a petition is approved or not, her intent is to always identify ways to remove barriers so students can persist and meet their academic goals.

I have no doubt that Deena is deserving of the AP Contribution award. Her productivity, positivity, and professionalism are the ideal qualities for a WSU employee. Her attention to detail and understanding of policies and procedures improve the day-to-day functions of the campus. Her kindness, commitment to academic values, and determination to support students make her an ideal member of the WSU Registrars team. For all these reasons, I'm proud to nominate Deena for this award and would be happy to provide more information if the review committee has any questions.

Sincerely,



Jana Kay Lunstad

Dear Selection Committee,

I am honored to write this letter of recommendation for Deena Richter, a dedicated and highly skilled professional at Washington State University Tri-Cities. Deena's unwavering commitment to student success, her exceptional problem-solving abilities, and her leadership within the campus community make her an outstanding candidate for this recognition.

Deena has played a pivotal role in numerous projects that have significantly improved operations and student support services. Her adaptability and proactive approach have led to notable achievements, including assisting TRiO Classic and STEM programs by updating student advisor assignments, supporting the College of Education in expediting summer enrollment appointments, managing Running Start student transitions to ensure seamless advising support during staffing changes, aiding the Pullman School Certifying Official by processing veteran certifications during unexpected staff shortages, and ensuring food security for students by personally assisting them with Cougar Cupboard access outside of regular hours.

Her ability to collaborate across departments demonstrates her leadership and problem-solving expertise. She has worked closely with TRiO, the Registrar's Office, Student Financial Services, and the Career Center to improve student resources and streamline processes. Some of her most notable collaborations include working with the Career Center to promote a WSU TC Student Veteran Career Event, which resulted in increased attendance by veterans, and partnering with the Commencement Planning Committee to enhance row monitor training—a first-time initiative that improved efficiency and confidence among event staff.

Deena's dedication to growth and inclusion is evident through her continuous professional development. In addition to the required WSU training, she has pursued external opportunities, including Elevating Cougs 2024 and "How to Be an Ally for Diversity and Inclusion." Her proactive approach allows her to implement best practices, foster inclusivity, and share knowledge with colleagues across campus.

She is actively involved in several key committees, including the WSU Tri-Cities Awards Committee, the Administrative Professional Advisory Council (APAC), and the WSU Alumni Association Scholarship Committee. Her leadership in these organizations demonstrates her commitment to institutional improvement and student success.

Deena's student-first mindset is evident in her daily interactions. She proactively ensures students receive accurate, timely information, particularly for veterans and underrepresented groups. She fosters strong working relationships with administrative teams, communicates with clarity, and remains a calm, solutions-focused leader even during high-pressure situations. Beyond her responsibilities, she is a team player who leads with dignity, respect, and empathy.

It is rare to find someone as dedicated, resourceful, and impactful as Deena Richter. Her contributions to WSU Tri-Cities, along with her unwavering support for students and colleagues, make her an ideal candidate for this recognition. I wholeheartedly recommend Deena and am confident that her continued leadership and service will leave a lasting impact on the institution.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any additional information.

Sincerely,

Rafael B. Pruneda

Rafael B. Pruneda
Director of Development/Alumni Relations
Washington State University Tri-Cities