



Department of Dance
California State University, Long Beach

August 1, 2026

Dear Review Panel,

It is my privilege and honor to write a letter of recommendation in fervent support of Vanessa Becker Weig.

I have known Vanessa for over three decades. As teens, we were accepted into the same acting conservatory program at Wright State University. We trained and performed side by side as young aspiring actors and over the past thirty years I have witnessed, with deep respect and awe, the evolution of her career from performing and choreographing to becoming an inspiring teacher, a visionary artistic director, and a true artist committed to social change through arts-based activism.

The quality of Vanessa's art making has been publicly acknowledged in the years of positive press she has received in the Lexington area (and Columbus, Ohio before that) and the awards and grants she has received. Perhaps less publicly known but even more noteworthy than her positive critical reviews is the impact, emotionally and socially, her arts as activism projects have had on the community. Vanessa's visionary art-making, changes lives.

I have had the honor of being a guest artist and community workshop facilitator for a number of her *Voices Amplified* projects over the years. I remain in touch with many of the past performers. Over the years I have born witness to these young women asserting themselves, raising their voices, and moving into adulthood -- empowered and freed by the alchemical process of learning and co-creating theatre from their own lives, through a lens of social criticism. The structure of Vanessa's teaching nurtures personal insight, transformation and empowerment of the participants, within the supportive container that Vanessa she creates.

My "realistic assessment" of Vanessa's ability to educate, mentor, and create visionary creative projects can be summed up in the following three words: Without a doubt. Vanessa has always achieved anything she has set her mind to. As you review her accomplishments you will note her work is prolific. She is a marvel. Passionate. Focused. Driven.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions.
Sincerely,

Lora Wilson, MA, BC-DMT
Board Certified Dance/Movement Therapist

Faculty, Dance Department
California State University, Long Beach