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Montana Arts Council  
ARPA Grant Committee  
Helena, MT

April 15, 2022

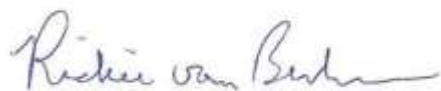
Dear ARPA Grant Committee,

I am writing in enthusiastic support for James Rickley's ARPA grant application. James was a member of the 2021 MAP Cohort that I coached. I have been the coach for seven MAP cohorts since 2014, and James was one of the most engaged and hard-working artists I have worked with. As you know the MAP program is designed for visual artists. As a composer, James joined the program fully prepared to adapt the material for his medium. He was creative and proactive in working the 35 MAP tools in ways that were appropriate for his medium. He rapidly transformed his existing business into a more art-focused model that is rewarding and economically successful.

Our group enjoyed the compositions James shared with us, and we were impressed with the range of original music he created. James is focused and detail-oriented, without losing sight of the broader goals he was working towards. He was disciplined, clearly putting time and effort into working on the tools as they were presented. He was prepared with results at each meeting: this guy got things done.

I feel these qualifications make James an excellent candidate to successfully complete the work that he has proposed. In my discussions with James, it was clear that he was engaged in collaborating with the music community of Great Falls. His proposal reflects this engagement and demonstrates the effort he put into preparing a workable proposal that meets his and the community's goals.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rickie van Berkum". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rickie van Berkum

To whom it may concern,

My name is Phillip R. Burton, I am on the Board of Directors of the Great Falls Municipal Band, currently serving as board President. I have been a musician and Trombonist in that band for the past 25 years. In addition, I also play in the Great Falls Community Jazz Band, The Great Falls Community Band, and the New Harold Nicholls Big Band. I am also a substitute Trombone player for the Great Falls Symphony. The purpose of this letter is to recommend approval of a grant to Mr. James F. Rickley.

In my musical experience I find Mr. James F. Rickley extremely worthy of a grant from the Montana Arts Council. Mr. Rickley has the discipline and ability to accomplish his goals and follow through with his request for said grant. As an accomplished Musician, including Organ, Piano, Percussion, and recently studying Cello with the Principal Cellist in the Great Falls Symphony, I believe he has the creative musical abilities, and artistic discipline of an individual artist to contribute to the community. He has recently joined the percussion section of Great Falls Community Band, which operates under the auspices of the Great Falls Municipal Band.

He has established a commendable and professional track record through original pieces composed for small ensembles at his church, including pieces for Organ and Trombone Quartet, in addition to a full concert band piece just last year for the Great Falls Municipal Band.

Yours Truly,

Phillip R Burton

Ronald J. Coons  
605 50<sup>th</sup> St. S.  
Great Falls, Montana 59405  
(406) 781-3407

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing this letter in support of James Rickley's application to the Montana Arts Council. In my experience as a music educator for over 40 years and as a performing musician in a variety of settings, I believe James Rickley to be a worthy recipient of this grant. James has the ability and determination to follow through with this grant, and to fulfill the creative requirements.

I have performed his compositions as a member of the Great Falls Municipal Band and at New Hope Lutheran Church in Great Falls. I find his compositions to be challenging and meaningful. He is well versed in many styles and compositional techniques. His ideas are fresh and thought provoking.

I can recommend James Rickley personally and professionally without reservation. I believe he will meet and exceed the requirements of this grant. Feel free to contact me if further information is needed.

Ronald J. Coons

April 5, 2022

To: Grant Committee  
Montana Arts Council  
From: Alan Johnson  
Re: Reference Support Letter-James Rickley

James moved to Great Falls approximately four years ago. I became aware that he had taken over the organist duties at a Lutheran Church. That organ and congregation was given a gift.

Slowly his presence has become known in the music community. He came to a community ensemble (band) concert which I was playing in, and I took the opportunity to introduce myself. He has brought something unique and personal to Great Falls with his musical offerings. His background and perspective somewhat stretch what I see as our community's musical norm. He's aware he has something different to offer and does not try to overstep but continues to "add" his musical ideas to a community that has a strong musical heritage. It is fascinating to see this evolve.

I have performed various times with James, mostly using his original compositions. Easter services with brass and mixed ensembles, solo with trombone and organ, and an original composition with the summer Municipal Band. All incidences have been challenging and thought provoking as a musician and rewarding as a performer.

I have a degree in music education with 40 years of teaching in public schools at various levels. Along with teaching I have stayed active playing wind instruments in tradition bands, jazz ensembles, and various other types of ensembles. In James' music something unique is offered to an ensemble and performer. He writes material that is accessible to the players he has available to work with and creates pieces that give a fulfilling experience. That's not always easy to create nor all the time the case in music literature. There is always genuine content along with attainable challenges in his work.

James Rickley is a well-organized and talented individual with clear vision and direction. As his work evolves, I see his contributions to our (the) music community do so like wise. He is methodical in what he offers and wise in his steps. Any arts grant rewarded to him would be worthy.

Alan Johnson

Retired Music Ed  
Great Falls Public Schools



GREAT FALLS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**MUSIC and ART DEPARTMENT**

April 9, 2022

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Dusty Molyneaux and I am the Music and Art Supervisor for the Great Falls Public Schools. I am writing this letter of support for James Rickley, who is applying for ARPA grant funds through the Montana Arts Council. I fully support this grant to bring live performances of music that is composed locally, performed by local musicians and also played for the hometown community.

One of my roles as a Fine Arts supervisor in this community is that I serve as a sort of ambassador between the public school system and the Arts Community in Great Falls. It is a role I gladly serve in, as I believe that the schools are the well that nourish our city with programs and events throughout the year that inspire, educate, entertain and bring joy to our citizens. Students that grow up with a strong Arts foundation in their schooling carry those skills into their adult lives, which makes for a healthier and more creative environment in which to work and play and grow families. It is a beautiful cycle!

In order for this cycle to continue, the schools are always trying to show students the relevance and reality of the Arts in their community. We also want students to experience the Arts in person as much as possible, and live events like these concerts as proposed in the grant documents have deeper and more emotional meaning than watching things on video or reading about them in a book. Seeing adults make a living in the Arts, and showing students how to achieve higher level thinking skills that use creativity, evaluation and analyzation make big impacts on student cognitive growth, and also show them that this sort of stuff can happen right in their backyard and not in some big city far away.

Another thing I really appreciate about this proposal is that it will use local musicians for performances, some of whom are educators as well as private instructors for the students of Great Falls. Giving these individuals a chance to be showcased not only is a nice honor for them, but it also will encourage these individuals to “sharpen the saw” and flex their performance skills that sometimes get pushed to the rear in their rigorous schedules of educating students. It will make my teachers stronger educators to engage in projects like this, which leads to student growth in the long run. This again is another beautiful cycle that I would enjoy watching unfold.

I heartily endorse and support this grant proposal to build an even stronger Arts community in Great Falls!

Please contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Dusty Molyneaux'.

Dusty Molyneaux  
Music and Art Supervisor  
406.268.6079  
dusty\_molyneaux@gfps.k12.mt.us