

August 29, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

I write this recommendation on behalf of my former student, **FARAH SIRAJ**.

I am Larry Bethune, Vice President for Student Affairs at Berklee College of Music in Boston, Massachusetts, USA. I have held this position for 33 years. I started at the college as a full-time professor at the college in 1971. I am also a professional musician and composer. In my 40 years as an educator in high education, I have come into contact with thousands of students and professional musicians. Berklee College of Music is the largest music school in the world with 4,000 students on campus and almost 10,000 on-line throughout the year.

I first met Farah Siraj in 2004, when she was a student at Berklee. I should say she first came to my attention, then. I was hearing about this young woman who had the exciting combination of true musical talent, astute business sense, and a global understanding uncharacteristic for young college students today. She became "famous" at the college almost over night, as most all knew she was a woman of extraordinary gifts.

The Student Government Association at Berklee is under my aegis. Ms. Siraj was, at first, the executive liaison for the SGA and me, and then vice-president of the association. Consequently, she and I met often to discuss matters of importance to the students she represented. I was impressed by her maturity and ability to articulate student concerns in a most professional manner.

Through time, I got to know Ms. Siraj very well, attending her many concerts and working with her on projects. I found she was quite a worldly woman, speaking several languages, and having lived in several countries. Her understanding of the Middle Eastern, European, and American cultures gives her a unique position to liaise with different cultures and to help bring understanding and collaboration to disparate peoples. She can do this through her articulate wisdom and through her music, which touches the hearts of the listeners.

This makes Farah Siraj a unique and powerful agent for fusing and diffusing positive ideas from East and West. She is a person of extraordinary abilities and would be a great asset to the music community of the United States of America.

I stand ready to answer any questions you may have about Ms. Farah Siraj.

Regards,

Lawrence E. Bethune
Vice President for Student Affairs
and Dean of Students