



## UNITED STATES OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

Human Resources  
Solutions

January 14, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure and honor to recommend Courtni Berry. I have worked with Courtni during my tenure as Associate Director for OPM's Human Resources Solutions (HRS), where she used excellent strategic internal communications to deliver results as a Communications Management Analyst. I am confident that Courtni's exceptional skills, professional experience, and personal qualities will make her a powerful asset to your organization.

Courtni demonstrated her strategic internal communication skills to improve HRS leadership communication, reputation, and employee engagement. Courtni created and delivered weekly talking points and presentations on policy updates, agency announcements, HRS customer engagements, and COVID-19 related communications for my meetings with OPM leadership and political appointees. Moreover, she coordinated closely with HRS deputy associate directors to identify and craft good news stories and highlight key data points to showcase HRS' impact and footprint across the Federal government. She also developed and led the communications planning and implementation for the 2020 American Council for Technology and Industry Advisory Council Igniting Innovation Awards for USA Staffing, resulting in USA Staffing's win for two awards – the 2020 Igniting Innovation Award and the Transformer Award.

Furthermore, Courtni's extraordinary work ethic, flexibility, agility, and adaptability always made her a stand-out team member. During urgent requests from the OPM front office, she showcased enthusiasm and dedication to getting the job done in a timely and professional manner.

Courtni has my highest recommendation to work at your organization. I have no doubt she will add value and make a strong addition to your team. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions at 703-473-5810.

Sincerely,

*Sara Ratcliff*

Sara Ratcliff  
Associate Director, HR Solutions



U.S. Citizenship  
and Immigration  
Services

January 31, 2019

To Whom It May Concern:

Courtnei Berry was my first federal hire and I have always been proud of my decision to bring her on board to USCIS. We hired her to assist the prior editor-in-chief of our USCIS Today newsletter which is issued to all 19,000+ agency employees around the world.

Courtnei immediately noticed a need to streamline the publication process. She worked closely with our technical team members to develop an online submission form and socialized the change to frequent submitters across the agency. Implementing and communicating this change was a monumental change to the USCIS Today submission and review process. It helped mitigate overlooked articles that were submitted via email and notified submitters when their article has been published. This change substantially increased submission rates and helped improve agency employee communications.

Within several months of Courtnei's arrival, the prior editor-in-chief left, and Courtnei stepped in without missing a beat. In this new role, she continued to help streamline and improve our employee newsletter by planning strategically to spotlight positive employee stories, creating sub-headings to help readers easily digest information, and building strong partnerships with our major business partners to help drive meaningful content relevant to all employees.

Courtnei was also responsible for developing USCIS Pulse Polls – and an entirely new method to quickly survey employees on topics related to workforce communications and employee engagement. Her leadership on this endeavor resulted in our office's ability to quickly implement feedback to meet the needs of employees. In addition, she collaborated closely with our multimedia team on the production of our monthly videos distributed to all USCIS employees. Courtnei coordinated closely with outside offices for content and contributed to the script-writing for these videos – her involvement in this process helped streamline messaging and overall delivery of multimedia content to the workforce.

I am confident that she is able to strategize, plan, and execute in order to deliver the best communication products for your organization. I highly recommend her for your team. She will bring a plate full of creative energy to help your company thrive.

Thank You,  
Juan Torres  
Senior Advisor  
Office of Public Affairs  
Transportation Security Administration



September 7, 2015

Dear Sir or Madam:

It is my pleasure to provide this letter of recommendation for Ms. Courtni Berry. Ms. Berry has served with exceptional performance in the Office of Human Capital and Talent Management (HCTM) at USAID. As the Chief Human Capital Officer (CHCO) and Director of the Office, one deficiency I noted when I arrived in 2013 was the lack of any communications or engagement function in the office of nearly 200 staff serving an Agency of almost 10,000. Ms. Berry was the first staff member hired to work for me in my front office to establish a Communications and Engagement team, to address both internal (across HCTM) and external (across USAID) communications, information sharing, awareness building, and engagement improvement efforts.

Ms. Berry began her employment in my office as an intern and within a year was hired as a permanent employee. She brings a strong educational background in communications that is matched with her natural talents in this field. She built an initial communications plan and was instrumental in rolling out both internal and external activities to achieve the plan's objectives. Ms. Berry demonstrated superb competencies such as research, analysis, information gathering, building consensus, creativity, persistence, teamwork, and interpersonal skills. She was given opportunities to develop her written and oral/presentation skills in a business setting and delivered consistently.

A few specific achievements I would like to highlight: 1) she coordinated communications for the annual Federal Employment Viewpoint Survey campaign; 2) she served as the project lead for setting up the new HCTM intranet (i.e., design, information gathering, writing content, display templates); 3) she served as coordinator with media for CHCO interviews; and, 4) she developed and implemented a communications plan for HCTM re-organization and re-design to the Agency, this included writing talking points and PowerPoint briefings for external meetings with Bureaus ("HCTM Road show"), creating office/program fact sheets and templates, and developing FAQs. Ms. Berry used both her communications and event planning skills in her lead role for all HCTM monthly All-Hands meetings (i.e., agendas, PowerPoint, speeches, team-building games), annual HCTM all-day retreat, weekly senior manager meetings, and quarterly manager off-sites/meetings.

In closing, Ms. Berry receives my highest recommendation. She is very talented in the communications field and she is an absolute pleasure to work with. She is friendly, positive, reliable, and engaging. I would absolutely hire her again. Please feel free to contact me with questions.

Sincerely,

*Elizabeth B. Kolmstetter*

Elizabeth B. Kolmstetter, Ph.D.  
Chief Human Capital Officer



# USAID | TANZANIA

FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

August 21, 2013

Ms. Julie S. Gowin, Outreach Coordinator  
Department of Communications  
R2130 Skinner Building  
College Park, MD 20742

Dear Ms. Gowin,

This letter is in reference to Courtni Berry, who worked full time as a Summer Intern at the USAID Mission in Tanzania from June 10 - August 18, 2013. Courtni worked under my supervision in the Development Outreach and Communications (DOC) Unit within the Program Office.

During the time that she was in Tanzania, Courtni proved to be a great asset not only to the USAID Program Office, but also to the U.S. Embassy; most notably being involved in tasks during the visit of President Obama's visit to Tanzania, such as assisting Embassy and White House staff with media coordination. Prior to the President's visit we were anticipating considerable traffic on the USAID website from press researching the U.S. Government's involvement in Tanzania. One of the immediate tasks I needed done was to update the Tanzania pages on the USAID website. I assigned the task to Courtni and she did a terrific job of; gathering the information from senior USAID team leaders, cross checking information, editing and incorporating it with existing information, and liaising with the USAID Africa Bureau in Washington to ensure that it was cleared and posted to the website.

In successfully executing this first task on the job, Courtni amply demonstrated several of her many admirable traits and skills that she subsequently applied to all of her assignments with us during the summer. In particular, she was able to work very independently and resourcefully seek out what she needed to get the job done. Most of us, including myself, were very absorbed with various tasks and assignments for the upcoming visit of President Obama and did not have much time to provide her with introductions or guidance. This did not deter Courtni. She demonstrated maturity, poise and self-confidence, approaching individual senior team leaders and obtaining their cooperation and time to provide the information needed to update the website pages for the different sectors. She would touch base with me occasionally for pointers, but for the most part, she was working on her own. What I really appreciated is

her ability to judge when she really needed my assistance and to seek it out, but at the same time to know how much she could accomplish independently. This gave me confidence that I could entrust her with even more important assignments.

Another assignment that she was given was to develop a "Behind the Scenes" Impact Blog to be published on the USAID website. The format was a Q & A with the USAID Mission Director on the new Power Africa initiative that had recently been announced by President Obama on his visit to Africa. Since this is a new Presidential initiative, the information on it was scant and Courtni had to investigate various sources in order to develop cogent questions for the Impact Blog. She also needed to interview the Mission Director for her answers to the questions, edit the content for the Impact Blog and ensure that the Mission Director signed off on the text and on the photographs to be used with the blog. Given that the Mission Director is the most senior person in the USAID Mission and is responsible for a portfolio of over \$350 million in US foreign assistance to Tanzania, her time is very limited. So I was very impressed with how professionally Courtni managed working together with the Mission Director, both in person and through email communications, to successfully develop and complete the "Behind the Scenes" Impact Blog on Power Africa for submission to USAID/Washington.

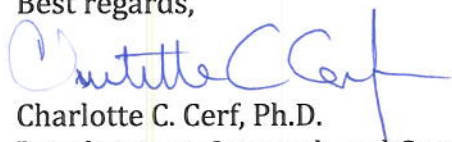
There are a number of other events and activities (many simultaneous) that Courtni very adeptly handled over the course of the summer. In all situations she was able to multi-task without getting too stressed and deliver as required. She also honed some staff management skills by supervising another intern. Midway through the summer, an intern who is a high school student, joined our team for a couple of weeks. At my suggestion Courtni delegated some of her tasks to him and then supervised him in the execution of the tasks. She also assisted him with some of his tasks when she noticed he was struggling, to ensure that the quality control was there. I was impressed at how well she managed this role. She provided assistance to the younger intern in a supportive collegial manner that helped him to grow and feel empowered.

I would like to point out in particular the very useful contribution Courtni made to USAID/Tanzania's social media efforts. I asked her if she could breathe some life into our USAID/Tanzania Facebook page that we struggle to keep current and interesting because of competing demands on our time. Courtni pulled content and images from various sources within USAID (website, Flickr, You Tube, job announcements) to regularly add creative new posts and raised the number of followers over 100% from what it had been. She also mapped out a format and a well thought out plan that we can use to keep the Facebook page updated with fresh content according to topics and sectors. Additionally, she introduced us to some new applications and software that we hadn't been aware of and that would help us streamline some of our outreach efforts using social media. These will be a great help to the DOC unit going forward.

In sum, we have been extremely happy with Courtni both in terms of her assistance and professional contributions to the USAID/Tanzania Mission, as well as the personal qualities that make her a good team player and a delight to work with. As a testament to our interest in Courtni as a member of our team, we invited her to come back and work with us again next summer.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any specific questions about Courtni's work at USAID.

Best regards,



Charlotte C. Cerf, Ph.D.  
Development Outreach and Communications Officer  
USAID/Tanzania