

J. MERRITT MELANCON

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To the hiring committee,

I would like to take this opportunity to recommend my longtime colleague Allison Floyd as a valuable addition to your team.

I have had the pleasure of working with Allison since March 2005. She is a lifelong learner, a generous and mission-driven teammate, and a curious, empathetic, and skilled storyteller. Over the past two decades, I've watched Allison use the storytelling ability she honed as a daily newspaper reporter and editor as a scaffold for new skills and new narrative structures.

From developing electronic games and videos to help teach about peanut cultivation to developing email newsletter campaigns to share her team's progress with stakeholders, she does what it takes to connect with the audience and achieve results.

Her drive to use and master new and emerging tools inspires me, but what makes her a great role model for communicators is her curiosity and authenticity.

For Allison, there are no boring stories because she never finds the people behind her subject boring. Her care for everyone – from the leader of an agricultural commodity group in the United States to a farmer in Ghana to an undergraduate student working on their first research project – has been her hallmark as a journalist and storyteller.

She is at ease around all of them and puts them at ease as well.

I want to add that before we were colleagues at the University of Georgia College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, Allison was our managing editor at the daily newspaper where I got my start. While she makes a wonderful teammate who cares more about the mission than who gets the credit, she also is an effective leader. I've seen and benefited from her commitment to helping her reporters develop their talents and strengths.

The last thing I'll say is about work ethic. Allison has extremely high personal standards for the way she spends her time. She is one of the hardest workers I've ever known. Lots of people have great ideas that never come to fruition. This is not the case with Allison. She has both the ideas and the gumption to bring them to life.

Thanks for your time. Please reach out if you have any questions. My email is jmerritt@uga.edu.

Warm regards,

J. Merritt Melancon