

## GREAT FUTURES START **HERE.**



April 12, 2019

RE: Reference and Recommendation for Dr. Shawn Robinson

To Whom It May Concern:

The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Fox Valley contracted with Dr. Shawn Robinson in 2017 and 2018 to provide literacy instruction services to a number of adolescents who at the time were functionally illiterate. Many of these young people were at high risk of academic failure and had struggled to receive needed supports and services for years. Through this experience, we came to learn two very important things:

1. Dr. Robinson's personal story and mission is inspiring. His experience as a person of color with dyslexia who could not read until the age of 18 gives him a unique ability to connect with young people quickly and garner their respect. He is, for many young people in similar positions, the example they need to start trying again.
2. Dr. Robinson's approach to literacy development, informed in large measure by his sensitivity to and expert understanding of dyslexia in the African American community, has proven to be more effective than current practices with many of the students he has served. For whatever reasons, this specific population of young people has not achieved literacy through a whole language approach. It is certainly true that there are many factors involved, but it is equally true that Dr. Robinson has, in many cases, been the difference maker. I have personally witnessed this having attended the graduation ceremony that was held at the end of the 2018 summer program.

Dr. Robinson has also helped us understand the needs of many of the kids we serve every day in a different way. We therefore have launched an initiative to invest more in literacy development. We expect to expand our literacy tutoring services to students, K-12, who may simply need more one-on-one attention and we expect to provide more in-depth intervention based upon Dr. Robinson's strategies.

I strongly support any and all continued investment in Dr. Shawn Robinson's important research and interventions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Lemke-Rochon".

Greg Lemke-Rochon  
Chief Executive Officer