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RE: Jeffrey Warner — general letter of professional recommendation

To whom it may concern,

My name is Tanya Promburom, head of the Research and Foreign Affairs Office at the Faculty of Business Administration, Chiang Mai University in Chiang Mai, Thailand. I am a Thai professional who has for fifteen years engaged my research primarily on ecotourism and natural resource management in socio-economical aspects. The following is a general letter of professional reference for Mr. Jeffrey Warner.

Mr. Jeffrey has a lot of experience in Thailand with government and non-government organizations and rural communities in northern Thailand. He has gained much knowledge for working with multi-cultural perspectives. Additionally, I believe his civic engagement work here has made a big contribution and provides support for community well being and enhanced livelihood that is valuable for my country. Thus I would like to affirm a strong support for Mr. Jeffrey in whatever he chooses to do.

I have worked with Mr. Jeffrey between 2012-2015, as a research team colleague for three major projects with the Faculty of Business Administration, Chiang Mai University (CMU). Jeffrey had to take the responsibilities in media production i.e. interview, write the article for newspapers, magazines, and/or making videos, among other team planning roles. I likewise met Mr. Jeffrey in 2012, during while I was managing a tourism project in four provinces of upper north Thailand, to improve the quality of tourism products and enhance the livelihood of tourism communities. Mr. Jeffrey was a volunteer tourist in this tourism program pilot. He was assigned to write about his experiences throughout the tour and in his diary. These shared experiences could reflect the tourist's satisfaction during the tourism attraction program. Jeffrey had a high participation and shared valuable information about his experiences that was worthy, useful, and supportive for our project.

As from his overall background and journalist skills, our CMU faculty then hired Mr. Jeffrey to do media, and he wrote the articles after interviewing the Chiang Mai Provincial Governor in order to do public relations and promote for an Asean Economic Community (AEC) project. This was to increase English language proficiency for human resources in core businesses of four Thai provinces, especially in the tourism sectors, logistics, and for journalists. This was to make them have more readiness for AEC, make them acknowledge more understanding about AEC context, and have more understanding of different cultures in Association of SE-Asian Nations (ASEAN) countries. Jeffrey performed his work well as a professional.

In 2013, I also worked with Mr. Jeffrey in a community based tourism development project in two communities near Sukhothai, Thailand, to facilitate the community with building tourism management capacity and teamwork. Mr. Jeffrey worked as well on the media, and also shared the ideas for conflict mediation among the communities. Jeffrey interviewed the organization stakeholders who were involved in this project.

In 2014, Jeffrey helped us with another project, with our designing and translating from Thai to English language a qualitative research questionnaire that we used to collect information from Chiang Mai tourists from all over the world. Jeffrey also collected these questionnaires in Chiang Mai.

I thought that Mr. Jeffrey has the greatest achievement in terms of personal learning; nobody has told him what to do with his work and life, even while in Thailand. He learnt by himself and works with his deep heart, to initiate his two books and humanitarian projects: a photo book about a community living on a rubbish dump (*Dignity Amidst the Rubbish*), and *Indigenous Voices*, which tells us about how modern economic development in my country is having an impact on the indigenous peoples here.

Last year, Jeffrey also built collaboration with a non-profit humanitarian organization that printed his first book, *Dignity Amidst the Rubbish*, which is in several countries now and is being used to support the fundraising through this organization for helping marginalized Burmese communities on the Thai-Burma border. Last year, Jeffrey also used his *Indigenous Voices* book research material and raised funds from his personal networks (i.e. Thai business sector, an Australian couple, and his network in the United States) to help support with the basic living necessities of a marginalized ethnic Karen community in Thailand.

I have also had the chance to work with Jeffrey on his *Indigenous Voices* book project, for over two years. We had no budget but interviewed and surveyed tribal villages in northern Thailand. Jeffrey's work on *Indigenous Voices* is interesting for me to be involved in because I believe his work addresses critical issues of common concern that have happened all over the world, related with economic development. The global market issue is a key driving force that has an impact on people's livelihoods. The national and international policies also have an impact on how livelihoods change, and especially in SE-Asia as the AEC will become formalized in December 2015. I also have participated with Jeffrey in other social contribution activities i.e. raising funds, giving donations, etc. for the tribal communities whenever we have a chance.

As from my Thai perspective, to work with Mr. Jeffrey I thought that it was very challenging for him to work with both Thai and other people who speak in a different language and have a different culture in both lowland and upland (in the mountains) area communities. It was a challenging task for us to work together while doing in-depth interviews of tribe communities, as we sometimes used three languages: Thai, English, and indigenous language to communicate as well. Jeffrey and I brainstormed together and planned for field trips in these villages. It was not easy, and we followed our plan in a real situation to work with the communities.

I observed that Jeffrey has an ability to cope with the problems while interviewing and working with communities as well. He had a quick learning and knows how to ask the right questions by applying his psychology skills as well. For example, he was applying candlelight during one interview to create an atmosphere when we were doing research for an electricity development impact issue. He also had a lot of patience for the language barrier, but it might have a limitation and created much pressure for him to cope with that situation sometimes.

We learnt how to work together and adapted in real situations. The different cultures have different details such as taboos and customs. We also learnt and respected their culture. Jeffrey was always aware and respected the different cultures. He seems to know that this is a foundation needed to work in a different culture.

Jeffrey did all of this without funding support. However, he has never given up on his dream and has tried to search for the network to cooperate with and support his work as well. Jeffrey always learns from new experiences and contributed his work while he has been staying in Thailand. As from these two project experiences and his personal learning, he gained a lot of knowledge and grew a lot as a person and professional. Moreover, he also learned how to deal with people in different cultures and different communities.

I think Jeffrey's work is very valuable for our Thai country and society. At least, it can reflect the voices of Thais and indigenous peoples who are the representatives that experience the impacts from development issues coming from market economy driving forces. This is a big issue and occurs everywhere in this world. It should be our concern and communicated to the world society as well.

The cultural changes that Jeffrey's work addresses in my country is a big impact issue. I think his work can contribute and encourage people to preserve the cultures that are the core and root of the human species, to tell us who we really are. The issues of development that Jeffrey is studying now are of global concern and that people all over the world must face.

As you can see from my letter here, Mr. Jeffrey has had many experiences in Thailand for five years, to study about how modernization has effected people's ways of life. Jeffrey has shown himself to be highly committed with professional standards, intelligent, and reliable in the conduct of his responsibilities. In addition, he has performed his duties and consistently proved himself to be hard working and responsible for his work and life. Mr. Jeffrey has a warm and congenial personality that enables him to adapt himself easily in each situation. He is also capable, industrious, ambitious, and very easy to get along with and good at cooperation with others. He seems to be well disciplined and persistent in the pursuit of his goals.

Mr. Jeffrey's future plan is to be a community planner, lecturer, advocate, and also to further setup a humanitarian non-profit organization to help marginalized people in the Asia-Pacific region and throughout the world. As from his experiences and his inspiration to study more on the impacts of development in a globalizing world, Jeffrey gained a lot of knowledge and has a perspective that can link with local and national policies and how this also has international impacts.

Finally, I feel confident that Mr. Jeffrey will continue to succeed with any other experiences he wishes to have and do. Thus, I believe that he can affectively share his knowledge and apply his experiences in ways that would be an asset to anyone who chooses to partner with him.

Should there be further inquiries about Mr. Jeffrey, please feel free to contact me.

Yours sincerely

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Ms. Tanya Promburorn

