To the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award Selection Committee,

I write to nominate Kathleen Perry for the Algernon Sydney Sullivan Award. Kathleen is a student of exceptional character, enduring faith, and creative service. She embodies the qualities of Mr. Sullivan like few others at Duke.

For three years I have worked closely with Kathleen through programs at Duke University Chapel. As a “Chapel Scholar” in the PathWays program, Kathleen and I meet regularly throughout each semester to catch up on her personal growth, spiritual development, and future career aspirations. (I have also been a TA for two of her classes and I am serving as an advisor for her senior thesis on Christian and Jewish theologies of suffering in the Religion department.) Through her studies in Religion and Global Health at Duke, Kathleen has developed a unique enthusiasm for health disparities and the importance of communities faith in working to overcome such an enduring global challenge. In this intersection of physical and spiritual health, she embodies the “nobility of character” element of this award. With other motivations, Kathleen could easily pursue a “narrow circle” of profit, prestige, and achievement through medicine. She could just as easily ascend to prominent (and lucrative) roles in certain Christian circles. But Kathleen’s heart leads her down quieter, more vulnerable roads. She gives herself to the service of others without asking for congratulations in return. She is a humanitarian and a global citizen who has embodied these ideals in regular local practices of care, presence, and assistance.

While there are many stories I could tell about Kathleen, I'd like to offer an off-campus anecdote with a unique window into her outstanding character. My wife is a nurse in Durham, and one of her close friends volunteers regularly at the Samaritan Health Clinic. A few months ago, without solicitation, our friend mentioned two remarkable undergraduates who brighten the clinic and make special connections with the uninsured patients. Of course, one of those students was Kathleen! She works effectively and compassionately with both the nurses and the patients, and she doesn’t seek recognition on campus for her efforts. (I didn’t know she volunteered there.) While many students ensure that their service work is visible to the most important administrators or university officials, Kathleen works diligently with some of the most “invisible” residents of Durham. Her work at the clinic, not to mention the volunteering at Hospice and Reality Ministries, is a testament to her remarkable selflessness and generosity.

Kathleen should be given highest consideration for this award – and of course I think she should win it! I would be happy to speak further in her support as you consider the nominees.

Sincerely,

Adam Hollowell