January 10, 2016

Recommendation for Gail Thynes

I am delighted to recommend Gail Thynes for a challenging and responsible position as a user experience designer in a Fortune 500 Company or startup company.

I have known Gail for over a year. She was one of 51 undergraduate students enrolled in my senior User Interface Design course during the autumn quarter of 2014. She was assigned to work in a project team developing a user interface for a Health Fitness Incentive System. The overall goal of the system was to develop a way to make exercising fun, while also monitor physiological functions while exercising, a way to establish goals for training, strategies for monitoring fluid/nutrient intake, entertainment provisions to encourage training and social networking. This was a tall order for a team of four students who did not know each other, had a diversity of experience from different university majors and nine weeks to do the project!

Gail was the leader of her group. She is a more mature student already with a wealth of life experience in the retail marketing world. Her leadership became the steadying influence in to coalesce her team to succeed in producing the best project in the class. This was standing was determined by a panel of practicing user interface design professionals from local Seattle businesses and by the grading of their final report. They achieve the top marks in both the judging by the panel and report. The teams final report was awarded a 100/100. Combined with the other requirements in the course, Gail earned the highest grade in the class.

Gail has strong interface design skills. She is knowledgeable in most web programming languages including CSS, HTML, Javascript, PHP, Query, Python, Java, etc. She is also proficient the use of design software: Adobe software, Axure, Balsamiq, Microsoft Visio. I am also aware that Gail participates in several extracurricular activities that also shows her commitment to the UX discipline and recognition by her peers.

But in addition to the skills that you would expect from a HCDE graduate, Gail has passion and substance. She is perhaps one of the most creative students I have met. Her analytical skills are outstanding…demonstrating the ability to deal with ambiguity. She has shown that she can build teams then use teamwork to execute a rigorous user interface design process with quality and timeliness.   She communicates with clarity, succinctness and presence. She also challenges the accepted norm and is willing to approach each new job with fresh eyes

In summary, I give Gail my unequivocal recommendation for employment in a responsible UX world. She has made a profound impression on me and based upon my experience I know that she will excel in the most challenging work environment. She maintains the highest standards of personal integrity and will make a great employee and leader.   If you have other questions please contact me my telephone or email.

Sincerely,

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Tom Furness is a Professor of Industrial & Systems Engineering with adjunct appointments in Electrical Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, and Human Centered Design & Engineering at the University of Washington. He is also the International Director of the Human Interface Technology Laboratory that he founded at the University of Washington in 1989 (www.hitl.washington.edu), with spinoff HIT Labs in New Zealand (www.hitlabnz.org) and Australia (www.hitlabau.org). He teaches courses in user interface design, virtual interface technology and technology-based entrepreneurship.   He supervises Ph.D. and M.S. students across engineering disciplines and the arts and sciences at the UW, University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand and University of Tasmania, Launceston, Australia. Dr. Furness has a long history of developing user interfaces including 23 years developing fighter cockpits for the Department of Defense and another 25 years developing advanced virtual interface technologies at the UW. He has contributed to over 100 inventions and with his students has started 27 companies with an aggregate market capitalization of > $ 8 Billion.   He is widely known as the grandfather of virtual reality and augmented reality.