

September 3, 2015

To whom it may concern:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Shabani Butoyi. Shabani moved to the United States in 2010 from a refugee camp in Tanzania. Prior to moving to the United States Shabani had no formal schooling. Shabani's native languages are Swahili and Kurundi. He only began to learn English upon his arrival to the U.S. as a 9th grade student. Since arriving in Portland Shabani has attended two high schools. Shabani is the oldest of five children, and comes from a single parent home. His mother struggles to work enough to provide for her family, and oftentimes Shabani is left with all the household duties. Furthermore his mother speaks very limited English and is not literate in English or Swahili. Despite all the above challenges Shabani has returned to high school for a fifth year with the goal of completing the last three credits he needs to graduate.

With Shabani's childhood history it is remarkable that he has gotten as far as he has in five short years. He is extremely motivated to earn his degree and begin helping his family out financially. When you ask Shabani why it is so important that he be allowed to run, he will tell you first that he truly "loves running" and that it is what he does "for fun." He also reports that it keeps him motivated to come to school and do well. Shabani didn't start running Cross Country until he was an 11th grade student. He found that athletics provided a structure after school, required tutoring, and kept him on track. All of these factors are important to him, and have gotten him to the place he is today.

If Shabani is allowed to run he will be required to stay after practice two days a week to receive individualized tutoring. In addition he will be assigned to a mentor that will work with him on overall school success skills. Shabani has willingly agreed to both.

If you have further questions regarding Shabani please do not hesitate to contact me. Shabani assisted in writing this letter, but is also happy to provide more information. Thank you for your consideration.



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