



To the DoD Cyber Service Academy Scholarship Committee,

It is with great enthusiasm that I recommend George D. Smith III for the DoD Cyber Service Academy Scholarship. As a Lecturer in the School of Cybersecurity at Old Dominion University, I had the pleasure of teaching George in my Windows Systems Management and Security course. His outstanding academic performance, enthusiasm for cybersecurity, and commitment to developing advanced technical skills make him a strong candidate for this prestigious scholarship.

From the onset of my course, George distinguished himself as a diligent and inquisitive student. Despite his young age, he demonstrated exceptional maturity and a clear passion for ethical hacking and cybersecurity fundamentals. His ability to apply theoretical concepts to practical scenarios, such as using tools like Kali Linux and Python scripting, reflects his hands-on approach to mastering complex topics. George consistently produced work of high quality, showcasing his analytical thinking and attention to detail.

George's background is a testament to his dedication to lifelong learning. Completing high school early and starting college at just 17, he has already amassed valuable experience in networking, penetration testing, and IT systems. His participation in the ODU Cybersecurity Student Association, where he engaged in Capture the Flag events and ethical hacking workshops, further illustrates his proactive approach to enhancing his technical and collaborative skills.

In addition to his academic achievements, George possesses critical soft skills, including problem-solving, adaptability, and effective communication. His ability to articulate complex ideas and collaborate with peers makes him a well-rounded cybersecurity professional in the making. He has also set ambitious goals for himself, including obtaining the Security+ and Certified Ethical Hacker certifications, which will undoubtedly enhance his technical repertoire.

George's drive to contribute to the field of cybersecurity aligns perfectly with the mission of the DoD Cyber Service Academy. His commitment to understanding and mitigating cybersecurity threats, coupled with his academic excellence and practical experience, positions him as an asset to the Department of Defense's workforce.

I wholeheartedly endorse George D. Smith III for the DoD Cyber Service Academy Scholarship. I am confident that his passion, skills, and determination will enable him to excel in this program and contribute meaningfully to national security efforts. Please feel free to contact me at [mgladden@odu.edu](mailto:mgladden@odu.edu) or 757-683-5533 if you require additional information.

Securely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Malik A. Gladden'.

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