

June 18, 2025

**Letter of Recommendation: Kelli Mathews Smalling**

Dear AISES Board of Directors Committee,

It is my honour to submit this letter of recommendation on behalf of my dear friend and chosen Sister, Kelli Mathews Smalling.

Kellie is a powerful force in her personal mission of advancing Indigenous education in STEM/STEAM. Kellie draws her strength from a deeply rooted foundation she possesses as a Citizen of Muscogee Nation. Her journey to this exact moment has prepared her for this role.

Well before Kellie took on her role as executive director of Engage Learning, a STEM/STEAM education non-profit, she had taken up critical space, in helping access education for Indigenous youth, especially our young girls, who often are overlooked when it comes to opportunities in science and math.

As a technologist in applied research and custom software, Kellie's collaborated with Fortune 100/500 companies and startups, driving innovation and organizational growth. She's been successful in the business world and those skills and experience will become great assets to our Board. A trained science communicator and advocate for S.T.E.A.M. education, Kelli has spent the past decade championing opportunities to inspire and empower learners of all ages.

As Kellie has shared with me over the years of our friendship, it's her hope to normalize the inclusion of STEM/STEAM within Indian Country and open opportunities for Indigenous minds to become leaders in their fields.

Kellie is the essence of what AISES is in search of to help us drive innovation and success as our Board continues to navigate these constantly changing waters. Kellie will be a constant northern star for our organization.

As a proud Sequoyah Fellow and former AISES Board Member, I respectfully submit this letter of recommendation for your consideration.

Peace

Jodi DiLascio

AISES Member