



Dear JEA Journalist of the Year Committee,

Based on my personal experience working with Alice Scott in a professional context, I am writing to highly recommend her for JEA National Journalist of the Year.

About a year ago, Jostens was working on a project in which we wanted to gather video statements from students about what it feels like to enter high school, tips for success during those four years, and what it feels like to approach graduation.

We have an in-house marketing team and videographer so the logical path for this project was to use content gathered by our internal team. However, when we learned that Alice Scott was interested in capturing some content for the project, we felt that we had very little to lose even though we didn't expect student work to be usable.

Alice blew us away. Not only was her work usable, it was exceptional.

As the project came together, it became clear that Alices' interviews would comprise 80% of the final video. Here's why:

- Alice sought out a diverse group of students to capture in terms of age, ethnicity and gender. In the unedited footage she submitted to us, we could hear her interactions with subjects. It was clear that she was comfortable interviewing each of them and did so with respect and curiosity.
- Alice's subjects were clearly also comfortable speaking with her. She was able to draw out thoughtful responses and authentic emotion.
- Alice worked from a set of suggested questions that we provided, but her impromptu follow-up inquiries were perceptive. They helped students to clarify their statements, and it was her insightful questions that resulted in the most compelling content.
- The videography was beautiful. She chose a depth of field that provides a crisp view of the student and minimizes background distractions, but also provides context through the surrounding environment.
- She controlled for background noise and other distractions that can make editing difficult.

As this project came together, we ran the videos past a focus group using DialSmith, a company that specializes in researching viewer perceptions for companies like Nielsen, CNN, CBS and TED. The feedback we got was hands-down the most positive we've ever seen for any of our videos. Viewers specifically noted the diversity and authenticity.

Because of Alice's efforts to select a range of humans and her comfort interviewing them, her facility with using video equipment, and her ability to think on her feet, the final project showcased authentic and unforced diversity. As a "one man band," Alice demonstrated extraordinary talent.

This country needs journalists like Alice Scott, and I hope her natural talent will be encouraged through this scholarship.

Sincerely,

Sara Sausker
Director, Renaissance Education
Jostens