

# Application Summary

## Competition Details

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|                             |                                   |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| <b>Competition Title:</b>   | 2021 Undergraduate Educator Award |
| <b>Category:</b>            | Institutional Awards - CTL        |
| <b>Award Cycle:</b>         | 2021                              |
| <b>Submission Deadline:</b> | 02/28/2021 11:59 PM               |

## Application Information

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|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Submitted By:</b>      | Lea Marzo                   |
| <b>Application ID:</b>    | 5817                        |
| <b>Application Title:</b> | Stephanie Reikes Nomination |
| <b>Date Submitted:</b>    | 02/22/2021 10:19 AM         |

## Personal Details

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|------------------------------|-------------------------|
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### Primary School or Department

Georgia Tech: School of Mathematics

|                                   |                       |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Primary Appointment Title:</b> | Asst. to the Chair II |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|

## Application Details

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### Proposal Title

Stephanie Reikes Nomination

February 17, 2021

Dear Selection Committee,

We are delighted to nominate Stephanie Reikes for the CTL Undergraduate Educator Award 2021. Stephanie holds a unique role in her position as Lecturer, with responsibilities to the School of Mathematics and the Tutoring & Academic Support unit at Georgia Tech. In the past three years, she has developed each of these roles to have significant impacts on Tech's pre-calculus curriculum and campus-wide academic support programs. Stephanie has provided curricular stability and instructional expertise in the foundational mathematics courses at Georgia Tech. In addition, her organizational skills and concern for student well-being has contributed to the outreach and success of support programs in Tutoring and Academic Support.

Stephanie is responsible for teaching all of Tech's pre-calculus mathematics courses, including Math 0999 Support for College Algebra, Math 1111 College Algebra and Math 1113 Pre-calculus. Stephanie has been influential in providing the necessary changes to align Georgia Tech with the mathematics curriculum mandated by the University System of Georgia. Stephanie's talents shine in her ability to propel students with weak math skills towards success in their majors-specific upper-level math courses. Stephanie advances the skills of students with varied math ability by meeting students outside of class time in far more than the typical number of office hours. She is also highly flexible in meeting the needs of her students' class schedules, including student-athlete travel. Stephanie works above and beyond typical expectations for supporting student-athletes and students with disabilities by offering alternate exam options, multiple exam sessions, and self-proctoring for extended time assessments (sometimes providing annotation or oral delivery!).

Stephanie utilizes multiple modalities for content delivery, including MyMathLab, Piazza, Kaltura Videos, OneNote, Gradescope, Kahoots, and Google Jamboard. She blends these technologies with instruction in both synchronous and asynchronous presentations. She actively shares her expertise with colleagues both within Georgia Tech and at regional conferences. Some of her recent efforts include a Kaltura training session for Math faculty, and presentations entitled "Active Learning without Dreaded Breakout Rooms," and "On Requisites: Are they Sufficient for Long Term Student Success?". By utilizing multiple methods of engaging her students in and outside of the classroom, Stephanie maximizes learning gains for her students, which also helps to establish their self-confidence before progressing to the calculus curriculum. Her high CIOS scores (4.74-5.0 on Item 10) confirm how much her students appreciate her pedagogical versatility and impact on their mathematical skills.

In addition to Stephanie's teaching responsibilities, she has strengthened the cooperation and collaboration between Tutoring & Academic Support and the School of Mathematics. Each semester, she schedules and coordinates the 75+ teaching assistants who work the Math Lab, which is drop-in tutoring support for 1000-3000 level math courses. Throughout the semester, she checks in with this large team of TAs to provide support and cohesion. Recognizing the need for private instructional space for Math postdoctoral instructors and graduate student instructors (GSIs), Stephanie schedules office hours for these individuals in Clough. Her leadership has expanded to impact the coordination of other drop-in tutoring partnerships with the Colleges of Computing and Sciences. Stephanie's passion for supporting student success has impacted TAS programming in small yet mighty ways. She has encouraged student interest in tutoring and PLUS with presentations at FASET and campus RA training, led the re-branding of Tutoring and Academic Support from the Center for Academic Success, and broadened our appeal with creative and timely social media presence.

In collaboration with Center for Teaching and Learning, Stephanie has developed a new program for TAS that will expand our support to faculty and students across campus. In parallel to the support that the PLUS program provides *outside* of class, TAS will begin offering instructional support *inside* of class with a Learning Assistant program. Stephanie led info sessions this spring to invite faculty to apply for the pilot program in AY21-22, and she will assist in the training and logistical support for the faculty and LAs in the program. The LAs will facilitate small-group discussions, breakout activities, and peer-peer collaboration in the traditional 'lecture' class.

Stephanie continues to expand and hone her pedagogical skills with professional development within Georgia Tech and external organizations. Within Georgia Tech, she has attended multiple CTL workshops including Course Design Studio, GTREET, and the GT Remote Teaching Academy. External to Georgia Tech, Stephanie has been active in the Georgia Organization of Student Success (formally Georgia Association of Developmental Education) and presented at the annual conference the last two years (titled above). In addition, she is an active member of the learning support community, and she attends the Learning Support Co-Requisite Academy, hosted by USG each fall and spring semester, as the Math representative for Georgia Tech.

On behalf of her excellence in teaching and service to the Georgia Tech community, we are proud to nominate Stephanie Reikes for the Undergraduate Educator Award.

Sincerely,



Linda E. Green, Ph.D.  
Director, Tutoring and Academic Support  
Senior Academic Professional, School of  
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## Reflective Teaching Statement

My passion for education and teaching has been instilled in me from a young age, as both my maternal grandmother, and mother were teachers. My career has centered on helping at-risk students overcome the challenges they face in learning mathematics. I believe that the work that I do provides a foundation and motivation for my students to be successful in all their courses.

I assumed my position as Lecturer at Georgia Tech just over 3 years ago. In this position, I work for both the School of Mathematics and Tutoring & Academic Support (formally Center of Academic Success). When I arrived on campus, there was a need to do an overhaul of the learning support curriculum. In 2018, I submitted proposals to the Institute Undergraduate Curriculum Committee for the creation of Math 0999: Support for College Algebra and reactivation of Math 1111: College Algebra and saw them through the approval process. I had the pleasure to develop the curriculum for these courses with a focus on student success. I have embedded in the Math 0999: Support for College Algebra curriculum effective learning strategies such as time management, note taking skills, managing academic stress, and test taking strategies. I observed the biggest hurdle for first year college students to be time management. Therefore, the first assignment that I give students in all my classes is to create a manageable time line of their upcoming semester – what is often called the “Semester at a Glance.”

As the sole instructor of all the math courses that are taken before Calculus, I get the pleasure of following a good portion of students from Math 0999 and Math 1111 to Math 1113: Pre-Calculus. I believe when it comes to math, “practice makes perfect.” I have always incorporated active learning into my courses with poll questions and small group work, but with the COVID-19 pandemic I have really taken a deeper dive pedagogically to keep the attention of my at-risk population. Last summer, I spent the first 5-weeks of summer semester creating more than 75 mini lesson videos with embedded quizzes. The use of video lessons produces a good preview of the material before lecture and review of material post lecture.

My Math 1113 course has been supported by PLUS (Peer Led Undergraduate Study) Sessions for several semesters. However, due to COVID-19, PLUS attendance has dropped significantly. With PLUS sessions being cut for my course, I pivoted my thinking on how I can bring the idea of PLUS to my students. Starting spring 2021, I have had the pleasure of adding Learning Assistants into the course who help reduce the student-to-teacher ratio and provide facilitation of active learning sessions. These active learning sessions include worksheet games, Kahoots (polling game), and Google Jamboard (collaborative white board) sessions. I am in the process of extending my pilot semester by opening a Learning Assistant Program to other instructors for the academic year 2021-2022. As teachers transition back to the classroom, I hope to bring impactful changes to student learning through learning assistants not just for myself, but for other instructors too.

While most of my students have arrived at Georgia Tech under special programs such as Athletic Scholarships, Tech Promise, and APS Scholars, I believe that by providing greater support and a strong mathematical foundation I can help my students see success. The deaths of

George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Rayshard Brooks and countless others last year have brought diversity and inclusion to the forefront of higher education. While Georgia Tech has a black student population of approximately 5%, my classes have anywhere from 55% to 100%. I give my students room to express themselves. For example, one semester my class began with music during the first 5-10 minutes of class where we had rotating student DJs. In another semester, class occasionally began with creating or watching the latest TikTok video. Due to COVID-19, I now start class with asking how my students are really feeling and give them time to speak if they need to. I believe that fostering an environment in which diversity is respected helps students build the mathematical knowledge and problem solving skills they will need for their lives in and beyond college.

As the designated instructor for Math 0999, 1111, and 1113, I have learned that building student rapport, and demonstrating responsiveness to varying mathematics abilities aides in my effectiveness as an instructor. I do my best to never say “no” to students who request extra help, whether it means staying after class longer or making extra appointments to fit their needs. I provide inclusivity to all my classes, where I believe my style of teaching comes from my energy, patience, repetition, and some added humor. While my students find my jokes a little silly, I know they won’t leave my class before knowing my favorite “f-word” - factoring.

## Illustrations of Teaching Excellence

### 1. Sample Work:

[Sample Video Lesson Quiz](#)

[Sample Course Notes Posted for Students](#)

[Sample Practice Worksheet](#)

[Sample Google Jamboard Activity for Math 1111](#)

[Sample Google Jamboard Activity for Math 1113](#)

[Sample Secret Word Activity](#)

[Sample Kahoot! Activity](#)

### 2. CIOS Comments:

#### **Math 0999**

- Able to connect with us as student athletes and her grace she gave when we had to miss class for athletics.
- She was super easy to understand and if we ever needed help she always was available.
- She helped me understand math. When I didn't understand something she personally walked me through it.
- The first math teacher that has helped me understand the content. Great professor.
- She really knows what is she doing despite this summer course was a bit different because the pandemic.

#### **Math 1111**

- The instructor was the best I've ever had she knows how to work with students.
- Her attitude to teach us was the greatest strength, no matter what's going on in her life, she would never show negativity in class. She's the best teacher.
- I loved doing kahoot and I enjoyed our laughs in class.
- The energy and that you can notice that she really likes what she is doing!
- She is very willing to work with you if you don't understand something and help you learn in different ways if needed.
- Her ability to explain something if we didn't understand a problem.

## Math 1113

- Stephanie Reikes is well organized, on time, clear and readily available to help. She also has excellent handwriting and blackboard writing, so you can understand the equations. She publishes many of her notes on line, and they are very useful.
- Ms. Reikes teaches concepts in a way that made sense to me. She always made herself available to help whenever was convenient for me (and other students), and her office hours were pivotal to my development in this course. Whenever I didn't understand something, she would work with me to find another way of explaining the concept (one that was tuned to my learning style).
- Professor Reikes is an amazing professor. She really knows her material and she really cares about her students. She is really experienced. I recommend her to everyone.
- She was always available for office hours and never got annoyed that I was always in there asking a million questions. She truly wants every student to succeed.
- Their greatest strength was setting up the expectations of students and what was necessary to succeed in the course. She was also a super nice lady who was easy to talk to when you needed clarification on something.
- She's very caring, knowledgeable, accessible, respectful and overall an incredible professor.
- Great at breaking things down to be understandable. She wasn't judgmental if you didn't know something. She helped you understand it.
- She was very patient with students and provide a comfortable atmosphere, allowing students to ask any confusing questions freely.
- I really liked how she used the tablet this year for our online class to do examples. She provided everything we needed to be successful in the course.

### 3. Honors and Awards:

- Center for Teaching and Learning**, Georgia Tech, "Thank a Teacher"                      Fall 2018
- 1 Letter
- Center for Teaching and Learning**, Georgia Tech, "Thank a Teacher"                      Fall 2020
- 6 Letters
- Center for Teaching and Learning**, Georgia Tech, "Honor Roll"                                      Fall 2020
- Student Recognition of Excellence in Teaching: Class of 1934 CIOS Honor Roll

### 4. Professional Growth and Development

#### Off Campus:

GADE Conference, February 7-9, 2018

Corequisite Academy, October 12, 2018

AACU Transforming STEM in Higher Education Conference, November 9-10, 2018



NADE Conference, March 7-9, 2019  
 Corequisite Academy, April 5, 2019  
 Corequisite Academy, November 11, 2019  
 GADE Conference, February 6-7, 2020  
 ACTP Conference, March 16-18, 2020  
 Corequisite Academy, April 3, 2020  
 Respondus Training, May 29, 2020  
 Connecting in the Time of Corona: Techniques to Listen & Heard, USG, June 10, 2020  
 Small Teaching Online: Minor Changes, Big Impact, USG, June 12, 2020  
 SESI Conference, September 19, 2020  
 2020 USG Fall CoRequisite (un)Academy, October 15, 2020  
 GOSS & USG CoReq Academy Joint Conference, February 12, 2021

**On Campus:**

Safe-Space, March 3, 2018  
 Canvas Training, April 17-19, 2018  
 Course Design Studio, May 18, 21, 22, and 24, 2018  
 Fall Teaching Kickoff August 13, 2018  
 New User Training for Turning Point Clickers, August 16, 2018  
 DiSC Training, May 9, 2019  
 Emergency Preparedness 101, August 8, 2019  
 Gradescope Training, August 14, 2019  
 Implicit Bias Training, January 13, 2020  
 GTREET, January 17, 2020  
 GT Remote Teaching Academy, April 29-May 1, 2020  
 GT Classroom AV Technologies in Support of Hybrid Teaching, July 9, 2020  
 Hybrid Teaching Faculty Focus Group, July 17, 2020  
 Engaging Students in Physically Distant Active Learning, August 21, 2020  
 How to Be an Anti-Racist Educator, September 25, 2020  
 Engaging Students Asynchronously and Synchronously, October 15, 2020  
 Understanding Learner Engagement: Kaltura Analytics, October 20, 2020  
 Keeping the Spark: Ways to Maintain Energy in Trying Times, December 14, 2020  
 GT Remote Teaching Academy, January 7-12, 2021  
 Understanding Implicit Bias in a Changing World, February 16, 2021

5. Presentations

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| <b>GADE Conference</b>  | February 2020 |
| “On Requisites: Are they Sufficient for Long Term Student Success?” |               |
| <b>GOSS &amp; USG CoReq Academy Joint Conference</b>                | February 2021 |
| “Active Learning without Dreaded Breakout Rooms”                    |               |

6. CIOS: Effective Instructor

| TERM   | YEAR | COURSE |      |     | CLASS SIZE | 5: strongly agree | 4      | 3 | 2 | 1: strongly disagree | N/A | NO. OF RESP. | INTER-POLATED MEDIAN |
|--------|------|--------|------|-----|------------|-------------------|--------|---|---|----------------------|-----|--------------|----------------------|
| Spring | 2018 | LS     | 398  | A   | 5          | 1                 | 1      | 0 | 0 | 0                    | 0   | 2            | 4.50                 |
| Spring | 2018 | MATH   | 399  | H1  | 19         |                   |        |   |   |                      |     |              | No Data              |
| Spring | 2018 | MATH   | 1113 | H   | 30         | 3                 | 3      | 0 | 0 | 0                    | 0   | 6            | 4.50                 |
| Spring | 2018 | MATH   | 1113 | PHA | 1          | 1                 | 0      | 0 | 0 | 0                    | 0   | 1            | 5.00                 |
| Fall   | 2018 | MATH   | 999  | A   | 30         | 14                | 3      | 0 | 0 | 0                    | 0   | 17           | 4.89                 |
| Fall   | 2018 | MATH   | 1111 | A1  | 30         | 14                | 3      | 0 | 0 | 0                    | 0   | 17           | 4.89                 |
| Fall   | 2018 | MATH   | 399  | A   | 5          |                   |        |   |   |                      |     |              | No Data              |
| Fall   | 2018 | MATH   | 1113 | F1  | 28         | 11                | 5      | 1 | 0 | 0                    | 0   | 17           | 4.73                 |
| Fall   | 2018 | MATH   | 1113 | F2  | 28         | 14                | 2      | 1 | 0 | 0                    | 0   | 17           | 4.89                 |
| Spring | 2019 | MATH   | 999  | A   | 5          | 2                 | 0      | 0 | 0 | 0                    | 0   | 2            | 5.00                 |
| Spring | 2019 | MATH   | 1111 | A   | 5          | 3                 | 0      | 0 | 0 | 0                    | 0   | 3            | 5.00                 |
| Spring | 2019 | MATH   | 1111 | B   | 3          | 2                 | 0      | 0 | 0 | 0                    | 0   | 2            | 5.00                 |
| Spring | 2019 | MATH   | 1113 | F   | 42         | 8                 | 2      | 1 | 0 | 1                    | 0   | 12           | 4.80                 |
| Summer | 2019 | MATH   | 999  | SF  | 8          | 4                 | 0      | 0 | 0 | 0                    | 0   | 4            | 5.00                 |
| Summer | 2019 | MATH   | 1111 | SF  | 8          | 5                 | 0      | 0 | 0 | 0                    | 0   | 5            | 5.00                 |
| Fall   | 2019 | MATH   | 999  | A   | 16         | 1                 | 0      | 0 | 0 | 0                    | 0   | 1            | 5.00                 |
| Fall   | 2019 | MATH   | 1111 | A1  | 16         | 1                 | 0      | 0 | 0 | 0                    | 0   | 1            | 5.00                 |
| Fall   | 2019 | MATH   | 1113 | F1  | 70         | 16                | 3      | 1 | 0 | 0                    | 0   | 20           | 4.90                 |
| Spring | 2020 |        |      |     |            |                   |        |   |   |                      |     |              | No Data              |
| Summer | 2020 | MATH   | 999  | SF  | 7          | 1                 | 0      | 0 | 0 | 0                    | 0   | 1            | 5.00                 |
| Summer | 2020 | MATH   | 1111 | SF  | 7          | 5                 | 0      | 0 | 0 | 0                    | 0   | 5            | 5.00                 |
| Fall   | 2020 | MATH   | 999  | A   | 17         | 6                 | 1      | 0 | 0 | 0                    | 0   | 7            | 4.92                 |
| Fall   | 2020 | MATH   | 1111 | A   | 17         | 8                 | 4      | 0 | 0 | 0                    | 0   | 12           | 4.75                 |
| Fall   | 2020 | MATH   | 1113 | G   | 85         | 48                | 2<br>1 | 3 | 1 | 0                    | 0   | 73           | 4.74                 |

## Letter of Support Beth Spencer



Award Selection Committee  
Center for Teaching and Learning

Dear Committee Members:

I am happy to write this letter in support of Ms. Stephanie Reikes' nomination for the 2021 Undergraduate Education Award. Ms. Reikes teaches MATH 1111 & 0999 (College Algebra and the corequisite Learning Support course) and 1113 (Precalculus). While only a small group of incoming Georgia Tech first-year students place in these courses (~20 in 1111/0999, 75-90 in 1113), their ability to succeed at Tech—especially as STEM majors—is dependent on their mastery of these math concepts, and therefore on Ms. Reikes' efforts as an educator.

Stephanie's commitment to teaching and supporting student success is especially evident in her accessibility: she offers extensive office hours for both individuals and small groups, with impressive student turnout. Her classes include many student athletes as well as students with learning disabilities. She cheerfully and adeptly manages the accommodations, make-up exams, and extra one-on-one attention these students need. Beginning in Fall 2020, she found larger rooms in Clough to offer socially-distanced in-person options for those who wanted that faculty/student interaction. In addition to making heroic efforts to reach any student who becomes academically "at risk," Stephanie proactively communicates with colleagues in advising and coaching, thus helping to create a support team for each student.

Stephanie is in an unusual and potentially lonely professional position: there is only one other instructor teaching a Learning Support course (ENGL 0999) at Tech; only a couple of other Math instructors have experience teaching 1113 at Tech. In addition to taking advantage of the professional development and community-building opportunities CTL offers, Stephanie has found colleagues by becoming an active and contributing member in the USG learning support group; she has also had her proposals accepted for presentation at the last couple of annual conferences.

When Tech moved to online teaching last spring, Stephanie embraced the chance to learn to use new technology and to develop new teaching techniques. She quickly became adept at teaching fully remote and hybrid courses, and became a go-to resource for tips and strategies—she even invited me to join a couple of "how to" sessions she facilitated for fellow Math instructors. Through our conversations, I know that Stephanie is a reflective practitioner, constantly asking herself about what's working/what could be changed in her teaching. She is also interested in using data to assess her teaching, student learning, and to track student success.

Stephanie Reikes is deeply committed to teaching math at Georgia Tech, and not just because she enjoys it, but also because she sees her work as crucial in establishing firm foundations for her students' academic success and progress. I can attest to her desire to continue to develop as an

effective teacher and her positive attitude toward change and overcoming challenges. We are fortunate to have her in her role at Tech, and I hope the committee will look favorably on her nomination packet.

Sincerely,  
Beth

Beth Bullock Spencer, Ph.D.  
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*A Unit of the Office of Undergraduate Education | An Equal Education and Employment Opportunity Organization*

## Letter of Support Klara Grodzinsky



**School of Mathematics**  
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PHONE 404-894-2700  
FAX 404-894-4409

February  
18, 2021

Dear Selection Committee:

I am pleased to write in support of **Ms. Stephanie Reikes** for the CTL Undergraduate Educator Award. I have worked with Ms. Reikes since she began her career at Georgia Tech in January 2018. Upon her arrival at Georgia Tech, she was tasked with several duties for the School of Mathematics under my direction, including management of the math lab and graduate student instructor/postdoc office hours. Ms. Reikes has also been the sole instructor for our mathematics learning support courses, College Algebra (Math 1111), Support for College Algebra (Math 0999), and Precalculus (Math 1113), since Spring 2018.

Instructing the math learning support courses is an intense and difficult task. Prior to hiring Ms. Reikes, the School of Mathematics struggled to find qualified instructors for these courses. In fact, Math 1111 did not “exist” as a true course number at that time; Ms. Reikes and Dr. Pearl worked together with the IUCC to create this standard USG course at Georgia Tech. Ms. Reikes has worked to continually develop the course syllabi, structure, and expectations to sufficiently challenge the students while preparing them for their future mathematics courses. She has constantly needed to evolve testing procedures after massive incidences of academic misconduct, and I have been quite impressed with the measures that she has taken to ensure that the students are learning and that their performance in the course is accurately measured.

During the recent campus switch from in-person to remote learning, Ms. Reikes has provided many great suggestions to the course coordinators of other mathematics courses. She has attended several CTL workshops to assist with the transition, and has mastered many online platforms that were previously unknown to the School of Mathematics faculty. More personally, she was extremely helpful to me in learning how to set up Kaltura in-video quizzes, embedded into pre-lecture videos for my students, and she also explained very clearly how to use the Honorlock proctoring tool with external websites, such as Pearson’s MyMathLab. Ms. Reikes attended online discussions with the course coordinators, where we discussed best practices in teaching and assessments and shared our syllabi to garner ideas from each other.

I recently had the pleasure of watching one of Ms. Reikes’ online Math 1111 lectures, which are currently running in a hybrid format (with the majority of instruction online). What most impressed me was her rapport with the students, and her immense patience in explaining basic mathematical principles. She presented the material in a very elementary manner, worked through many examples with the class, and tried to engage the students in the problem solving

process. Additionally, she expected all of the students to turn on their cameras during class, which definitely made it more personal and interactive. The students were participating and taking notes, and Ms. Reikes maintained a positive, encouraging tone even when presented with “extremely wrong” answers from the class. I also watched one of Ms. Reikes’ pre-lecture videos for Math 1113. Again, she explained the material in a very basic manner, and included short questions throughout the video to maintain the students’ attention.

One of Ms. Reikes’ administrative roles involves managing the math lab in Clough Commons. Her duties include scheduling our graduate teaching assistant (TA) office hours in the math lab, monitoring TA and student attendance in the lab, and writing reports on lab usage each term for the School of Mathematics administration. Under Ms. Reikes’ leadership, we have been able to more closely track these statistics each term, and our TAs have had fewer unexcused absences from the lab. Additionally, Ms. Reikes tracks usage data for student office hour attendance when the instructor of record is a graduate student or postdoctoral fellow. As graduate students and postdocs mostly share larger offices in Skiles with each other, we have moved their office hours to a classroom in Clough to reduce office distractions. Ms. Reikes secures this classroom for us each term, sets up a sign-up page for instructors to select their office hours, and collects data on student attendance from the instructors in order to write each semester report.

I have truly enjoyed working with Ms. Reikes for the past three years, and she has become a valuable part of our instructional team with her work toward supporting our first-year students. I hope you will consider her for this prestigious award.

Sincerely,



Klara  
Grodzinsky  
Academic  
Professional  
Director of Teaching Assistants

## Letter of Support Joe Miller

February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Dear Awards Committee,

It is with the utmost enthusiasm that I write my support regarding Mrs. Stephanie Reikes nomination for the Center for Teaching and Learning Undergraduate Educator Award. It is my belief that she embodies everything this award recognizes. Stephanie has contributed immensely to the education of freshman students at Georgia Tech and particularly our student-athlete population.

Stephanie has worked with hundreds of students during her time at Georgia Tech. I specifically would like to highlight her impact on our student-athlete population. She has made a phenomenal impact on our freshman student-athletes who began academic careers at Georgia Tech by taking remedial math (college algebra and pre-calculus). As we know, a student's freshman year is incredibly important. It is even more important for students who need to develop their foundational math skills in order to be successful in other courses at Georgia Tech. Some of our weakest math students have found success under Stephanie's creative teaching, intervention strategies and support.

Stephanie began impacting student-athletes in 2016 as a tutor. She later started full-time in 2018, and has taught all Georgia Tech students that were required to enroll in college algebra and pre-calculus. In her position, Stephanie has helped shaped core math skills for students that require additional support early on in their academic careers at Georgia Tech. I firmly believe that without these foundational classes and instruction by Mrs. Reikes, many would not matriculate to graduation or find success in the higher level courses. The importance of these two classes that Mrs. Reikes teaches cannot be understated. However, students are not just learning foundations of mathematics. They also learn skill building and success strategies that translate to other courses at Georgia Tech. She has incorporated success tips and strategies throughout these two courses such as time management, study strategies and academic skill building.

Stephanie has an evident passion for supporting and making herself available for students. She has an ease of approachability that students are drawn to. She has routinely gone above and beyond making herself available for students in office hours, both in-person and virtual. Our students have never had an issue with scheduling extra time to meet with her to learn material if they need to. She volunteered to present in our freshman athletics orientation program called "Jump Start Jackets" where she provided tips for incoming first year students on how to start their careers at Georgia Tech successfully.

In summary, Mrs. Reikes has been a huge contributor in the development and success of undergraduate students who need extra support early on in their careers at Georgia Tech. She reaches a diverse population of student-athletes, encourages outside the box thinking to broaden the student experience, and her communication and collaboration has earned her the respect of her students and staff. It is my pleasure to lend my support for Stephanie for this award.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if additional information is required. I can be reached at (404) 769-8586 and at [jmiller@athletics.gatech.edu](mailto:jmiller@athletics.gatech.edu).

Joe Miller

Assistant Director of Academics, Georgia Tech Athletic Association

## Letters of Support from Students

To: Georgia Tech Undergraduate Educator Award team,

I am excited to write a letter of support on behalf of Professor Stephanie Reikes for the Undergraduate Educator Award. Professor Reikes was my instructor for Math 1113: Precalculus. In this Precalculus class, I gained fundamental knowledge when it came to understanding the prerequisite of calculus. As a student that always struggled in mathematics, I am more than happy to say that professor Reikes has well prepared me to not only become proficient in my Precalculus class, but to also be well informed in my current Math 1712: Survey of Calculus class. Surely, a lot of the materials I learned in my first semester at Georgia Tech (my fall semester), has carried over to my current studies. As an entrepreneur and business major, I enjoyed it most when professor Reikes taught the class about money equations. I see myself applying these concepts into my own real life such as how I am helping my parents calculate our monthly interest and mortgage on our new home we are about to close on.

Although I only had the pleasure of taking Professor Reikes once so far, she has shown me what an incredible, caring teacher looks like, especially during a remote world. I took some dual enrollment classes in high school, as well as some Georgia Tech courses for two semesters now, but I have yet to meet an instructor that is so passionate about the success of her students. Last semester, professor Reikes went out of her way to offer all of her office hours in person (in the CULC building), when she could have easily conducted BlueJeans office hours like others. This allowed students, like myself, to build a more personal connection with our professor and paved the way for additional assistance beyond our virtual lectures. Speaking about additional assistance, Professor Reikes would make it her duty to drive all the way to campus as early as possible, whenever a student was in need of her help on school days. This further proves how Professor Stephanie Reikes goes the extra mile to support her students to ensure their academic success is her priority. Moving on, Professor Stephanie Reikes still, to this day, extends her support to me, even though I am not currently taking her class. She had informed me that whenever I need math-related help, she is an email away and she would always be there for me! I find myself, like last semester, taking advantage of her office hours to discuss business calculus questions, and overall, life topics.

Professor Reikes' commitment to excellence and ensuring her students are always accommodated and successful-academically makes her a phenomenal professor. I have no doubt that Professor Reikes is THE perfect candidate for the Georgia Tech Undergraduate Educator Award. She is a great incorporation to the Georgia Tech community, and an even greater asset to the Georgia Tech Math Department! I am sure many students, like myself, will continue to benefit under her wings.

Sincerely,  
Aboubacar Barrie  
Scheller College of Business



To whom it may concern,

I am honored to have the opportunity to write a letter on behalf of Stephanie Reikes for the Undergraduate Educator Award. This award is presented to teachers who impact students' lives, are passionate about what they teach, are educational innovators, and are accessible to those in and out of a classroom setting. Stephanie Reikes is the perfect candidate for this award.

Professor Reikes taught me Math 1113: Pre-Calculus in the Fall of 2020. It was my first year at Georgia Institute of Technology, and I had no idea what to expect. However, I was pleased to have begun my first semester with a teacher like her. I have never been one that looked forward to math, but attending class with Professor Reikes was always a pleasure. Throughout the semester, Professor Reikes spent many extra hours ensuring that we understood the material. She was always available when we needed her to ask questions. With the abundance of resources provided to us- for example, the video lectures, the live lectures, and the homework practice- I felt assured that I was capable of mastering the material.

Not only did Professor Reikes teach us the material for the course effectively, but she also made us feel at home in her classroom, even in virtual circumstances. Teaching during a pandemic is not easy, but Professor Reikes understood how to keep every student involved. At the end of class, we reviewed information through Kahoots, which is something entertaining all students enjoy. In addition, the students always felt comfortable asking questions and making mistakes; Stephanie Reikes' classroom is a safe space, and she makes that very clear. Finally, Professor Reikes even spent an hour on Fridays hosting a "Happy Hour," where students could drop by before office hours to just chat and get to know her as a person. Personally, this is something I appreciate as a new student who barely knows anybody; she made me feel heard. Not to mention her personality and jokes always will bring a smile to your face.

Professor Reikes' commitment to teaching and compassion for her students truly makes her one of the best teachers I have had yet at Georgia Institute of Technology. She is the kind of teacher that wants you to succeed and will do everything necessary in order to make it a reality. Even though I have only known Professor Reikes for such a short time, I am confident in saying she is the perfect candidate for the Undergraduate Educator Award.

Sincerely,  
Catherine Shamanski  
School of Psychology, Spanish Minor

To whom it may concern,

I am honored to write a letter in support of Professor Reikes for the Undergraduate Educator Award. I first had professor Reikes my freshman year of college in Precalculus 1113. I had previously taken pre-calculus before in high school, but had decided to take it again because I was nervous to jump straight into differential calculus. That choice was one of the best choices I had made so far in my college semesters at Georgia Tech. I had always looked forward to going to her class. I knew I'd learn so much from attending. The class was very well aligned to do well on exams. As long as you went to class, did the homework, went to the studio, and asked questions when needed you'd be sure to do well. Professor Reikes was such a patient professor. I would sit in the front of class every day, and on a personal note I'd remember looking at her in a confused manner when I was confused on a specific topic. She would simply smile, and chuckle to herself and care to explain the concept once again in a slower, and different perspective. Not to say, she'd make sure to check in with her students every step of the way.

I cannot thank her enough for explaining algebra so well. Although her class was mostly focused around trigonometry, her questions weaved a lot of algebraic rules and concepts as well. Most teachers I've had have taught algebra through memorization; (An example would be, "Whatever is inside the absolute value signs will always come out positive"). Although, they never care enough to explain the conceptual reasoning behind why that concept is true, or what an absolute value sign actually does to a function. Professor Reikes, taught me algebra through pre-calculus and I learned the WHY behind math. I cannot explain enough how thankful I am for her patience, and ability to explain the reasoning behind certain math concepts in an easy, but accurate clear cut manner.

Not only was Professor Reikes a great teacher, but she is a genuine and kind woman all around. It was always nice to say hi to her in office hours. Every Friday she hosts "Happy Hour" a time for her students to just talk and relax about what is going on in their lives. It's always nice to see a friendly face. Having had a teacher who takes time out of their day just to ask how yours was is something special. It gives students the comfort and attention, they sometimes feel aren't there.

Professor Reikes commits so much time towards her students and career, and genuinely cares about how they feel not only inside the classroom but also out. Her teaching guarantees a strong base of knowledge for students going into 1551 Differential Calculus. I have no doubt that Professor Reikes would be an excellent selection for the Undergraduate Educator award.

Sincerely,  
Lydia Troupe  
School of Psychology