

July 22, 2009

To Whom It May Concern

Subject: **Letter of Recommendation for Arnold W. Thomas**

I write this letter in strong support of Arnold Thomas whom I have known for the past three years through our mutual service on behalf of veterans at the VA Medical Center in Salt Lake City, Utah.

During these years I have personally attended several Sweat-lodge ceremonies conducted by Arnold as well as received many favorable reports from veterans who also had attended these ceremonies. I have witnessed for myself the healing, comforting and transforming influence these special native American ceremonies have on people as directed by Arnold Thomas. It has been my direct observation that Arnold consistently demonstrates a unique blend of what I call 'toughness and tenderness.' He is very compassionate yet at times graciously bold and very insightful and competent regarding human behavior and how to assist people with physical, emotional and spiritual suffering. Although not limited to just one patient population, the majority of VA patients Arnold has assisted for many years have been patients in our Substance Abuse program, who most highly regard and appreciate the services provided by Arnold through the Sweat-lodge ceremony.

As the supervisor for the VA Chaplain Training program at the Salt Lake City VA Medical Center, I have experienced the high value of integrating the services by Arnold Thomas who has graciously facilitated an annual sweat-lodge ceremony specifically for our interfaith Chaplains in-training. This annual experience has been a huge success and has become an integral aspect of our Chaplain training curriculum. A highlight this past year was when one of the military chaplains in our training program suffering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) as a result of his two combat tours of duty in Iraq, participated in this special Sweat-lodge lead by Arnold, and experienced a powerful healing transformation. When this military chaplain exited this sweat-lodge ceremony, he did so a different and healthier man than when he entered. Thanks largely to Arnold who helped him to heal war wounds.

I very strongly recommend Arnold Thomas as a 'healer' of broken lives, hearts and souls. He is humble, gracious, giving and competent.

Respectfully,

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