applicants for Spring 2018 Texan Managing Editor:

Matthew Adams
Ellie Breed
This application and supporting materials must be submitted to the TSM Business Office (HSM 3.200 / William Randolph Hearst Building, 2500 Whitis Avenue) by **Monday, December 4, 2017 at 12:00 p.m.**

This position is due to be appointed at the TSM Board meeting scheduled for **Tuesday, December 12, 2017 at 1:00 p.m.**

Please plan to attend and discuss your application with the Operating Trustees.

**Applicant Information**

Matthew Adams msa2348
Name UT EID

matthew-adams@utexas.edu Journalism, RTF
Email Address Major

**Applicant Attestation / Authorization for Release of Information**

1. I am currently enrolled as a UT-Austin student.

2. By the start of my term of office, I will (if an undergraduate) have completed 12 hours at UT-Austin with a GPA of at least 2.0 or (if a graduate student) have completed 9 hours at UT-Austin with a GPA of at least 3.0.

3. I agree to complete and pass a media law and libel test administered by the Editorial Adviser prior to taking position.

4. I have obtained and included signatures from at least five staff members of The Daily Texan supporting my application.

5. By the start of my term of office, I will have completed at least two semesters as a permanent-staff member of The Daily Texan in an area other than opinion.

6. By the start of my term of office, I will have served in a Daily Texan management position with supervisory and design responsibilities (as defined by the Daily Texan Handbook) for at least one semester.

*Note: if no qualified applicant has filed by the deadline, the Board shall make an appointment using the Handbook qualifications, each of which shall be waivable by an affirmative vote of two-thirds majority of the voting members present.*

I certify that to the best of my ability I have given true and accurate information concerning my scholastic and experience qualifications, and hereby grant permission for the Office of the Director, Texas Student Media, to verify said information. Further, I understand that this information will be provided to the TSM Board of Operating Trustees and will become part of the public record of TSM.

Matthew Adams 12/1/17
Signature of Applicant Date
Supporting signatures from at least five staff members of The Daily Texan:

Please see attached sheet.

My experience at The Daily Texan consists of (list positions and dates):

Associate Managing Editor Aug.-Dec. 2017
News Desk Editor Jan.-May 2017
Senior News Reporter May-Dec. 2015
General News Reporter Aug.-May 2014-15
Sports blogger Aug.-May 2014-15

It is recommended that you include supporting materials such as:

A résumé
A letter outlining your qualifications, goals, plans for the position
Letters of recommendation
Samples of published work (on 8 1/2" x 11" paper)
Supporting signatures from The Daily Texan staff

[Signatures]

[Signatures]

[Signatures]
Matthew Schafer Adams
817-475-0774
matthew-adams@utexas.edu
@MatthewAdams60

Education
The University of Texas at Austin
Bachelor in Journalism and Radio-Television-Film May 2018

Experience

The Daily Texan Fall 2014-Fall 2015, Spring and Fall 2017
Some of the roles at the Texan included being an Associate Managing Editor, a news desk editor and a senior reporter covering the UT System. As a reporter some of the topics I covered included campus carry, the Fisher lawsuit against the University’s admissions policy, and the battle between Regent Wallace Hall and Chancellor William McRaven.

Raleigh News and Observer May 31-August 11
I would be working as a reporter for the state government team. I covered education, environmental issues, and various activism groups in North Carolina.

Fighting for Anderson Completed in May 2017
A short documentary about alumni of Old Anderson High School fighting to preserve the history of their school by recalling its impact on the African-American community of East Austin. Working to expand other parts of the story to make a feature documentary.

Houston Chronicle- Austin Bureau January-August 2016, January 10- May 15 2017, Responsibilities ranged from editing and producing video, covering higher education and covering Legislature committee meetings. Some of the top stories include University of Texas President Gregory Fenves announcing the school’s campus carry policy and going to Lakeway after the deaths of Sean and Brodie Copeland in Nice. In addition to that, I produced and edited the first political podcast for the Chronicle.

KXAN News- Sports Department August 2016-Dec 2016
Learned new ways to film with broadcast equipment and how to edit on Avid. My responsibilities include making packages, cutting video for shows and transcribing interviews.

TSTV Sports Spring 2015-Present
Assistant sports director for the department, responsible for producing the sports debate show, College Crossfire.

Weatherford Star-Telegram Fall 2012-Spring 2014
This was my first journalism experience back in high school. My school did not have a paper, but I worked out an agreement with the local paper to submit stories and photos on my high school’s sports. The sports ranged from football, basketball, volleyball, track, golf and tennis.
To whom this may concern:

I remember the first time I interviewed with The Houston Chronicle for an internship. I was getting a feel for their Austin Bureau Chief Mike Ward and he was doing the same with me. There was a lot said in that interview that stood out. But one thing in particular that did was when he said The Daily Texan used to be the news outlet for the University.

Then I heard other people — alums, professors, and citizens around the city — repeat the same line. That line and message about the Texan once being the main news outlet stuck with me.

Over my six semesters with the paper, I have seen a mix of changes. Like every other news outlet, we are trying to figure out how to get people to notice our work. With thousands of different outlets for news, we have to make our work stand out.

We made some progress this semester in terms of our engagement on social media. Our Twitter page finally hit over 1 million impressions the last couple of months and we passed the 53,000 followers mark. We even started connecting with people in the UT Facebook memes page and had some luck. Stories that involved the Speedway project got students coming to the website. Social media also took advantage of The Tribune Fest by interviewing politicians and doing wrap up discussions after talks.

We started staggering stories to keep the website fresh and spread clicks out during the day. It has worked, but because we are holding stuff from the previous day publishing old news is not sustainable.

The first thing we need to do is expand social media to include web producers. The Texan needs two or three web producers who solely keep the website fresh throughout the day. These producers would focus on short, click bait stories that other news outlets rely on. We need stories that are about social media reactions, listicles or even a “this day in history on the Forty Acres” story. The Texan needs to have some more things published material that is little less serious and will get more viewers to come to the website.

The second thing to tackle is the newsletter. Newsletters today are critical for outlets. I follow lots of outlets so I can get the latest stories sent to my email. The Chronicle and The Texas Tribune have good newsletters because both do an excellent job of sharing their top stories, national news that other publication are sharing, and they include a picture or tweet of the day. Right now the Texan sends out five or six links each morning, and that is not enough. Other student publications like The Diamondback (Maryland), The Chronicle (Duke) and The Daily Bruin (UCLA), break the newsletter up with their top stories, followed by links to stories from all content producing departments and photos. By publishing a more engaging newsletter, it increases our subscribers and the website views in the morning.

The third thing that desperately needs a change is our multimedia platforms. The podcast and video department need to be revamped. When it comes to podcast, the
running joke in the office is, “Wait, who is that?” Aside from the weekly sports podcast there isn’t much else. There are so many podcasts out there that are more of radio shows. When I interned with the Chronicle, one of the things they wanted to do was create a political podcast in the Austin bureau. It took a few episodes to get it right but we figured it out. I would gather audio clips throughout the week and on the day of our show, we would organize the show and the talk around those topics. After leaving I worked with the person who took over for me and now the show has a slotted time on Texas Public Radio.

For the Texan sports podcast, there is no reason why someone can’t go to the weekly press conference teams have and get audio for the show. Other shows we would need to get creative with. We would need a range of shows that include features on particular people or analyzing issues that are happening at the University. Between campus, the UT System, city and state issues, there should be several things to play with and see what works best to go deeper with stories.

Video is vital in journalism today. We have had some nice pieces but the problem is the videos are not always timely. Sometimes a video that is supposed to accompany a story could be turned in two weeks late. We cannot afford for that to happen. There shouldn’t be any reason video cannot publish three or four videos a week. It could be a combination of videos for particular stories, videos features, or 30 to 45 second clips that could be distributed across social media. Having a mix of those kinds of videos would benefit us greatly on all of our platforms.

Now, this is probably not the part anyone wants to hear but some cuts have to be made. The first one is the Science and Tech department. When it first started the section was a benefit to the paper. It brought some fresh stories and it helped other departments if they were short on content. But how Science and Tech began hasn’t continued. Some weeks we only see stories turned in for the Friday paper. We could go days without seeing a story from them. This year there was also a lot of confusion between News and Science and Tech because they would be working on the same story at the same time and neither one would know until a budget meeting. My plan would be is if you are interested in being a science reporter, we would be willing to keep one or two on board but they would work in News. Science and Tech would not be its own section anymore.

No, I am not done talking about video and podcast. Both departments have people they do not need but particularly video. The video department hired five extra people this semester, and it hasn’t been a benefit to them. Podcast would lose a position and video could do without at least two of those positions.

If we actually lose these positions, this would open up six or seven positions available to new roles. We could add web producers, an extra investigative reporter for News and I would work with Design to have an art director. We use to have one several years ago, and I wish we still had one. Design has a lot to deal with on a nightly basis but add late info graphic requests on and layout issues on top of it they don’t have time to do certain things. If we had an art director, that person could coordinate with departments to prepare graphics and other illustrations.
I say this a lot because it is true. I never imagined myself coming back to the Texan once I left. When I was a senior reporter I had tunnel vision and was only thinking about myself and getting internships. To have returned and be in the position I am today I feel blessed. This paper gave me opportunities to grow, and it has been a joy to see that happen for others. The Texan is better but I know it can be even better. That is what I want for the Texan.

For those who will read this, and if you know me, you are aware that I am an Associate Managing Editor right now. And my guess is you are asking yourself what have you learned from being in management this year? Aside from what I want to change, the biggest thing I've learned is I must surround myself the right people. Without the right staff of editors and reporters, my job becomes harder and the paper does not succeed. Some people I've already started talking with about certain positions. If I am selected to be the next Managing Editor of the Texan, we will be one of the closest groups. Of course we will get on each others nerves at times, but we will all be on the same page and committed to the same goal — be the best publication in Austin and Central Texas.

Thank you,

Matthew Adams
List of References

Mike Ward, *Houston Chronicle* Austin Bureau Chief
mike.ward@chron.com
512-632-9561

Scott Kingsley, Director of Multimedia for the *Houston Chronicle*
scott.kingsley@chron.com
508-212-7640

Jordan Schrader, political editor *News and Observer*
jschrader@newsobserver.com
919-829-4840

Roger Wallace, KXAN Sports Director/Anchor
roger.wallace@kaxan.com
512-799-2333

Melissa Winn, former reporter and editor for the *Weatherford Star-Telegram*
scoopmdw37@gmail.com
817-691-2736

Renee Moreno, Director for TSTV Sports from 2015-2016
rvmoreno@utexas.edu
512-633-9967

Sam Ketterer, reporter for the *The Daily News* but was one of my news editors at *The Daily Texan.*
samantha.kett@gmail.com
713-304-4602
Matthew Adams samples of published work:

Sample #1
Potential teachers may get a full ride – if they teach the right subject

Sample #2
NC poised to test what critics call a ‘snowblower blowing garbage juice’

Sample #3
Governor’s School hopes to avoid shutdown as it welcomes students

Sample #4
Indicted Montgomery County judge asks panel to let him return to work

Sample #5
Austin area mourns father and son killed in Nice attack

Sample #6
Alumni of Anderson High School fight to prevent their school's destruction by recalling its impact on the African-American community of East Austin, Texas.

Fighting for Anderson
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SADwvscryY&feature=youtu.be
TEXAS STUDENT MEDIA APPLICATION FORM
MANAGING EDITOR OF THE DAILY TEXAN
Term of Office: January 1, 2018 - May 31, 2018

This application and supporting materials must be submitted to the TSM Business Office
(HSM 3.200 / William Randolph Hearst Building, 2500 Whitis Avenue) by
Monday, December 4, 2017 at 12:00 p.m.

This position is due to be appointed at the TSM Board meeting scheduled for
Tuesday, December 12, 2017 at 1:00 p.m.
Please plan to attend and discuss your application with the Operating Trustees.

Applicant Information

Ellie Breed
Name
eab3678
UT EID
eleanorbreed@utexas.edu
Email Address
Public Relations
Major

Applicant Attestation / Authorization for Release of Information

1. I am currently enrolled as a UT-Austin student.
2. By the start of my term of office, I will (if an undergraduate) have completed
   12 hours at UT-Austin with a GPA of at least 2.0 or (if a graduate student)
   have completed 9 hours at UT-Austin with a GPA of at least 3.0.
3. I agree to complete and pass a media law and libel test administered by the
   Editorial Adviser prior to taking position.
4. I have obtained and included signatures from at least five staff members of
   The Daily Texan supporting my application.
5. By the start of my term of office, I will have completed at least two semesters
   as a permanent-staff member of The Daily Texan in an area other than opinion.
6. By the start of my term of office, I will have served in a Daily Texan
   management position with supervisory and design responsibilities
   (as defined by the Daily Texan Handbook) for at least one semester.

Note: if no qualified applicant has filed by the deadline, the Board shall make an appointment
using the Handbook qualifications, each of which shall be waivable by an affirmative vote of
two-thirds majority of the voting members present.

I certify that to the best of my ability I have given true and accurate information concerning my
scholastic and experience qualifications, and hereby grant permission for the Office of the Director,
Texas Student Media, to verify said information. Further, I understand that this information will be
provided to the TSM Board of Operating Trustees and will become part of the public record of TSM.

Signature of Applicant

[Signature]

Date

11/29/17
Supporting signatures from at least five staff members of The Daily Texan:

Cathenie Martin  Forrester Hilburn ENTERPRISE REPORTER/ASSOCIATE SOCIAL MEDIA EDITOR
Sunny Lee  ASSOCIATE DESIGN EDITOR
Chase Karacostas  SENIOR CITY/STATE REPORTER
Gabriel Lopez  ASSOCIATE PHOTO EDITOR
Kirsten Handler  ASSOCIATE COPY DESK CHIEF
Katie Bauer  SENIOR PHOTOGRAPHER
Daisy Wang  ASSOCIATE LIFELINE EDITOR
Morgan O’Hanlon  LIFESTYLE EDITOR

My experience at The Daily Texan consists of (list positions and dates):

News Editor  -  Fall 2017
News Editor  -  Spring 2017
Associate News Editor  -  Fall 2016
News Desk Editor  -  Summer 2016
News Desk Editor  -  Spring 2016
General News Reporter  -  Fall 2015

It is recommended that you include supporting materials such as:

A résumé
A letter outlining your qualifications, goals, plans for the position
Letters of recommendation
Samples of published work (on 8 1/2" x 11" paper)
Eleanor Breed  
2105 Pearl Street  
Austin, Texas, 78705  
512-750-8147  
eleanorbreed@utexas.edu

EDUCATION
The University of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX  |  Candidate, Expected graduation May 2019  
Bachelor of Science in Public Relations, Moody College of Communication  |  Business Foundations Certificate, McCombs School of Business

WORK EXPERIENCE
The Daily Texan, Austin, TX
News Editor  January 2017 to present
• Managed a department of 40 students, including associate editors and all news reporters, who reported directly to me  
• Directed all news coverage in the print and online editions of The Daily Texan  
• Oversaw production and edited content five nights weekly, working with photo, design and copy departments  
• Coordinated breaking news coverage, including nationally recognized coverage of on-campus stabbing May 2017  
• Communicated consistently with campus media professionals and law enforcement officials

Associate News Editor  June 2016 to December 2016
• Assigned and edited print and online news content three nights weekly  
• Assisted in managing a staff of 30 reporters and editors  
• Recruited and mentored news desk editors and general reporters

News Desk Editor  January 2016 to June 2016
• Edited print and online news coverage during production nights twice weekly following a prescribed editorial style  
• Attended weekly budget and planning meetings  
• Mentored general reporters to help improve their writing and reporting abilities

General News Reporter  August 2015 to January 2016
• Reported on campus and greater Austin news twice weekly  
• Revised work to meet editorial approval or time and space requirements

Neogenis Labs, Austin, TX  
Marketing Research Assistant  November 2015 to February 2016
• Forecast and track marketing and sales trends, analyzing collected data.  
• Devise and evaluate methods and procedures for collecting data, such as surveys, opinion polls, incentive-based questionnaires, or arrange to obtain existing data.

Camp Waldemar for Girls, Hunt, TX  
Publications Department Head and Senior Counselor  July 2017 and July 2018
• Taught a daily journalism class and oversaw the production of a weekly newsletter  
• Mentored a class of aspiring writers and journalists ages 8-16 and helped them report on events at the camp

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION
Paul J. Thompson Award, The Daily Texan, Austin, TX  May 2017  
Awarded to an “outstanding Texan staffer who displays attributes possessed by Paul J. Thompson (UT Journalism School Director, 1928-1958), including devotion to duty and concern for high ethics.”

Journalist of the Year, Stephen F. Austin High School, Austin, TX  May 2015

SKILLS
Computer Software: PC/Macintosh software, Microsoft Office and Excel, Adobe Creative Suite (Photoshop, InDesign, InCopy)  
Reporting: Breaking news, multi-media stories, AP style, extensive writing and editing experience  
Social Media: Facebook, Twitter, WordPress, 24LiveBlog, and most familiar platforms
November 29\textsuperscript{th}, 2017
To the Texas Student Media Board of Operating Trustees,

My name is Ellie Breed, and I am applying to serve as managing editor of The Daily Texan in the spring of 2018. I am a third-year public relations major, and I have worked on The Texan staff for the last three years. With this letter, I hope to communicate my vision for the paper in the coming semester and my qualifications for this position.

My time at the Texan began on the first day of class in the fall of 2015. I went down to the Texan basement for the first time, and a news editor greeted me. She quickly became my role model, and I spent that semester as a reporter in her news department. I immediately fell in love with the sense of community working at the Texan provides. In the following semesters, I held every editing position in the news department. After proving myself an effective editor and judge of news content, I became news editor in the spring of 2017, a position that I have now held for two semesters. As news editor, I manage a staff of approximately 40 reporters and editors who report directly to me. I am ultimately responsible for ensuring the first four pages of our eight-page newspaper are filled every weekday. This position, I would argue, is one of the most stressful positions at the paper. The responsibility of preparing 10 fully reported and edited stories for publication each weekday is a great challenge and has required a high level of organization, level-headedness and management ability on my part.

During my tenure as news editor, I led the paper through our nationally recognized coverage of the tragic stabbing on campus in May. Additionally, I managed our coverage of the presidential inauguration, the Texas legislative session, multiple student deaths, the recent lawsuit surrounding UT’s sexual misconduct policy, the Texas Tribune Festival and much more. Through my experience as news editor, I learned how to manage my staff and maintain their respect, while still fostering an enjoyable work environment. I learned how to keep a level head during times of crisis, and I learned how to provide my staff with the resources, emotional support and technical guidance necessary for them to produce quality content they are proud of.

Although I have never been an associate managing editor, there have been many instances throughout the last year in which I took initiative and played a management role. When one of my reporters was assaulted while covering a protest this semester, I was the first one at his side. For the next four hours I coordinated our coverage from the waiting area of the emergency room as he was treated. I also single handedly planned a proposal for Atavist, a new online platform for the Texan’s long form projects, so our staff’s best content could be displayed in an engaging and dynamic way. This proposal was approved and our Atavist page has attracted thousands of readers with each new project. As a fully engaged news editor, I regularly stayed at the office through entire production nights, working closely with copy, design and photo editors until the paper
was sent to the printer. I am fully aware of the challenges that managing a large newspaper staff entails, and I believe that my experience makes me qualified to do so.

If appointed, I would use the management skills I have learned in my year as news editor to help the Texan and its staff prioritize the following:

**Content and Winning Awards.**
It is a privilege to work at the most highly awarded college newspaper in the country. It’s also a privilege that we are able to remain one of the few daily college newspapers. However, the fact that we print daily also provides the content-producing staff of the Texan with its greatest challenge. It’s a challenge that I have become uniquely familiar with during my two semesters as news editor. While I love producing a daily paper, it can be so time consuming for senior reporters and editors that it prevents them from producing the long-form, investigative and multi-media pieces that win awards. There is no reason the most awarded college newspaper shouldn’t also be winning scholastic journalism awards year after year. This semester as news editor, I established an investigative team within the news department to make strides in this area. Although these reporters, under my supervision and guidance, produced our most widely read projects of the semester, each of these stories required upwards of 40 hours of investigating, reporting and supervision.

As managing editor I would give more resources to content-producing departments and restructure portions of the news department to ensure we continue to create content of this caliber on a regular basis. I would increase the number of long-form reporters to make a group of at least four reporters that focus specifically on producing projects worthy of award submission on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. This would not just be a news department effort. The life and arts and sports departments would also, with the help of more resources, be able to produce more involved projects. As managing editor I would continue to work closely with department heads to guarantee these projects have the necessary art and graphics, a compelling presentation in our print product and a social media campaign to advertise each one. Adding just a few reporters to this effort and including the management team in its oversight would grant section editors the necessary time to focus on filling eight pages every day, while still allowing the Texan to produce high-quality projects on a regular basis.

**Engagement and Public Relations.**
As a college newspaper, the Texan serves a unique purpose: to inform the UT community of what is happening on campus. For us to be effective in this role, our staff must do a better job of engaging with our audience. Really, the Texan needs a PR overhaul. Students and professors alike need to like the Texan. Students need to laugh, be entertained and enjoy reading the Texan. And, students need to respect and regard the Texan as a reliable, worthwhile source of information. The only way we can shape public opinion in this way is by engaging with our audience through social media and outreach. This means a number of things including replying directly to students’ questions on social media through our main account, retweeting and sharing student achievements, advertising our tip line often to open up direct communication and much more. The Texan can no longer simply appear online as a newspaper that pushes content through
scripted social media posts. We must personify ourselves as a news organization with a strong online voice, personality and reputation of credibility.

To ensure engagement is a priority, as managing editor, I would rebrand one of the two associate managing editors to be the associate managing and engagement editor. It would be their responsibility to closely monitor the social media and web departments to ensure our online presence is lively and personal, never robotic or repetitive. Early in the semester, this editor would also be responsible for working with the social media editor to recruit staffers who have an engaging online voice and personality. Additionally, I would overhaul the structure of our social media department to include a web editor and web reporters. Their primary job would be to produce daily web stories like campus-related quizzes and polls, man-on-the-street campus video interviews, or social media reaction stories on a daily basis. (I have attached to my application as my first writing sample a very successful web piece Forrest Milburn and I wrote after the Speedway brick removal. It turned out to be one of our most clicked on pieces of the semester.)

Some might say this type of content is juvenile, silly or below the Texan’s standard of journalistic excellence. We have to rid ourselves of this mentality. Many large professional news organizations have realized the benefit of this type of journalism and are incorporating it into their traditional coverage. The fact is, this is the type of content people (especially college students) will click on. It will draw readers to our website, generate ad revenue and allow us to continue writing the high-quality, hard-hitting journalism people expect from The Texan.

**Better utilization of on-campus resources.**
The Texan prides itself in its editorial independence, and it is of utmost importance that we maintain objectivity as we cover the events of the campus around us. However, the Texan should not let this principle dissuade us from making use of the numerous resources around campus to improve our product. Despite The Texan office being a mere 50 yards from the offices of the journalism school, our staff fails to capitalize on the expertise and knowledge of the many journalism professors we have access to.

With the help of the Dean and willing journalism professors (some of whom have already indicated interest in the idea), I would set up a mentorship and advising program between The Texan and the journalism school. This past semester I was lucky enough to receive help from former professor Wanda Cash on our Presidential Power project, which was our most highly viewed project of the semester. Her expertise on open records requests proved invaluable during our investigation. Cash is only one of so many former and current professors with specific areas of journalism expertise in the college. We should not hesitate to work with them more in the coming semester.

**Recruitment and diversity in the newsroom.**
As managing editor I would also put a high priority on intensifying and focusing our recruitment efforts. In previous semesters recruitment has simply consisted of broad social media advertisements and a few information sessions. The Texan could recruit a much more talented and diverse staff if we tailored our recruitment practices to the specific groups and communities that we are trying to target. We should send
representatives to UT’s chapter of the National Association of Black Journalists, the National Association of Hispanic Journalists and the Asian American Journalists Association, among other groups, to ensure a diverse incoming class of reporters and editors. Recruiting more minority student journalists into our staff is the only way we as a news organization can hope to accurately and genuinely give voice to the experience of minority students on campus.

For the sake of brevity, these are only a few of the many priorities I would focus on as managing editor of the Texan. My goals for this paper are ambitious, but my confidence in its staff is unwavering. Throughout the last few years, I have had the opportunity to work with so many motivated staffers across all departments of this paper, and I am exceedingly proud of the work we have been able to accomplish together. I have attached to my application a letter of support from department heads and associate editors of this past semester. I am humbled by their support for my candidacy, and if selected I would put forth every effort to make them proud of this paper and the content we produce next semester. The Texan staff has become my family over the past three years, and I would be honored to serve as their managing editor. It would mean the world to me to be able to give back to the paper and staff that has shaped my college experience for the better. Thank you very much for your time and for your consideration of my candidacy.

Sincerely,

Ellie Breed
News Editor, The Daily Texan
(512) 750-8147
To the Texas Student Media Board of Operating Trustees,

We are writing today to unequivocally endorse Ellie Breed as The Daily Texan managing editor for the spring 2018 semester.

Throughout her tenure as news editor over the past two semesters, Ellie has proven she can rise above any challenge that surfaces from running the Texan’s largest content-producing department. The news editor is one of the most time-consuming and challenging positions at the Texan, second only to the managing editor; yet time and time again, Ellie Breed has shown her dedication to ensuring the news department puts out daily content that is worthy to be printed on the same pages as the Texan’s masthead.

Her position is integral to the production of the print publication every day, and since her time as editor, the Texan has flourished in putting out quality content that informs its audience. This semester, she single-handedly lobbied management and TSM Director Gerald Johnson for Atavist, a new online home for the Texan’s investigative work that beautifully displays longform work and in-depth projects. She helped re-establish an investigative team in the news department this semester and was involved in the nitty gritty reporting that went into some of the semester’s biggest in-depth projects, such as our investigation into UT President Gregory Fenves’ power in determining the outcome of sexual misconduct cases.

She has also proven she can handle stress and crises better than anyone in the newsroom. Last spring, when we sent a team of reporters, photographers and social media staff to cover the campus stabbing near the semester’s end, she dropped everything — during finals week — to remain in constant communication with Akshay Mirchandani, the managing editor, and every single department head. She made sure we were constantly updating our story and putting out accurate information at a time when students were frustrated with the University’s slow response. She even eloquently acted as the face of the Texan in a Texas Standard interview for a story about our coverage, which beat out many local outlets.

On top of excelling as news editor, Ellie doesn’t wait for someone to tell her what to do — she takes action whenever necessary. This semester, Ellie mapped out the entirety of the paper’s coverage for the 2017 Texas Tribune Festival by setting up live blogs of panels and communicating with photo and social media staff. She did this without much help from management, and the coverage beat out not only that of the other college newspapers present but also that of some local professional outlets. By planning the entire coverage for the festival, Ellie proved she’s primed and ready to take over the mantle of managing editor for the Texan.
Many of us signed below have served under multiple managing editors, and we have seen the qualities that make one effective. Ellie has more than what it takes to run the Texan, and she has repeatedly proven her worth in communications with other departments and with her excellent time at the helm of the news department.

Signed,

Fall 2017 department heads and associates

Morgan O'Halloran, Life and Arts Editor
Bella McWhorter, Copy Desk Chief
Rena Li, Design Editor
Thomas Negrete, Video Editor
Kayla Mayerson, Associate News Editor
Kirsten Handler, Associate Copy Desk Chief

Johnan Hodges, Science and Technology Editor
Alex Dominguez, Social Media Editor
Juan Figueroa, Photo Editor
Forrest Milbruch, Associate Social Media Editor and Enterprise Reporter
Catherine Martin, Associate News Editor
Gabriel Lopez, Associate Photo Editor
To the members of the Texas Student Media Board of Operating Trustees:

I write this letter to strongly support and recommend Ellie Breed as the next managing editor of The Daily Texan. I worked closely with Ellie during my tenure as managing editor last spring, and know her as a strong leader that always seemed destined for a spot in the management office. I have no doubts that she will excel if selected for the role, and you should feel comfortable with her qualifications and character.

Ellie’s Texan career began during the first semester of her freshman year when she joined the news staff as a general reporter. She rose through the ranks quickly, becoming a news desk editor and later associate news editor. She is now the Texan’s news editor, a position she has held for two semesters. The news department is almost like a family, and Ellie became such an integral part of that family from almost the very moment she stepped in the basement.

When I was selected as last spring’s managing editor, I knew how important my selection for news editor would be. The position is one of the most important at the Texan, and it has been a struggle in the past to find someone willing to take on the roll. I must have been one of the luckiest managing editors of all time, because I fell into Ellie and never looked back. She was the clear cut candidate that wanted the job and the responsibility that came with it. Admittedly, I was a little nervous about hiring a sophomore to one of the most taxing positions at the paper, but I’m so glad I did.

Before the semester started, Ellie and I sat down to discuss her goals and ideas for the semester, as well as my vision. I was impressed by how she carried herself and how prepared she was for the job. Ellie knew the intricacies of the complex news department and found ways to make it run even smoother than ever before. We hit our print deadline at an incredibly high rate during my semester, and Ellie’s ability to have her staff and stories in order was a major part of that. We were able to cover stories digitally like we had never done in the past by getting content up quickly and efficiently. Ellie naturally had the mind of an editor and leader, making her so easy to work with.

Of course, it was an incredibly busy and hectic semester. During our first week working together, we dealt with covering how the inauguration of Donald Trump affected campus, and the protests and marches that followed. We also dealt with the 85th session of the Texas Legislature, which Ellie oversaw coverage of. She and her staff found new ways to cover storylines from the session that directly affected our largely student audience. Under Ellie’s watchful eye, we broke a major story about Student Government election violations in regards to last semester’s executive alliance race.

But perhaps our greatest challenge came during our last week of the semester, when we had to cover the tragic stabbing incident on campus that left a fellow student dead. Covering a story of that magnitude is not easy, especially when it comes at the semester’s end. But I was so proud of the way Ellie and our staff handled it. People were getting the news from the Texan first before anyone else that week, and we fulfilled our duty to inform the student body. Throughout the entire week and all the twists and turns it held,
Ellie kept a level head. While that week was challenging in so many ways, having Ellie as my news editor made it easier.

Ellie was one of the most reliable editors I had. We communicated with each other multiple times a day as it related to what was going on within her department. Stories change, news breaks and mistakes are made. That’s just the life of being an editor at a major college newspaper. Through it all, Ellie was always quick to own up to a mistake or adapt when plans didn’t come to fruition. She dealt with my high expectations and exceeded them, and I always knew I could count on her to go above and beyond in her position. She had my back throughout everything we went through together, and became not only a great colleague, but an amazing friend and confidant. She truly was a rock for me last spring, and I was a better managing editor because of her.

I’m now a loyal reader of the paper instead of an editor. I can see that Ellie is still going strong as the Texan’s news editor, building on the foundation that she created last semester. I can see Ellie’s fingerprints all over the paper as I read it from afar. From important investigative stories to the daily grind of covering such a sprawling school, it’s easy to see that Ellie has taken things up another level from last semester. I can assure you that this is the next logical step in Ellie’s journey at the Texan. It’s extremely rare that someone stays the news editor for two semesters, but Ellie has embraced the department and it has prepared her for the role of managing editor. She is no stranger to managing a group of people and bracing for the day-to-day grind that comes with planning a paper five days a week.

What separates Ellie from the crowd, however, is her character and leadership ability. The news staff respected and adored Ellie during my time at the Texan, and that hasn’t changed. She knows when to be someone’s friend, but also when to lay down the law when needed. One of the most important and underrated aspects of being the managing editor is bringing people together. The ideal candidate must unite a group of over 300 students, from the department heads to issue staffers, and make them understand they are a part of something bigger. Ellie understands this. The staff already respects her, and she knows how to make everyone from the top on down feel like they are a part of a team. She’s never been afraid to lend a helping hand to someone either as it relates to their job, or as a friend.

The Daily Texan continues to grow and prosper in new ways. It offers something few colleges papers still have in the daily print product. It continues to grow digitally and push the envelope of the content it creates and the stories it covers. It’s a place where students can work on their craft and passions, whether that’s in design, photography, writing or editing. It’s a place where people can find an on-campus family, and give back to the University in a time where journalism is more important than it has ever been before.

Ellie understands this. She knows the Texan and knows what makes it tick. I believe journalism is a meritocracy, and I am extremely sure of Ellie’s ability to take the reins as
managing editor and push the Texan forward. It will continue to be valuable piece of the University and produce the highest quality journalism.

I am very lucky to have worked with Ellie. I cannot wait to see what she will accomplish in the future, and I hope that future involves the position of managing editor. If selected for the role, I believe she will continue to grow and prosper as a person and as an editor. And, in return, I believe she will take the Texan to new heights. If you have any questions about Ellie or her qualifications, please don’t hesitate to contact me. I would be thrilled and honored to speak on her behalf.

Sincerely,

Akshay Mirchandani
Daily Texan Managing Editor, Spring 2017
Digital Sports Producer, The Dallas Morning News
972-757-9949
To the Texas Student Media Board of Operating Trustees,

Nov. 8, 2016 was the day I realized Ellie Breed would make a far better news editor than I ever could.

That night, Ellie, who was then my associate news editor, stayed put in The Daily Texan office as I led a team of reporters to cover the presidential election night at several spots in the Austin area. As news editor that semester, I was acting as a reporter and couldn’t fulfill my duty to ensure the paper was printed the next day with the right number of stories. I had to ask Ellie to fill my shoes, and if I’m being honest, I was never for one second worried she couldn’t rise to the occasion. She did just that and much more, as we published a series of election night coverage stories that I was proud of.

If you’ve ever had the chance to work with Ellie, then you’re used to having your expectations surpassed. Ellie has always gone above and beyond what is asked of her; I learned that on election night, and my appreciation for Ellie as a leader has only been continuously confirmed throughout her two semesters as news editor. In spring 2017, I had the pleasure of serving as Ellie’s associate to help her lead the news department in her first semester as editor. Then this semester, I have had the honor of serving under Ellie’s leadership in a different role, as one of her two enterprise reporters, and I’ve seen Ellie’s leadership as news editor flourish in her second semester.

But I can’t quite pick the exact moment I realized Ellie would make a great managing editor, which is why I am writing this letter today.

I could have realized it when she quickly had to learn the ins and outs of the Texas Legislature — a monumental feat — in spring 2017, so she could help guide our two new legislative senior reporters. I could have realized it when she helped guide the Texan through its biggest challenge in years, when we covered the tragic stabbing that rocked campus in spring. I could have realized it this semester, when I saw how invested she was in every single investigative story the enterprise team has published.

After serving as every single role in the Texan’s news department throughout my three years here, I know what makes a good managing editor — and Ellie has those qualities and so much more. The best quality in Ellie is that she listens and she’s not afraid. She’s not scared to try anything new, or give an idea a shot if she thinks it could help make the Texan better in the years to come.

My time at the Texan helped me score two separate internships at two of the state’s largest news outlets. While I served as Ellie’s associate in spring 2017, I went on to an internship at the Austin American-Statesman to cover the 85th legislative session; after that, I spent 10 weeks covering local, state and national health care politics and issues during a summer internship at the San Antonio Express-News. I have seen what works (and what doesn’t) at two of the state’s professional news organizations.
Ellie and I have spent this entire semester trading ideas back and forth about how to push the Texan closer to where professional news outlets and many college newspapers are headed. Her vision of the Texan’s future is one of the reasons why I am writing to you all today.

For Ellie (as well as myself and many others), the Texan has to finally stop saying it will be “digital-first” and it needs to start doing it. I’m sure many of you serving on this board have heard the same thing from past managing editor applicants.

As someone who has worked in a professional setting and has seen what works and what doesn’t, I can tell you Ellie is not like previous applicants. Ellie gets it. She may not have a resume stacked with journalism internships, but she doesn’t need that. She is applying to run a news organization, and that takes someone who is level-headed, and knows when to listen to the reporters and editors she hired. It takes someone who knows how to work across departments to print a daily newspaper that employs more than 200. It takes someone with fresh ideas, that is inspired by what professional news outlets and other college papers are doing. That, I’m here to tell you, is Ellie.

As the social media team’s associate editor, I can tell you that Ellie has a multitude of great ideas, stuff that we have never done in our history in focusing on the Texan’s digital brand — no, not simply improving the way stories are tweeted out, but engaging with our audience in a way that garners clicks to the website through attention grabbing posts and articles.

I have worked with her for every semester I have been here at the Texan, and my appreciation for her has only grown greater as we’ve had the chance to work together. She is the real deal, and I would be more than proud to call Ellie my managing editor next semester. The Texan needs a managing editor who can keep pushing us and help us build on the success of our predecessors, and for me, the choice is crystal clear. If there are any questions, I would be happy to chat further.

Sincerely,

Forrest Milburn
Associate Social Media Editor, Enterprise Reporter, Fall 2017
News Editor, Fall 2016
Ellie Breed samples of published work:

Sample #1
Below is a link to the web story discussed in my letter. It brought more traffic to our website than almost any other article.

20 hilarious reactions to Speedway brick removal

Sample #2
Disclaimer: This is not a sample of my own writing, but an interview in which NPR’s local channel Texas Standard recognized my news department’s coverage of the on-campus stabbing this spring. It will serve to illustrate my ability to direct staff in breaking news coverage, maintain a level head during times of crisis and act as a calm and composed face for The Texan. A recording of the live radio interview, which contains most of my commentary, can be accessed at the following link:

AFTER CAMPUS STABBING, UT-AUSTIN STUDENT NEWSPAPER PROVIDED INFORMATION WHEN OFFICIALS DID NOT

Sample #3
UT Sigma Alpha Epsilon chapter suspended

Sample #4
My full live-blog coverage from inauguration day can be accessed with the following link:

Live blog: Trump sworn in as president, protests begin