

To whom it may concern:

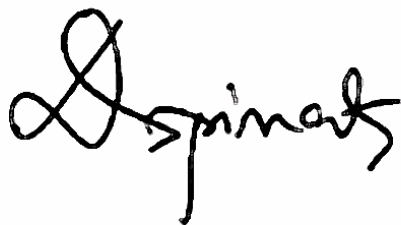
I am the editor of the *European Voice*, a weekly newspaper dedicated to covering political, economic, and cultural affairs of relevance to the European Union. Our readers primarily work in and around the European Commission, Council, Parliament, and the European Investment Bank. We are part of the Economist Group of publications.

Mr. Sweeney came to us in the autumn of 2004. Initially we had our doubts about his application. Mr. Sweeney had neither advanced degree in international affairs nor any professional experience covering Europe. Nevertheless we accepted him because his application letter professed a high degree of interest and his experience in Ecuador indicates he is capable of adapting quickly to foreign countries and foreign languages. And as a freelance journalist, technical writer, and grant writer, he is clearly capable of writing well in diverse formats.

I am pleased to report that Mr. Sweeney relieved our doubts and exceeded our expectations. We are an efficient operation and were able to give Mr. Sweeney a minimal degree of orientation and training; as a weekly publication our deadlines are inflexible. Nevertheless, within two days of arrival, we saw fit to publish Mr. Sweeney's coverage of the American election on page 2. For the next issue, we published his feature on the Belgium's decline in attracting direct foreign investment. Following that, he provided the three articles for our survey on the state of the European scientific research community. He continued with two articles on the black market and the underground economy in the new Member States, and another feature on sovereign currency risk ratings. He consumed and analyzed large quantities of statistics, reports, and other printed materials. He interviewed subject matter experts. From this he produced lucid content under pressure. In the context of Mr. Sweeney's relative lack of experience and education on the subjects he covered, this is an achievement of which he can be proud.

We are therefore quite pleased with Mr. Sweeney's performance, and we plan to use him as a freelance correspondent. He still has much to learn and he knows it; it is why he came to us in the first place. He received neither financial compensation nor academic credit for his work here, nor did he seek any. Education was the only credible motive for his efforts; it was all the compensation he received. I therefore recommend Mr. Sweeney without reservation for more education. He has motivation, discipline, and capability. He has already demonstrated his interest and capability in international affairs. He would be an asset to your program and a good investment for your scholarship support.

Sincerely,



Dana Spinant | danaspinant@economist.com
Editor

European Voice | www.european-voice.com
International Press Centre
Résidence Palace
Rue de la Loi 155, Box 6
1040 Brussels, Belgium
+32 (0) 2 540 9090