

V O I C E S

MCHENRY COUNTY COLLEGE LITERARY/ARTS JOURNAL

2023

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VOICES

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MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of *Voices* to recognize and showcase the visual arts, musical and literary talents of McHenry County College students.

EDITORIAL STATEMENT

Voices publishes work that reflects the literary, visual, and musical points-of-view of contemporary community college students. Although *Voices* does not organize content thematically, the work selected represents the contemporary zeitgeist of the McHenry County College community.

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BEST OF MAGAZINE

Voices 2023 is proud to announce Awards for the Best of Magazine

LITERARY:

Drexla Unverzagt
In Your Pocket

VISUAL ART:

Kelsi Gillespie
Growing Pains

MUSIC:

Lilith Noah
Generosity

Voices wishes to acknowledge students for their excellence in literature, music and visual arts.

THE DAN RISCH MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

The Dan Risch Memorial Scholarship is awarded to outstanding and promising visual art students. This Scholarship is generously funded by Dan's family and friends in memory of former MCC art student Dan Risch.

The 2023 Dan Risch Memorial Scholarship winners are:

Nicki Carpatiuc
Kara Waddington



MUSIC

- 1 **JOVANY LEON**
Nice To Meet Ya
- 2 **AARON LUSH**
Dungeon
- 3 **LILITH NOAH**
Generosity
- 4 **AARON LUSH**
Interrupted Mix

To hear this year's selections go to soundcloud.com/mcc-voices/sets/voices-2023 or simply scan the QR code below:



IN YOUR POCKET

I would like to live in your pocket
Safe in a cozy corner of that old jacket of yours.
The one with the worn, raggedy cuffs
That smells of you even when it's hanging
On the coat rack next to the front door.
I want to be with you when you go for breakfast
At the café that has the best coffee in town.
Its aroma mingles with the smell of fried bacon and griddle cakes
That's served up hot with melted butter and real maple syrup.
While you commiserate with the locals, talking politics for sport.
I want to be with you on your afternoon walk,
Where the scent of the earth greets you with every footstep.
As you stop to sit awhile on a soft patch of grass eating an apple
Plucked from a neighbor's tree. And without a hint of guilt,
You linger there to watch as a noisy squadron of geese flies south.
I want to be with you in the evening when you find a cushy chair
At the bookstore. The one that has those old wood floors that creak and complain.
A homey space that smells of newly printed books filled with fresh hope,
As you take your time to settle in, perusing the best book to bring home,
Only to doze off with a prospective contender flopped open on your lap.
I want to be with you at Kelly's Pub on Friday night
Where you like to stop in to catch the game or whatever is on TV.
To share a pint with an old friend whom you've known for years,
Retelling the same old dog-eared stories of your glory days,
And then wondering at how quickly you've both grown old.
I want to be with you, like I used to be, at the end of the day
When we would walk through the door together.
Me cozy and safe in that jacket pocket with raggedy cuffs.
The one that hangs on the coat rack next to the front door.
The one that smells of you still.

BEST OF MAGAZINE

KELSI GILLESPIE

Growing Pains



STONEWARE, 25" X 17" X 5"

CHAI IN OUR KITCHEN

We sat in the orange kitchen, you and me.
Where the late day's light leaked into our corner,
rinsing us in saffron.
I sat on my knees at your feet, and
My hair pooled in your lap.
Your hands on my head were your prayers incarnate,
They darken my hair with their weight.
You pulled a single strand to plait in,
tugging too tightly and ignoring my irritation,
before picking up
that little turquoise
cup with a clink.
Hold on,
You said, and I peer up at you,
as my hair loosens.
You pour your tea onto your saucer
and sip
This is how we drink chai,
You said,
Off the plate.

NICKI CARPATIUC
Untitled



ACRYLIC ON PANEL, 36" X 24"



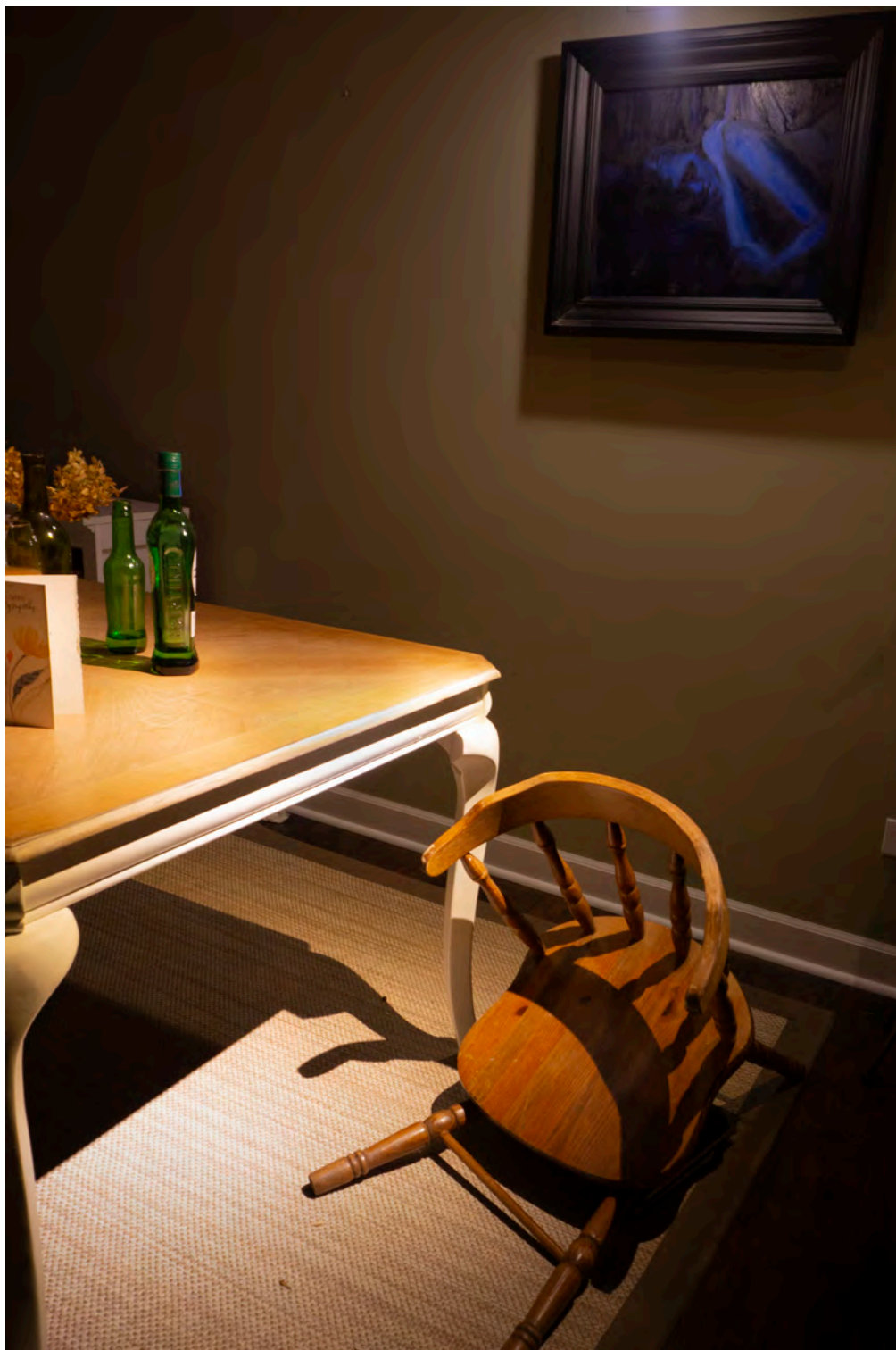
BELÉN ASHLEY
Cinderella



PORCELAIN, 8.5" X 3.5" X 2" EACH

MARYELLEN JOHNSON

Grief



ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT, 17" X 22"

FALLOUT

They shamelessly shed their coverings
like clandestine lovers
in sleazy motel rooms.
Nearly naked,
these models stretch their limbs,
expose their firm trunks,
pose in the shadows of a waning day.
Immodest maples and indecent beech
strew their colored garments
on blacktop or lawn
where caretakers rake up remains
from a season well spent.

ELIZABETH GREENWALD

Body Dump



CHARCOAL, 18" X 24"

JONNA KIVISTO
I'm A Little Teapot



CERAMIC, 6" X 5" X 4"

BEFORE I DIE

I want to be enlightened
with ears that grow long just to the tips
of my shoulders, like the Buddha,
so, I might hear better.
I want to see the world with
cloudless eyes, rejoicing in gratitude,
for both the darkness and the light
so, I might know truth.
I want to grow a prosperous round belly
and let my robes fall gracefully open,
like a lotus unfolding,
so, I might expose abundance.
I want to walk with gentle footsteps,
in the long shadows of twilight,
leaving no trace on Earth's green skin
so, I might share in her beauty.
I want to wear a serene smile
that says nothing and everything
at the same time,
so, I might show contentment.
And when at last my blossoms fall,
I want to fly away, on the wings of time,
Giving back my energy to the universe,
So, that I might live again.

.

ANDREA VELAZQUEZ

Ophelia



ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT, 24" X 30"

MADDIE O'BRIEN

Till Death



PORCELAIN, 9.5" X 3.5" X 3.5"

10 OUNCES

Your heart is 10 ounces
I measure my heart in packs of sugar
Only 1 teaspoon each
57 packs of sugar to give
19 cups of sweet coffee
three packs a cup
Before things go bitter
57 people to share a teaspoon with
Except I accidentally gave you four packs in one day
Called you kiddo
Called you boy
Accidentally fell in love
And forgot to only give you a pinch
A sprinkle
The way I do with the folks on the Metra
Only a couple teaspoons left now
Only a couple beats
still worth hearing
Almost one year into you
And most of me
Has been dissolved
In your coffee

DYLAN KULA
Private Car Show



ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT, 8.5" X 11"

REGINA LOMBARDO

The Flock

STONEWARE, 7" X 7" X 2" EACH



JORDYN HOLLISTER

Poetry

TO DAUGHTER

I have not wrapped a gift for you
And marked it with your name.
I do not remember your birthday—
Every year it's all the same.

I have not bragged about you, dear,
For I don't even know you.
What are you, twenty-one now?
No, that's not right. Twenty-two?

I have not heard you laugh or cry,
Never tended to your cough.
You have your mother for that, though,
Let's hope she is enough.

If you should want to meet me ever,
I guess I would act glad.
Just don't expect the love you crave.

Signed,
Your Absent Dad

DONNA BIESCHKE
Where Do I Go From Here?



OIL ON CANVAS, 32" X 37" TK

SOPHIA GOODNER
Backroads



ARCHIVAL INKJET PRINT, 8.5" X 11"

WAITING FOR DAWN

When the evening falls
And before the stars
Pierce the dark with resilient light
When the shadows creep
And the birds that sing
Surrender their songs to the night

It is then I feel the ache
A quiet longing
For a friend beside me, standing
For someone who knows me
And loves me
To simply be here, understanding

The thought catches me
Like ice: alone
The fear like the shadows growing
Of being alone
With no sign of change
Tonight, when the dark is showing

And then comes the star
After dark of dusk
Shattering my pain with a flicker
I remember a song
That is sung in the night
Chased by despair but still quicker

Never alone
A breath of light
Catches me on wings of healing
Though it's still dark
And cold is still close
Truth knows more than I'm feeling

Promise I hold
Believe that it is
Merely the night that I'm seeing
Wait for the dawn
Know it will come
Wait, watching stars, simply being

KATHLEEN ESCOBAR

bes frens



STONEWARE, 12.5" X 12" X 9" EACH



OIL ON CANVAS, 36" X 24"

KARA WADDINGTON

Blister Slop



OIL ON CANVAS, 46" X 30"

THE MONSTER

Were you there in my childhood
behind my twisted hair,
bitten fingernails,
and bleeding cuticles?

Were you there in the anorexia nervosa
when I was a college freshman,
afraid to gain that 15?
Were you lurking in the cafeteria line
as I ate less and less until my skirts
hung from my shrunken hips
like empty gunny sacks?

Did you smirk when I visited
Aunt Gwen at Mendota Mental Hospi-
tal?
She, that once elegant lady,
then housedress clad
with grey hair awry.

Were you there
in the lettuce sandwiches I fed on
when I was pregnant—
fearful I'd never lose the extra pounds
once my child was born?

Were you hovering in the hives
that covered my skin
like symbols of sadness
after my husband died?

You bastard!
Did you wait to pounce
until I was older, weaker?
Do you think that you're a winner,
shaking the pillboxes like castanets,
beckoning me to get on board the Xanax
train,
to float on the Cymbalta barge,
to fly on the Zoloft jet?

I'll give you your due.
You're scarier than Jason
or The Headless Horseman.
You're more frightening
than the music from "Psycho" or "Jaws."

If I knew where you hang out
during off hours, I'd get a gun
and hunt you down.

ALLIE BONET

Kathleen



GELATIN SILVER PRINT, 8" X 10"

WORDS

Words
fall onto me
like rain when I see you
apparent enough to see and feel
but never fast enough to grasp
leaving me drenched in what
I wish I said

THE UNRAVELING

He was a child
alone
in an empty museum.
The silence echoed
down the white plastered walls.
Staring up the hung textile,
color contrasted with the monochrome world.
It was
Exciting,
Enchanting,
Amusing,
Provoking.
It had no defense,
no protection.
It hung and simply asked
for no one to touch it,
For the viewers just to examine
and bask in its presence.
He knew he shouldn't,
he couldn't
hurt such a thing.
Something so
Beautiful.
Its destruction depended on his intuition.
But his small hands twitched for the motion.
His instinct took over
as he grabbed onto the smallest string,

and pulled
and unraveled
and corrupted
and destroyed
and slaughtered
and murdered.
All while he stood
convulsed.
He stood tearing apart
years of
work and skill.
All within moments
he took everything it was.
Until it was reduced
To a limp-long-colored-string
on the pristine gallery floor,
a sad thing
most people walked over and ignored it.
Unraveled art,
has no meaning
has no value as it lays on the floor.
Is that what the boy wanted?
Perhaps, or maybe not.
But the damage
was still
done.
Even if nobody knew.

JULES FISHER
a place for happy thoughts



STONEWARE, 26" X 24"

MY THINGS

Some of my things are with you.

A few rainy days and a candlelit night folded into one of my love letters.

Extinguish that night, and return my things.

A painting and a small locket, a few unfinished poems woven into my words that evening, and I think, an empty bottle of wine.

They lay by the table, I'm sure, and as the honey glow of the rosy sun-drenched us in gold through that window, we'd lazily watched the day meet its end.

Close that window, and return my things.

One hundred and sixteen moonlit nights and that single dimple on your shoulder.

Shall I remind you of all the false promises too?

Forget those, and return my things.

The sounds of our silence, the melody of our hearts, the smoothness of the paint, the rustle of fingers through hair, the tones of whispers, the lazy look in our eyes, and that scribbled entry in my beaten diary.

Break that silence, and return my things.

The scar from that chipped glass chess piece, the mindless dancing in the kitchen, the feeling of an endless forever and that faint scent of jasmine.

Give me back all of my things.

And when I bury them,

I'll lay myself to sleep with them.

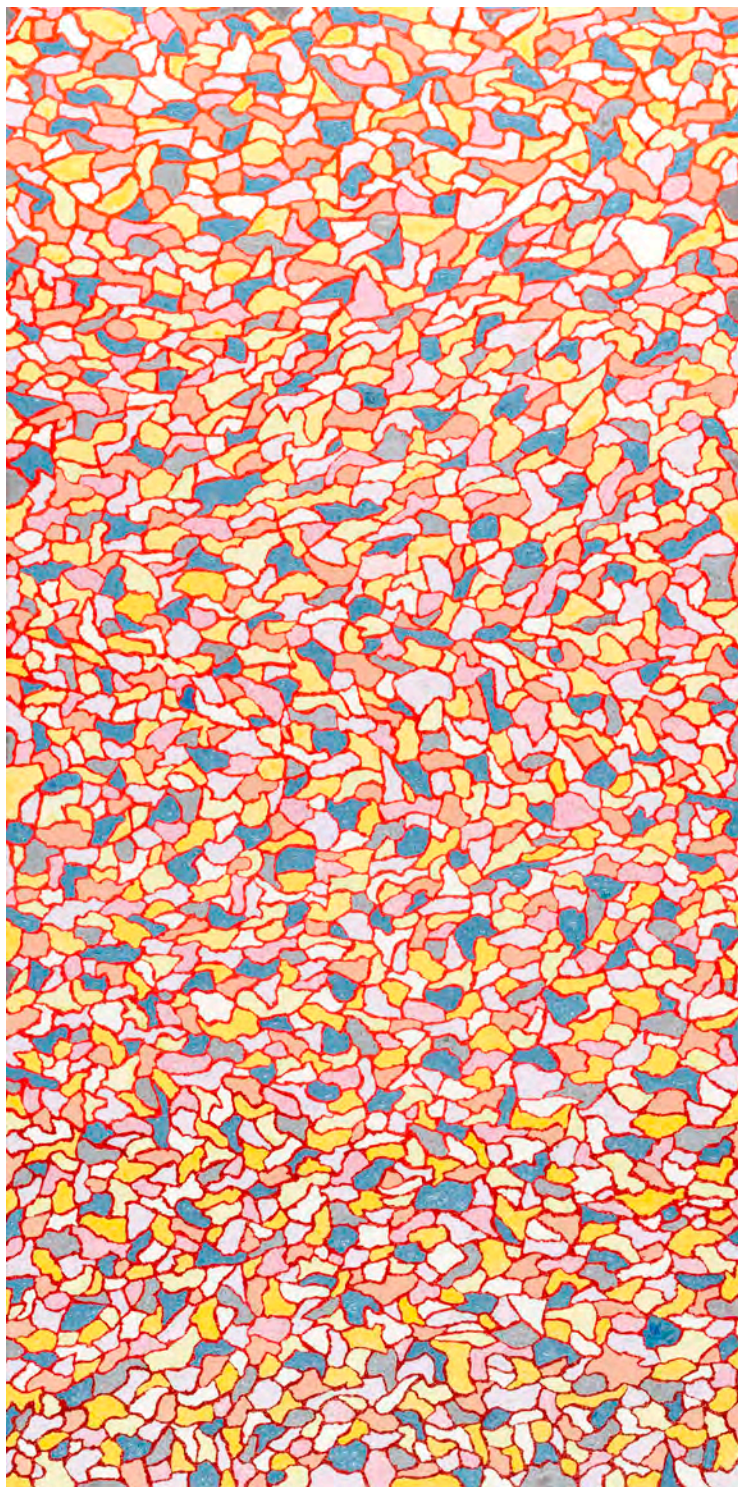
ANDY LECHNER
Cool Candle Holders



PORCELAIN, 8" X 11" X 9"

JACOB KNAPP

Untitled 1



OIL ON CANVAS, 48" X 24" X .5"

LUCY DOLAN
Deborah



GELATIN SILVER PRINT, 8" X 10"

JESSICA OLSEN
Sword and Shield



NICKEL SILVER, BRASS, PINK OPAL, 1" X 2" X .5"

BATTLE OF THE VALLEY

The battle ends in a chaotic crescendo.
The torn banners wave uncertainly in the
solemn air,
Who truly won?
Who is to claim such an affair?
The bloodshed, a synonymous loss.
The warriors,
Equally lost.

Gray clouds hang like a veil over the valley.
The soft long grass,
The bright wildflowers,
Native inhabitants,
Suddenly misplaced.
Accelerando, the battle begun,
Shortly fought,
And all for naught.
What is war?
But few men's disagreements.
That thrust violence onto unwilling actors.
Young men leave their mother,
Only to fight and kill a brother.

Look, the valley,
She mourns.
The dark clouds give way to cold rain.

To a mourner on the desolate field,
it feels the same as the blood that plaster his
clothes.

Body or stone,
Lay heavy against the Spring Earth,
Blood or rain, or both,
Pool the surface.
Instead of the gore,

The valley longs for trees,
For rivers,
For cheery creatures,
To fill her arms.
Not the bodies of so many lost innocent souls.

Men may forget a battle like this,

Forget those who fought with valor,
But the valley will always remember.
The desperate crying and begging for mercy,

The relentless violence.

Yes,
she will always remember.

THU NGUYEN

Logo Identity



GRAPHIC DESIGN, 16" X 20"

GOODBYES

I will kiss you with passion as if this one is our last
Eyes desperately looking for an image to grasp
Our body is forever woven, fingertips grazing each other
I know it's time

I can't,
Hand latching onto your black sweatshirt
One more kiss, I can't help but blush, as a tear runs down my cheek
Our lips will collide as if oxygen to breath

Please, come back to me
And I am left
Headlights tattoo my skin
Goodbye, I mutter

FLYING HIS KITE

“A kite, please,
to take to the beach.”
A nine-year-old boy’s wish
is granted. A blazing red nylon kite,
with a fierce serpentine tail, is purchased.
Then gingerly carried in his hopeful hand,
to arrive safely at the beach,
ready to take flight.
The day is postcard perfect:
blue skies, white sand, warm sun.
The ocean lapping at the shore in ancient rhythms
as waves break hypnotically, one after the other,
welcoming us back with that life-affirming
scent of salt and sea.
Crowds of people have already gathered,
slathered from head to toe in suntan lotion,
smelling of overripe coconuts, cocoa butter
and sweat. The steady beats of beach
music, fill the air with a festive holiday mood,
as the happy chatter of children competes
with the ubiquitous, shrill cries of seagulls,
as they float overhead like untethered kites,
drafting gracefully on invisible currents.
While back on earth, the boy
has suddenly gone missing. Swallowed up

by the crowd, disappearing in his excitement,
to try his hand at flying the new kite. A panic
squeezes down hard on my heart, and in breathless fear,
I scan the beach for a sight of him.
And then, as if staged for a Hollywood movie,
the crowd parts, making way for the boy,
his red kite soaring into the sky behind him.
It flaps and dives wildly at the end of its sting,
like some exotic bird frantically trying to escape.
But it’s held tight, as he runs full speed along the shore,
his arm extended triumphantly over his head,
the kite climbing higher and higher into the sky
as if to join the stringless seagulls in flight.

And on his face...
On his radiant little boy face,
is his smile...
reaching from cheek to cheek,
so big and so wide,
that it lifts him up,
and he knows that he can fly.
Above the ocean, above the clouds,
until he is beyond our earthly reach,
gliding on the wings of his joy.

MELISSA RAGUSIN
An Ode to Mothers



OIL ON CANVAS, 40" X 30"

PATTI STRICKER
You Think You Know



ACRYLIC ON CANVAS, 20" X 20"

TOUCH

I miss your touch
Tips tracing my outline
As the sun eclipses the moon

Whispers of Insignificance
Forever etched
Into my mind

Palm caressing
My inner workings
As if repairing a broken machine

Squeezing me
Eager
As if I'll go

Weight of your dreams
Pushing upon my back
My worries slip away



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The ideas and the opinions expressed in *Voices 2023* are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the attitude of the Board of Trustees, the administration, the faculty, or the staff of McHenry County College. Materials for *Voices 2023* were submitted by students who have been enrolled in courses at McHenry County College during one or all of the previous three semesters. The pieces selected for inclusion in *Voices 2023* were based on the student editors' opinion of their aesthetic merit. It is the policy of McHenry County College not to discriminate on the basis of sex, age, race, religion, national origin, or handicapped status in its educational programs, as required by Federal regulations. Inquiries regarding compliance may be directed to Michelle Skinder, Assistant Vice President of Human Resources.

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