

September 28, 2005

To Whom It May Concern:

I am an undergraduate researcher in Dr. Ron Hoy's lab at Cornell University. Since Dr. Jacob Krans began his postdoctoral work in Dr. Hoy's lab in January, 2005, I have had the opportunity to interact with him, both informally and during official lab meetings. In that time, I have come to regard him as a wonderful educator, a mentor, and a trusted friend.

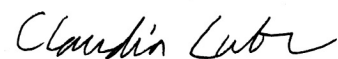
My introduction to Jake was both memorable, and indicative of his attitude toward all of the undergraduates in the Hoy lab. I arrived in lab fairly early in the morning, on the first day after winter break, to discover Jake already at work. He enthusiastically introduced himself, and inquired with genuine interest about my role in the lab and my project. I was feeling somewhat overwhelmed by the return to work after a month's absence. Jake immediately noticed this, and expressed concern and encouragement. Since then, Jake has been unfailingly supportive of all the undergraduates, and has devoted his own time and energy to assist our development as biologists. His love of teaching and helping students to improve themselves both academically and otherwise is continually apparent.

Jake is always willing to answer my many questions, which have ranged in subject from lab technique, to neurobiological concepts, to the politics of graduate school applications; he is patient, provides thorough answers, and encourages understanding rather than the mere acquisition of facts. In addition, he distinguishes himself in his respect for the undergraduates, and does not hesitate to seek our opinions if he believes we may be aware of something that he is not. He demonstrates his interest in our research progress by voluntarily attending the undergraduate lab meetings, and offers helpful advice and input. He has systematically discovered the individual interests and future career goals of each student, and has on many occasions shared his own experiences in the scientific community to help guide my thinking.

Especially at a large institution like Cornell, it is rare to find an instructor who takes a personal interest in their students. This gives me an even greater appreciation of Jake's friendly and outgoing nature. He is a trusted adult with whom I feel comfortable discussing personal concerns, and I have been amazed by the value and wisdom of his advice. While such skills do not often seem to be formally evaluated in the classroom, they are extremely beneficial to the student.

I consider myself lucky to have had the chance to work with Jake and to learn from him. I wholeheartedly recommend him for a teaching position at your institution.

Sincerely,

  
Claudia Lutz