Dear Health Professions Advisory Committee,

I am pleased to provide my highest recommendation in support of Zachary Gold’s application to attend medical school at your institution. I was Zach’s supervisor at EcoHealth Alliance (EHA) for the final year of his 20-month employment at our organization. EcoHealth Alliance is a nonprofit research and development institute with 40 employees, including various public health scientists, research veterinarians, and disease ecologists. EHA receives grants from the Department of Defense, USAID, NIH, and NSF. Partnering with over 20 countries, EHA conducts biosurveillance and statistical modeling to predict and mitigate infectious disease threats to human and animal health.

Zach came to EcoHealth Alliance as an unpaid intern in November, 2013. His maturity, intellect, and productivity was quickly recognized and he was brought on as a full-time member of our staff. During my time as his supervisor, Zach worked on several projects. He was the co-lead on a project dedicated to identifying the occurrence, characteristics, and drivers associated with the emergence of infectious diseases in human populations between 1940 and 2013. Zach lead the scientific aspects of the study and worked with our team of programmers and web-designers to create an interactive web-application displaying the results. Zach served as the primary author of a journal article that conveyed the methods results and implications of the work to a research audience.

Zach’s other major focus was related to our work in biosurveillance. He conducted research on the state of global biosurveillance, and was intricately involved in the development of several biosurveillance tools. He worked closely with our engineering team and collaborators, like ProMED-mail, to ensure our tools incorporated sound scientific research. Zach performed writing duties for many of these projects. Zach’s ability to focus on and discuss the public health ramifications of our tools was invaluable. Zach and I frequently discussed opportunities for new projects, a number of which came to fruition.

I was extremely impressed by Zach’s capabilities and recommended that he apply for a Ph.D. in epidemiology, with the possibility of continued work with my department at EHA. However, Zach expressed his desire for working directly with patients in the practice of medicine. Zach combines a strong intellect and passion for learning with a deep interest in human health. He has a gift for connecting with disparate personalities and has a kind and compassionate demeanor. I strongly endorse Zachary S. Gold for medical school. He will be a terrific doctor and an asset to his patients and the community.

Cheers,

Andrew G. Huff, Ph.D., M.S.

Associate Vice President

EcoHealth Alliance