November 15, 2015

To Whom it May Concern,

I am writing to support Karissa Whiting’s application to the environmental health science and biostatistics departments. I am her supervisor at EcoHealth Alliance in the Data and Technology Science department. In addition to my duties as a supervisor, I mentored Karissa through various public health, data science, and software engineering projects.

Karissa excelled as a research assistant, participating and leading discussions, helping to manage a $2.4 million research project, and learning how to code in python. She has acquired real world public health experience and computational skills during her time at EcoHealth Alliance. Her dedication, critical thinking, and preparedness in the research environment have greatly contributed to the success of our department. Karissa balanced tasks well. She never complained and was always eager to learn new skills and analytical approaches. Her infectious diseases knowledge has greatly improved over the past year and she frequently asked questions about diseases, One Health, and research methods. Importantly, Karissa was the only research assistant to tackle statistical analysis and data management. She is very proficient in all office software and as the research assistant in charge of research interns she was responsible for her team’s analyses and results. She showed a willingness to learn analytical software (Python, Q GIS, Google analytics, proprietary qualitative coding software), and with time to learn more fully, she will be a major asset to a research team and to public health.

Amazingly, Karissa assisted with the writing of several grants (NIH, NSF, DHS, DTRA) in excess of $3 million each, and individually constructed the budgets and budget justifications for most of these proposals. In addition to understanding the business aspects of research, she grasps the public health significance of the research we perform.

Karissa is still developing her research interests, but I have no doubt she will have a strong career in public health. She is very interested in and willing to perform lab tasks, but also enjoys fieldwork. She has a strong scientific background and an interest in both environmental health science and biostatistics. Karissa is an inquisitive, friendly, and brilliant individual who works well in teams and completes tasks well individually. I enthusiastically recommend her as a graduate student in environmental health science and biostatistics. Please do not hesitate to contact me with further questions.

Cheers,



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

Associate Vice President

EcoHealth Alliance