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October 6, 2005.

Dr. Yves Brun
Department of Biology
Indiana University
Jordan Hall 142, 1001 E 3rd St.,
Bloomington, IN 47405-7005.

Dear Dr. Brun,

I am writing on behalf of Professor Dmitry (Dima) Belostotsky, who is applying to a position to your department and it is with great enthusiasm that I recommend him to your faculty.

I have known Dr. Belostotsky for about ten years. At the time, my laboratory had some interest in 3' end processing of RNA and I first knew of Dr. Belostotsky through his work on RNA binding proteins in plants, a project he carried out as a postdoctoral fellow in Rich Meagher's lab. It was pioneering work in the area at the time. Over the years, Dr. Belostotsky was only one of a few plant biologists carrying out systematic studies on an important yet quite over-looked aspect of RNA metabolism for plant biology research. Dr. Belostotsky's interest has focused on RNA processing as a theme, but has expanded from polyA-binding proteins to a more global effort in understanding the role of exosomes in RNA processing and their functional role in biological processes. Although we had not pursued our own interest in RNA processing for several years, I maintained my overall interest in the area, probably because of my own background and also realization that it is a fundamental cellular process and I should keep abreast with new knowledge. This together with the evolution of an aspect of research in Dr. Belostotsky's interest in the area of plant reproduction kept us in close contact as colleagues, then as friends, over the years in between.

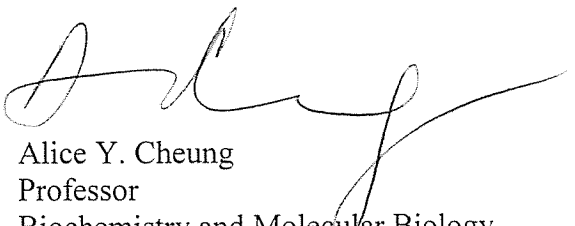
With my own graduate training in a lab where RNA biochemistry was the main stake, I have always considered the quality and extent of biochemical analysis of RNA processing carried out in Dr. Belostotsky's lab among the best in plant works and will compete well with similar studies carried out in other model systems where RNA processing has been more thoroughly studied. His adeptness in crossing over to use yeast as one aspect of functional investigation has facilitated the search of a functional role. But ultimately, the impressive thing is Dr. Belostotsky's work has never lost sight of the functional significance of the protein systems towards the processes in plant cells and in plant growth and development.

In more specific terms, Dr. Belostotsky's laboratory has almost completely characterized the polyA binding protein gene family from Arabidopsis. Their work was carried out not only from a genomic standpoint, but they have provided characterization of their biochemical activities and elucidated their functional diversity. His work on exosomes is an even more ambitious undertaking. His group has already obtained considerable fundamental characterization of the proteins involved in this important protein complex. Moreover, through mutant analysis, their studies have linked the function of these RNA processing proteins to important developmental processes such as embryo and endosperm development. These accomplishments are in their own right considerable and are the basis of many high quality articles published in major journals. But being in the position of having almost all the tools in his disposal, Dr. Belostotsky's laboratory will stand to reap major returns in all the functional studies that are ripe to be launched. I expect Dr. Belostotsky's laboratory will be making major contribution to the area of RNA processing in the next few years. Overall, I think Dr. Belostotsky has chosen to focus on an important and challenging subject area whose significance is beyond plant biology. It is also not yet an overly congested area. With the importance of RNA processing becoming more center stage, I believe Dr. Belostotsky's laboratory will be highly competitive in leading the field in accomplishments and in the success of grant applications.

On a different level, I have had the opportunity to work with Dr. Belostotsky as co-organizers for two international meeting, "Frontiers of Sexual Plant Reproduction I, II". These meetings provided an excellent forum for experts and young scientists in the field from all corners of the world to come together for focused discussions. For both events, Dr. Belostotsky was the driving force in the organization, the structure and the fund raising aspects, and I probably contributed just in terms of overall scientific organization, recommendation and invitation of chairs and speakers. His energy and generosity of time and effort was very impressive. Both meetings were considerable successes, we were urged to plan meeting number III because II was over and received congratulatory notes from directors of programs who supported the meeting. From these collaborations, I feel confident that Dr. Belostotsky must be a devoted colleague who is committed to serve his community and assist in every way possible among colleagues to get jobs well done.

I urge you to provide the application from Dr. Belostotsky a favorable considerable and observe his accomplishments in person. If there is any additional aspects that you think I may provide that could be helpful, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



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