



DUKE UNIVERSITY HEALTH SYSTEM

Peter Agre, MD
Vice Chancellor for Science and Technology
Professor of Cell Biology
Professor of Medicine

10 November 2005

Search & Screen Committee
Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Indiana University School of Medicine
635 Barnhill Drive
Indianapolis, Indiana 46202-5122

Re: Todd Lamitina

Dear Colleagues:

It is with great enthusiasm that I write on behalf of Todd Lamitina who is applying for a faculty position in your department. You will no doubt receive many applications from young scientists with impressive credentials, but I feel that Todd stands out as an exceptional prospect based upon his remarkable ability to engage younger scientists and organize complex research efforts from multiple campuses.

Todd has served as co-mentor in the training of George Huang, a graduate student in my laboratory at Johns Hopkins. George wanted to study the aquaporin gene family in *C. elegans*, and I have long known Todd's postdoctoral mentor, Kevin Strange at Vanderbilt University. Through Kevin, I met Todd and suggested that we collaborate. Todd enthusiastically agreed to this idea and during the past two academic years, George has made several trips to Todd's lab to work on this project. During the course of our relationship, Todd also visited my lab at Hopkins, and I have also visited his lab at Vanderbilt. Together we published our first paper on the *C. elegans* osmotic stress response in which he had postulated a specific role for aquaporins in these responses. Our second manuscript is in preparation.

Given the long-distance nature of this collaboration, I have been impressed by Todd's ability to constructively mentor George and keep him moving forward, while at the same time Todd has pursued his own productive research projects. This was particularly important for George during the extreme demands our lab has experienced during the post-Nobel period and my decision to move to Duke University. In my view, Todd has consistently demonstrated that he is a highly organized and insightful scientist. His co-mentorship of George reflects his generous and thoughtful commitment to our graduate student. Based on these very positive attributes, I am confident that Todd will make an outstanding teacher to other future graduate students.

During his post-doctoral fellowship, Todd developed an exciting and innovative research program using *C. elegans* genetics to define the genes and signaling pathways underlying the osmotic stress response in animals. He has shown an excellent ability to present these studies. In addition to a fine list of publications, Todd was awarded a prestigious National Kidney Foundation fellowship, including a rare third year funding renewal. He has also been asked to present his findings at several prominent scientific meetings, including plenary lectures to the German Society of Zoologists and the American Society for Nephrology.

Based on his demonstration of outstanding mentorship, his innovative research program, and his dedicated work ethic, Todd ranks at the top of my list of prospective leaders in the life sciences. It is my privilege to recommend him to you with my highest level of enthusiasm. I would love to continue our collaborations and hope this will allow me to visit him on your campus.

Sincere best wishes,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter Agre', written in a cursive style.

Peter Agre, M.D.
Professor of Cell Biology and Medicine
Vice Chancellor for Science and Technology