

# UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, MERCED

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October 31, 2005

Yves Brun, Systems Biology/Microbiology Faculty Search,  
Department of Biology  
Indiana University  
Jordan Hall 142  
1001 E 3rd Street  
Bloomington, IN 47405-7005

Dear Professor Brun,

I am writing to strongly recommend for Dr. Dat Nguyen for a faculty position at the University of Indiana. I have known Dat since 1999 when he joined my research group in the Biology and Biotechnology Research Program at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory. As one of his research advisors, I co-directed his research and worked closely with him during his four years in my laboratory, and have continued to follow his work since his move to Harvard. Based on this experience with Dat, I believe that he is a highly talented scientist with a very wide range of research interests and accomplishments.

As the co-director of Dat's graduate research I followed Dat's scholarly progress. Dat worked on several innovative chemical modeling studies addressing a range of biological problems related to the action of anticancer drugs, RNA-binding fluorophores, and anti-freeze proteins. These projects required Dat to develop several innovative approaches for simulating and analyzing biochemical processes. Dat is the first author on a papers published in *The Journal of the American Chemical Society* and the *Biophysical Journal*, and he has made presentations on this work at several national meetings. Based on the strength of his graduate work, Dat was awarded a prestigious Sloan Post-doctoral Fellowship to study computational biology with Prof. George Church at Harvard.

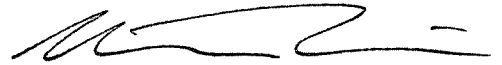
Based on his work in my laboratory, I believe that Dat has the potential to be an outstanding scientist and professor. Dat is an extremely persistent and hard worker, always spending long hours at work, and yet always finding time to help out other members of the group who needed assistance. He also has excellent scientific skills and is a careful and persistent researcher, always trying to solve problems himself and never giving up. Dat is good at staying focused on the research problem at hand, and is a careful listener who learns quickly with minimal guidance. Dat was a valuable member of my research group and was well liked by my post-docs and the other staff researchers. In my opinion, these qualities are an excellent reflection of his long-term potential as a scientist and a teacher.

Dat's academic achievements are particularly impressive given that he has faced a number of challenges. Dat came to America on his own to study when he was 19, and supported himself, first in a junior college, and then at UC Davis where he obtained a BS and Ph.D. in Chemistry and a MS in Computer Science. I believe that Dat's ability to overcome these challenges and achieve the

impressive accomplishments described above speak well to his likelihood of success in his long-term goal as a faculty member.

During my seventeen years as a staff member in federal laboratories and for the past two years as a faculty member at the University of California, I have worked with many graduate students. Overall, I would rank Dat among the best graduate students I have known. Based on my observations of which students ultimately achieved their goals, I believe Dat's persistence, motivation, and strong academic skills will make him successful as a professor, and I expect that his research and teaching will have a lasting beneficial effect. Therefore I highly recommend Dat for a faculty position in your university. Please don't hesitate to contact me if there's anything else I can do to help in this.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Colvin', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Michael Colvin, Ph.D.