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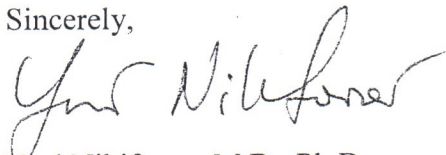
To whom it may concern:

It is a pleasure to write this letter of recommendation for Dr. Richard Cronkhite. Richard was employed as a postdoctoral fellow, in my lab, from June 2003 until March 2004. During this time, Richard was involved mainly in the project to make and construct to knock in the green fluorescence protein (GFP) gene downstream of the RET gene, which is necessary for our studies of RET/PTC rearrangement induction in cultured thyroid cells after radiation exposure. Unfortunately, this project must be stopped due to the lack of funds to support it. Dr. Cronkhite was instrumental in making a construct, cloning a number of gene fragments into plasmids, and developing the entire scheme of the insertion of the construct into the cells. He also achieved significant progress in testing thyroid culture cells for stable transfection using thymidine, and even has some preliminary data for a patent proposal, which he plans to submit.

During his time in our lab, I observed that Richard has a unique ability to take the extra time and care which make the assays work. His record keeping is thorough. He shows a passionate interest in his work and in the meaning of the results, going to the literature to help him to understand. Richard understands the importance of meticulous, sometimes painstaking work to reach the final goal. He has a deep and broad knowledge of molecular biology, which he applies every day to his work in the lab. Although he prefers to work alone, he always contributes to resolving the general problems within the lab, conditions of the equipment and instrumentation.

It is unfortunate that we do not have additional support to keep Dr. Cronkhite in the lab. However, I can recommend him without reservation. Please do not contact me, should you require additional information.

Sincerely,



Yuri Nikiforov, M.D., Ph.D.  
Associate Professor