

U N I V E R S I T Y *of* H O U S T O N

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April 26, 2006

Ms. Amy Higgins
The Biocomplexity Institute
Department of Physics
Swain Hall West 117
727 E. 3rd Street
Bloomington, IN 47405-7105
bioc@indiana.edu

Dear Ms. Higgins,

I am writing you on behalf of Mike Melnichuk who has applied to you for a post-doctoral position. I have a very high regard for Mike and especially like the way he works through a problem. I taught him advanced methods in x-ray and (some) neutron scattering. He always would ask just why something was so, often trying to force it into something he already knew. But he was quite persistent and learned a lot from these queries. He is still arguing until he understands, but then he really does understand whatever the issue may be.

I have followed his graduate student career with Prof. Lowell Wood, and have read the papers that have come out of that thesis. They are really both excellent and, until one understands the experiment, rather non-intuitive. All three papers are quite original and demonstrate an excellent understanding of the underlying optics and its applications to new experimental schemes.

This work, in fact, represents a very nice application of optics to some old friends like BaTiO_3 . I like his approach and believe that he will be a great asset to any group. He is very bright, excellent at experiments and very hard-working. In short, Mike Melnichuk is an excellent choice for any group in modern optics that he joins, including both more conventional condensed matter physics (and related optics) and in emerging fields such as biophysics, and I recommend him to you with absolutely no reservation. He is destined to make a fine career for himself.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Simon Moss'.

Simon Moss
M.D. Anderson Chair of Physics (ret.)
Research Professor of Physics
University of Houston