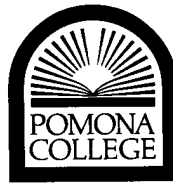


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Department of Physics and Astronomy

December 23, 2003

Biocomplexity Faculty Search Committee  
c/o Prof. Rob de Ruyter van Steveninck  
Biocomplexity Institute  
Indiana University  
Swain Hall West 117  
Bloomington, IN 47405-7105

RE: Jordan Gerton

Dear Members of the Search Committee,

It gives me great pleasure to write a letter of recommendation to you on behalf of **Jordan Gerton**. Jordan is currently a postdoctoral researcher at Caltech, but last fall Jordan was hired by Pomona College to teach a section of our introductory physics laboratory. This laboratory course is a full 4 hours in class each week, in addition to preparation and grading duties. Pomona College is a one of the nation's premier liberal arts colleges, and has very high standards for interactive and investigative laboratory courses. It is quite common for our department to hire a person to help us cover an extra section of lab, and it is always difficult to find someone who can do this well. During the Fall of 2002, I taught both the lecture portion of this course and a section of the laboratory. I was also the laboratory coordinator, so Jordan was nominally working under my supervision. It is my understanding that Jordan will have other letters that emphasize his research prowess, and I will focus my letter on his teaching here at Pomona College.

My first introduction to Jordan occurred when he came to give our physics colloquium during the 2001-2002 academic year. Jordan gave a very clear and insightful talk about his thesis work on Bose-Einstein Condensates in Lithium. This lecture was clearly pitched at the right level for our audience, a talented group of undergraduate students. It was clear that Jordan had not only had the fortune to work on an exciting new area of physics, but also that he was able to communicate that work in both a clear and enthusiastic way. Later conversations revealed that Jordan had a genuine interest in teaching as well as research. When it was clear we would need to hire an extra laboratory instructor, we approached Jordan about teaching a section for us, while he was still working on his postdoctoral research at Caltech. It would have been much easier for him to decline our offer and work on his research, but Jordan showed a strong initiative and desire to teach in our undergraduate program.

As laboratory coordinator I prepared materials for all the lab sections, and reviewed them with the other instructors. Jordan always had helpful suggestions on how to improve the laboratories. He spent his time in laboratory actively engaging students and in contrast to many guest instructors, it was clear that the students genuinely enjoyed and appreciated his guidance. This is borne out by the student surveys I collected at the end of the term. All but one of his students gave Jordan the highest mark possible in an evaluation of the effectiveness of their laboratory instructor (the other student gave him the second highest ranking.) One student even explicitly wrote in the margin of the form, "*Dr. Gerton is great! Hire him again, he was very enthusiastic about the labs and laid back at the same time.*" In fact, we did try to hire Jordan again this past year, but the time demands of his research were unable to accommodate our schedule. I should note that Jordan's popularity was not limited to the students he taught here. Both the faculty and staff in our department enjoyed working with Jordan during this period.

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While I am confident that you will have other letters that comment on Jordan's research, allow me to make the following observations. Biophysics techniques are becoming increasingly important as an area of applied physics. My own research makes extensive use of scanned probe systems and carbon nanotubes, and my colleague here is one of many physics researchers working with laser tweezers to study biophysical systems. Jordan's work includes the development of hybrid systems that combine non-linear optical effects with scanned probe techniques. Not only is this a very exciting research area, but I should emphasize that it is very feasible to build up such systems in a reasonably short period of time. While my own department is currently not looking for a new hire, I know that we would be enthusiastic about hiring Jordan for a tenure track position based on both his teaching and his research. I strongly encourage you to give him serious consideration in your own search.

If there is any way I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone or electronic mail.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David M. Tanenbaum". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

David M. Tanenbaum