BRIGHAM AND WOMEN'S HOSPITAL

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

December 17, 2003

Dear Biocomplexity Faculty Search Committee:

I am very pleased to provide this letter in support of the application of Dr. Patrick Burgon for a position at the Biocomplexity Institute at Indiana University. I have known Patrick for more than five years, ever since he came to the laboratory of the late Dr. Eva Neer for his postdoctoral fellowship. My lab shared joint lab meetings with Dr. Neer's group, and I got to know Patrick well. Patrick and I continued to maintain a close relationship after he went to the Seidman lab following the death of Dr. Neer. I would rank Patrick Burgon in the top 5% of postdoctoral research fellows I have come to know well in more than a decade on the faculty of this institution.

As you will note from his CV, Patrick has a solid academic background, dating from his graduate work in his native Australia, where his thesis work on LH and FSH led to some interesting findings published in first-rank journals. Patrick then came to the US for a postdoctoral fellowship in the laboratory of Dr. Ernie Peralta in the Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology at Harvard University. About a year after Patrick came to Harvard, Dr. Peralta died of a brain tumor, and Patrick joined the laboratory of Dr. Eva Neer to complete the projects he had started on G protein signaling and to embark on new studies with Dr. Neer. About a year later, Dr. Neer died of breast cancer and Patrick joined the laboratory of Drs. Jon and Christine Seidman, who remain in good health at Harvard Medical School. From Patrick's tenure in the Peralta lab, he was first author on an important paper published in JBC that documented the phosphorylation and nuclear translocation of the signaling protein RGS10. Other projects in the Peralta and Neer time were truncated by the untimely demise of his mentors, which serves to explain Patrick's relatively lower research productivity during his early postdoctoral years.

Patrick's very solid training in protein biochemistry and signal transduction, forged during his tenure with Drs. Peralta and Neer, serves as the foundation for his current and planned work in the regulation of cardiac myocyte signaling pathways in cardiomyopathy. Patrick also has learned a great deal about molecular genetics and myocardial development/remodeling from his years in the Seidman lab. He has consistently brought rigor, focus, energy and creativity to his work. His principal projects in the Seidman lab are just now coming to fruition. His discoveries on the role of lamin A/C and MyBPC have provided important new insights into the control on cardiac myocyte differentiation and development, and these findings have the potential to identify new pathways for the development of cardiomyopathy. Indeed, I feel that Patrick's background in biochemistry, cardiac myocyte biology and

in animal models of cardiomyopathy form a strong basis predictive of his success in pursuing his independent research career. He is fully ready to head off on his own, and I anticipate that his independent research program will be highly successful.

I have also been involved in mentoring Patrick's teaching as well as research interests. Patrick is an exceptional teacher, a fact that is affirmed by his selection as head teaching fellow for Harvard's principal undergraduate course in biochemistry. He also has worked closely with individual undergraduate students as a member of the Board of Tutors in Biochemical Sciences at Harvard College. Lucid, engaged and effective, Patrick brings his exceptional intelligence, warmth, and high personal standards to his interactions with students in groups both large and small. Of all the postdoctoral fellows I have ever known at Harvard, Patrick stands at the very pinnacle as the most effective, committed and skilled teacher of this select group.

Patrick would be a wonderful addition to your junior faculty, a mature and thoughtful young scientist with exceptional skills as an investigator and mentor. He is the "complete package" of creative researcher and committed teacher, ready to take on the challenges of an academic career in experimental biology. I recommend him with the greatest possible enthusiasm and without reservation. Please do not hesitate to contact me if I may provide additional information.

Sincerely,

Janine Chalk for Dr Thomas Michel

Thomas Michel, MD, PhD