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January 16, 2004

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

Dear Professor de Ruyter van Steveninck ,

I write to recommend Dr. Felicia Pitici to you as a candidate for a faculty position in your Department. I got to know Dr. Pitici when she enrolled in several of my courses as a doctoral student at the Mount Sinai School of Medicine. We met occasionally thereafter to discuss her work and her many interests in computational biology. I have had similar infrequent contacts with her throughout her time at Wesleyan. This has allowed me to follow her progress, even though I am not an expert in her precise areas of interest. These interactions form the basis for my assessments of her scientific interests, her mathematical and computational abilities, and her general qualifications for a faculty position.

Ms. Pitici's expertise lies in the application of computational methods to the prediction of protein folding and dynamics. She is a very strong computational scientist, with a solid background in the underlying physics and mathematics relevant to the molecular simulations she performs. I cannot provide an informed assessment of the originality of her specific contributions to protein folding, as I am not familiar enough with that research area to judge. I expect that Harel Weinstein, her thesis advisor, and David Beveridge, her postdoctoral mentor, will be able to provide more informed evaluations of the details of her work.

Dr. Pitici is a dedicated, very hard working scientist. She also is quite friendly and personable, in a quiet way.

If I were seeking an Assistant Professor working in this area, my experience of Dr. Pitici would make me regard her as a potentially very attractive candidate, certainly worthy of further careful evaluation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Craig J. Benham".

Craig J. Benham
Associate Director
UC Davis Genome Center and Bioinformatics Program