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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

Dec. 29, 2003

Dear Colleagues,

I am writing on behalf of Dr. Felicia Pitici who applied for a faculty position in your Department. During her graduate studies, as the Director of the Molecular Modeling Core, I was in intermittent contact with her work, helping her in both technical and scientific matters on several occasions. I was also a member of her thesis examination committee.

She chose a project that was tackled unsuccessfully before her by a few postdoctoral fellows and stuck with it. Here she was helped by her industriousness and tenacity. Running the number of large simulations presented in her thesis itself implies a fair amount of skills in computational and theoretical biophysics, but these are, of course, basic skills. The arena where a simulator can distinguish herself nowadays is the analysis of the simulations and this was exactly the strength of Felicia's work: she applied both harmonic and quasi-harmonic analysis to detect concerted motions in the proteins, leading to an interesting hypothesis of autoinhibition. For this project she did not limit herself to run 'canned' programs, but also resorted to write programs on her own.

Her physics and mathematics background was above the average graduate students'. Her English is very good – the presentations she made were always clear. She also was able to maintain a cordial relationship with her peers. I believe that one can conclude from this that she would be a good teacher.

Hoping that my comments will help you reaching a favorable decision on her application, I am

sincerely yours:

Mihaly Mezei, Ph.D.
Associate Professor