



Québec, 13 January 2004

Professor Rob de Ruyter van Steveninck
Biocomplexity Faculty Search Committee
Biocomplexity Institute
Indiana University
Swain Hall West 117
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USA

Re: Letter of recommendation for Dr. Eric E. Snyder

Dear:

It is my pleasure to write in support of Dr. Eric E. Snyder for a position at the Biocomplexity Institute at Indiana University. I have known Dr. Snyder since 2000, when we were both in the Human Genomics Laboratory at the Pennington Biomedical Research Center (PBRC), Louisiana State University. Since I have moved at the Université Laval in April 2001, I still collaborate with him on several projects involving mainly functional genomics and bioinformatics.

I met Dr. Snyder when he was collaborating closely with Dr. Claude Bouchard, Professor and Executive Director of the Center, on the positional cloning of obesity QTLs using genetic material from the Quebec Family Study. He was responsible for the majority of the data analyses on the project, as well as supervising SNP genotyping, sequencing and mutation detection. Dr. Snyder has quite improved the integration of the genomic data from the different public databases and our genomic markers for the genomic scan analyses. His experience and knowledge of the positional cloning process from Sequana Therapeutics was essential for making progress towards identifying genes associated with this genetically complex, multi-factorial disease.

Undoubtedly, Dr. Snyder's most important contribution was in bringing bioinformatics to the Pennington Center. Previously to his arrival, we had practically no UNIX computers and only the most basic PC-based analytical tools. Eric organized the purchase of a Silicon Graphics server and set up essential services such as BLAST, etc. He also set up databases to keep track of physical and genetic maps, gene sequences and literature in support of the positional cloning projects. He was very generous with his time for anyone with a computer problem in the Research Center, particularly if it involved analyzing DNA sequences.

It was a result of willingness to set aside time for other people's problems that our first collaboration began. I was performing the Serial Analysis of Gene Expression (SAGE) method for my research on physical fitness at PBRC. However, due to our limited computing resources, I was forced to manipulate my sequence data using a word processor. It was very time consuming and ineffective. One day, Eric saw me doing this on the computer and asked about the project. This led to several conversations during which we discussed the SAGE strategy and how to process the raw

sequence data to tabulate transcript abundance. Within a week, he made a program doing the basics and in a month it was ready for use. Over the next 6 months or so, we refined the program to calculate statistics and identify transcripts by name. The program, called SAGEparser, has become an essential tool in my research and was the first public-domain program available for this purpose. I was quite impressed to observe how perfectly Eric understood the complex SAGE strategy in order to identify each critical step and information to produce so quickly an effective program. This is representative of the exceptional aptitude of Dr. Snyder for the research, his cleverness, his facility to resolve problems and his excellent knowledge of bioinformatics as well as molecular biology.

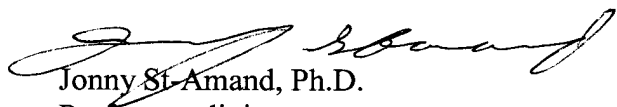
Eric Snyder has remarkable breadth and depth of knowledge. He has a thorough knowledge of molecular biology and great practical experience in working with computers and developing software. With his SAGEparser program, I have observed the power of this combination. Indeed, his program could analyze my data in less than one minute. Otherwise, it would have taken several months.

At the PBRC, he participates assiduously in our seminar and laboratory meeting in which he made excellent presentations, both visually and intellectually. He has always had very constructive and clever comments and does not hesitate to share his original ideas. His excellent oral presentation at the SAGE meeting 2000 was well received.

You will find him as a person who is very eager to learn, willing to work long hours and who is extremely motivated. I am sure that he would do everything necessary to establish a new research program and ensure that it becomes a success. Dr. Snyder is a very friendly and sympathetic individual with whom it is always a pleasure to work. It is obvious that research and teaching are a passion for him. He would be a great asset to any department, particularly one with a bioinformatics program and/or faculty that are enthusiastic about embracing computational biology. I highly recommend, without reservation, this exceptional candidate.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you wish further details.

Sincerely,



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