



To Whom It May Concern:

I am the head of Chemistry at Fairmont University with a joint appointment in the Department of Earth and Ocean Sciences. My research focuses on the isolation and structure elucidation of novel organic metabolites produced by marine organisms.

I am truly enthused about recommending Marc Bellingham for medical studies. For nearly a year, I have had the great pleasure of supervising Marc Bellingham's work in my laboratory. He took the position of student intern in my laboratory in order to gain research experience in natural-product chemistry, and over the past ten months, he has made many valuable contributions to our laboratory.

Marc has been impressive with his independent work as well as his ability to integrate himself into our interdisciplinary research team. A few days after joining our lab, I asked him to give a presentation to some of our collaborating colleagues in the chemistry department about bioprospecting and the properties of *Flabellina gracilis*, the aeolid nudibranch that our lab has been studying. He did an excellent job researching the materials, preparing the PowerPoint slides, and giving an informative presentation on intervertebral biology and ethical bioharvesting to our chemistry colleagues. Marc has become an integral member of our biochemistry studies team, playing a vital role from the beginning of a study to its conclusion. Some of our studies focus on defensive metabolites found in the skin extracts of nudibranchs, and I have assigned Marc to assist the researchers in my lab who are focused on using stable isotope methodology to study the *de novo* biosynthesis of terpenoid and polyketide metabolites. Marc helps prepare the *F. gracilis* specimens by feeding the nudibranchs their appropriate precursors, on a regimented daily schedule, via syringe injection through their dorsum into the hepatopancreas. He is also responsible for generating and harvesting skin extracts by immersing the nudibranchs in methanol, and partitioning the specimens by solubility in various reagents for the different research projects. Lastly, he analyzes the fractionation of the ethyl acetate-soluble materials in preparation for loading into the chromatography fixtures.

Marc regularly works alongside our chemistry expert, Dr. Harold Korvasian, and my visiting scholar, oceanographer Dr. Alice Sung. Marc has helped to streamline many of our lab protocols by conducting background literature reviews and actively involves himself in the planning and discussion meetings with Drs. Korvasian and Sung. He has shown initiative by studying biochemistry and marine biology texts in order to understand his lab assignments and to be more effective in his work. I believe Marc's ability to work efficiently and independently arises from his aptitude and enthusiasm for new challenges, which will serve him well in his future career.

From the start, Marc showed his eagerness for learning by carefully observing Dr. Korvasian