Dear Professor Lopez:

I am writing this letter on behalf of Dr. John Smith, in support of his application to your postdoctoral fellowship at Lab U. I have had the privilege of interacting, collaborating, supporting, and mentoring Dr. Smith while he was a graduate student at University College School, and seen him blossom into a promising young scientist. I have truly found it fulfilling to have such a skilled, reliable, and intelligent scientist like Dr. Smith as part of my research group over the past 5.5 years.

Coming out of undergrad with a background in environmental science, Dr. Smith came to University College School knowing very little about Earth’s upper atmosphere. But, I have seen Dr. Smith grow over the last 5.5 years into a skilled and quite accomplished physicist, whom any Postdoctoral program would be lucky to have. Dr. Smith quality of work has and continues to be outstanding, and his ability to work cooperatively and supportively with other students and professors has been top-notch. Dr. Smith just recently defended his dissertation entitled “Tropospheric Weather and Space Weather … Not so Different After All?”, to which his committee and colleagues in our department gave glowing reviews. I know what it is like being a first-generation college and graduate student so for Dr. Smith to really excel here at University College School is a true testament to his resolve.

Dr. Smith academic and research record speaks for itself and is one of a talented researcher. During his tenure here at University College School, he published 3 first-authored peer review journal papers, and 2 as second or third author. He also presented his work at numerous national and international meetings, receiving an award for one such oral presentation (the “Society Award for Outstanding Graduate Student Presentations”). He also has been a teaching assistant in two different undergraduate courses including *The Physics of Upper Atmospheres* and *Fluid Mechanics*, in both of which he graded homework assignments, proctored exams, held office hours (which I am told the students found particularly useful), and gave lectures. My colleagues and I were impressed by his rapport with the students, who commented positively on his lectures in their end-of-term reviews. He has also taken a leadership role in the community by serving on a number of committees, most notably the diversity, equity, and inclusion committee here in our department. Lastly, he has actively mentored undergraduate students through a number of different programs here on campus, which I have found particularly impressive. His dedication to mentoring undergraduate students, coupled with his other service activities and outstanding academic acumen, speaks directly to Dr. Smith’s high scientific standards and respect for others.

Dr. Smith is a brilliant computer programmer who is proficient in several useful languages, including Fortran and Python, which has allowed him to quickly transition between research projects within my group. He was an important contributor to my research group and easily balanced conflicting proposal, research, and/or coursework deadlines, to the point that he assisted others in our group at “crunch time.” For example, another graduate student of mine and colleague of Dr. Smith was really struggling with completing a NSF Graduate Research Fellowship application, of which Dr. Smith was a recipient of. I personally watched Dr. Smith sit with his colleague for an hour or two every day for the better part of month helping him with preparing his application. This student made a point to come and speak with me how fortunate he was to have the assistance of Dr. Smith and stated “I would not have submitted a successful application without his (Dr. Smith’s) help.”

To summarize Dr. Smith is an excellent scientific researcher with the programming and teaching talent to succeed in your Postdoctoral fellowship. Furthermore, the things Dr. Smith has overcome to excel here at University College School are nothing short of remarkable. All of these things coupled with his research acumen make him a rare individual, and an asset to any research group. He is independent researcher who is confident, hardworking, and humble. Your institution would be lucky to have, and I know he will benefit from and make the best use of the opportunity afforded by this Postdoctoral fellowship, if offered the opportunity. Please feel free to contact me with any additional questions.

Respectfully,

Professor Jones

University College School