



## INDIANA UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF MEDICAL AND MOLECULAR GENETICS

School of Medicine

November 26, 2012

Roberta B. Ness, M.D., M.P.H.  
Dean and M. David Low Chair in Public Health  
The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston  
1200 Hermann Pressler Street  
Houston, TX 77030

Dear Dr. Ness:

I am delighted to provide this letter in support of Dr. Myriam Fornage's application for promotion from Associate Professor to Professor at the University of Texas Health Sciences Center. I have known Dr. Fornage professionally for several years, primarily through our joint service on the National Institutes of Health (NIH), Genetics of Health and Disease Center Scientific Review (CSR) review panel. In addition, Dr. Fornage was a coauthor with me on a paper that was recently accepted for publication.

In reviewing Dr. Fornage's curriculum vitae as well as her personal statement it is clear that she has developed a mature research program focused on neurogenetics and neuroepidemiology. Her focus overall has been to develop and utilize novel brain imaging phenotypes for genetic studies – with the goal of understanding the risk factors contributing to stroke as well as brain aging. Her research has been well received both in terms of grant support, which is substantial, as well as manuscripts, which have also been published in top tier journals. Her research is absolutely cutting edge and has successfully utilized all emerging genetic technologies to their fullest. She is creative in her use of genetics and phenotypes. Another mark of Dr. Fornage's success is the number of collaborations she has developed across different research areas, which have also resulted in additional grant support as well as publications. In this era of collaborative research – these are critical metrics of success and by all measures, Dr. Fornage has been highly successful.

Dr. Fornage has also been sought out as a seminar speaker and has presented at numerous national and international conferences. She has also been a part of several national expert committees focusing on genetics and in many cases stroke phenotypes. Again, these are all clear indications of the high regard of the scientific community and the success of her own research program.

On a personal note, I sought out a collaboration with Dr. Fornage as well as her colleague Dr. Tom Mosley several years ago. I am the geneticist on a large study focusing on intracranial aneurysms and we were seeking to collaborate with the ARIC

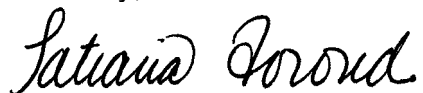
study investigators to identify a set of controls for our studies. Dr. Fornage was our key collaborator and she was extremely helpful and collegial. She assisted us in better understanding key aspects of the ARIC study design and then provided helpful feedback in our interpretation of analytic results and the drafting of the resulting manuscript, which has now been accepted for publication.

The requirements for promotion to Professor typically require that a researcher also provide both service and teaching as key elements of their scholarship and their contributions back to the scientific community. Dr. Fornage has been quite successful in both of these areas as well. She has mentored students who have been quite successful in terms of their publications during their training with her. She has also served on committees and provided lectures as well as full courses as part of her teaching mission. Her service has also been exemplary – and as one might expect at her level and with her reputation – includes substantial national as well as international components. These are all clear measures of the value placed on her scientific abilities as well as her willingness to provide this service.

I'd again like to comment on my experience of Dr. Fornage's service. I was the chair of the Genetics of Health and Disease CSR review panel for two years (2010-2012). During that time, Dr. Fornage came as an ad hoc member to the panel and then was nominated to serve a term as a member. I was impressed by Dr. Fornage's thorough reviews. She came very well prepared to discuss her grants and also provided key input during the discussion of other grants for which she was not a reviewer. She was always fair and balanced and was a very effective member of the panel. In seeing her service on this panel, I am not at all surprised to see that she serves on an American Heart Association review panel and was asked to serve on the Swedish equivalent of an NIH panel.

In summary, I believe Dr. Fornage is an outstanding candidate for promotion to Professor. While I do not serve on our university's promotion and tenure committee, I do serve on the committee for our departmental review. Dr. Fornage would exceed our typical expectations of research, service and teaching. She is a leader in her field and clearly has a bright future ahead of her. I give you my strongest support for her promotion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Tatiana Foroud". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tatiana" and last name "Foroud" clearly distinguishable.

Tatiana Foroud, Ph.D.

Chancellor's Professor

P. Michael Conneally Professor of Medical and Molecular Genetics

Director, Division of Hereditary Genomics