



DUKE center for
HUMAN GENETICS

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter of recommendation to support Clayton Thomas. Clayton worked for me as a Research Technician in the Center for Human Genetics of the Duke University Medical Center during the summer of 2003. During that time, Clayton was involved in our investigations into the etiology of Primary Open Angle Glaucoma (POAG) and Alzheimer disease. His contribution to the glaucoma project included the DNA sequencing of candidate genes within linkage intervals. Clayton used PCR to amplify coding sequences from the genomic DNA of glaucoma patients, and then determined their DNA sequence using a capillary electrophoresis system. He then compared the gene sequences of patients and controls in order to identify any variants that could be linked to disease. Although none of the specific genes that Clayton sequenced turned out to be involved in disease pathology, Clayton's work on this project was excellent. He was very productive and efficient with his time in the lab, and the quality of his work was very high. Clayton kept good records of his labwork so that we can easily refer back to his findings.

Clayton was also involved in a second research project during his time in the lab. This project was focused on characterizing gene expression patterns in the hippocampus of patients with Alzheimer disease. The hippocampus is a region of the brain that plays a critical role in the Alzheimer disease process, so understanding the gene expressed in this tissue may help provide clues to the underlying causes of disease. Clayton's responsibilities on this project included the organization and selection of thousands of clones that were part of a Serial Analysis of Gene Expression (SAGE) library. Because of the numbers of clones involved, organization and record-keeping are critically important. Again, Clayton's work on this project was of very high quality, and he made a real contribution to the success of this work.

Finally, I would like to comment on Clayton's work ethic. He was originally hired to work on the glaucoma project only, and it was his own initiative and enthusiasm that led to his involvement in the Alzheimer disease project. Clayton was always very anxious to be involved in ongoing projects and was not happy unless he had plenty of work to do. This enthusiasm and sense of purpose will ensure that Clayton excels at any job that he undertakes.

Sincerely,