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|  | Howard Center for Investigative Journalism  Philip Merrill College of Journalism  3100 Knight Hall  College Park, Maryland 20742-8227  Twitter: @HowardCenterUMD |

Dear Chris Vachon:

I write in support of Luciana Perez-Uribe’s application for an IRE scholarship. I have had the pleasure of working for the past six month with Luciana at the University of Maryland Philip Merrill College of Journalism, where I teach data journalism and run the data desk for the Howard Center for Investigative Journalism.

As a student in my data journalism course and as a reporting fellow at the Howard Center, Luciana has shown me that she is a capable, dedicated journalist with a strong interest in using data to find and tell stories of local and national import. Here’s why I love working with her:

* She’s whip smart.
* She’s a problem solver. She knows when to ask for help, but also how to figure out how to fight through an obstacle, whether it’s a thorny coding problem or get data from a reluctant government agency.
* She has a commitment to accuracy and fairness, allowing me to put great trust in her work.
* She’s an eager learner, always trying to add another tool to her toolbox.
* She’s great at community building, helping her colleagues get better.

As an active attendee and teacher at NICAR conferences, I know she would benefit from tapping into the welcoming IRE/NICAR community. I hope you’ll give her strong consideration for a scholarship.

Best,

Sean Mussenden

Data Editor

Howard Center for Investigative Journalism