Dear Hiring Committee,

I am submitting this letter of recommendation for Dilip Nikhil Francies. Dilip currently serves as a data analyst intern in the Research & Analytics Division of the Office of Institutional Analytics at Indiana University. Our unit is responsible for providing actionable research and advanced analytics in support of Indiana University's mission. During his studies as a master's student and his continued work as an intern on our team, he has made significant contributions to core projects, providing analytical insights that improve instruction and inform policies with the goal of enhancing student success. I believe he would be an ideal candidate and a valuable addition to your organization.

We post several internships each year in our unit, and these positions usually attract hundreds of applicants from graduate students in the fields of computer science and data science. Thus, finding a standout candidate can be a challenge. However, from the beginning, Dilip's application materials and interview performance signaled an obvious hiring choice. In addition to his academic and professional achievements and his technical skillset, he is extremely articulate and passionate about making a difference with data science. This passion, along with his performance in several team projects (described below), motivated the team to renew his internship for a second year while he finishes his studies.

One team project involved building an ensemble of machine learning models to predict student retention. He also developed a comprehensive analytics strategy to extract actionable information from the models, using Shapley values, variable importance plots, and permutation importance—methods and visualizations that highlight how models make decisions. These insights contributed to the university's understanding of which variables most impact student retention. He has also participated in statistical analysis projects to cluster and identify courses that are particularly problematic for students, highlighting potential focus areas for the campus. These projects have served not only an internal audience at the university but also an international audience. For example, Dilip participated in a group presentation at the Learning Analytics in Practice Conference (sponsored by an international learning analytics organization) that showcased the team's work related to variable importance.

Finally, Dilip has the qualities of a lifelong learner and is extremely diligent and conscientious. As the field of data science and artificial intelligence continues to evolve, organizations will need independent, detail-oriented staff who can solve problems and stay at the forefront of the latest technologies and trends. Dilip possesses these qualities and will contribute positively to your company's long-term goals and innovation strategies.

Thank you for considering Dilip for a position in your organization. I have included my contact information in this document. Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions or if I can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Gina Marie Deom

Gina Deom
Lead Data Scientist
Institutional Analytics (IA)
Cyberinfrastructure Building
2709 E 10th St
Bloomington, IN 47408
812-855-5371
gdeom@iu.edu
https://iuia.iu.edu

INDIANA UNIVERSITY