

February 25, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

I most strongly recommend Katie Chung for the NSF REU program.

Katie joined my group when I started as a faculty member at UCLA in the fall, and this is my second quarter advising her in research. During this time, she has demonstrated **an initiative for independent learning** and **a commitment to creating a vibrant lab culture**. I am enthusiastic to write this letter of recommendation.

Katie actively seeks out opportunities to develop her skills and contribute in meaningful ways. As an introduction to research, I compiled a reading list of recent HCI papers at ACM UIST and CHI for Katie to read and discuss with me weekly. In the second week, I asked her to augment the list with additional papers she found and wanted to read. Over the quarter, she **synthesized and presented a brief literature review** on six papers related to creativity support tools and artificial intelligence, entitled "An HCI Literature Review on Automation." Her abstract reads:

"As a result of AI, automation has entered a new era of development, with the capacity to automate complex processes unlike anything the history of humanity has seen before. With AI becoming more prevalent in the HCI research field, I want to explore when, how much, and why automation should be used."

Her abstract captures **her curiosity in HCI broadly and more specifically on the role of AI in society, creativity support, and ethics**. Furthermore, while Katie was finding her footing with reading research papers, Katie applied her artistic abilities to **create the lab logo**, iterating on it over a few weeks based on feedback from the lab and me. Finally, it was Katie who thought to apply to REU programs after talking with a PhD student who was a former REU participant! These examples demonstrate Katie's intrinsic motivation and proactivity, an energy she will bring to any project this summer.

In addition, Katie has helped foster a friendly environment in the lab. On a weekly basis, Katie **actively participates in lab meetings and lab hackathons**. When others present, Katie **asks questions and follows up over Slack with feedback or ideas**. In discussions, Katie brings in relevant current events, what she is learning in her courses, and her other extracurricular activities. Further adding to the positive lab culture, Katie is currently helping me design lab-branded mugs and stickers. It is easy to see why a **PhD student noted last quarter that Katie's participation noticeably strengthened the**

lab's sense of community.

Above all, Katie is **eager to learn, engage others, and apply her growing skillset to contribute meaningfully to a lab.** I am excited to see how she continues to grow as a researcher through an REU this summer. Based on her commitment to learn and try new things, I am confident she will make the most of any opportunity, contribute positively, and take the entire experience in stride as she continues in her undergraduate (and hopefully graduate) journey!

Please do not hesitate to contact me about anything.

Sincerely,



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