

23 May 2021

Re: Recommendation letter for Katia Goldberg

Dear Dean Keith Simonton Prize for Creativity in Undergraduate Research selection committee:

I am writing to enthusiastically recommend Katia Goldberg for the Dean Keith Simonton Prize for Creativity in Undergraduate Research. I am currently mentoring her as she carries out an independent research project funded by the Lloyd W. Swift Endowment Fund, and I have been consistently impressed by her persistent enthusiasm, even in the face of difficult field conditions, her curiosity about the natural world, and her initiative and creativity in proposing improvements to the project. I am confident that any project she leads will benefit immensely from these qualities.

Katia is a third-year student at UC Davis but has already gained considerable field experience, including internationally, in South Africa. This spring and summer, as my mentee, she is demonstrating that her experience has translated into competence. She is leading a project that investigates how land use and climate affect the internal temperature of bird nest boxes, and how that affects the growth of bird nestlings. She has been punctual, resilient to change, and detail oriented. Perhaps more importantly, she has demonstrated creativity and initiative. As she learns more, she has more and better questions, and these questions have led to beneficial adjustments of the project. Her compassion for birds and other non-humans is inspiring and leads her to ask questions that might be inaccessible to people with a more anthropocentric mindset. In my opinion, this process is the root of scientific inquiry, and it is her natural state.

Katia has made an excellent start to a promising career. Furthermore, she is committed to creating knowledge that will sustain biodiversity through climate and land use change. With the opportunity afforded her by the Dean Keith Simonton Prize, I am confident that she will contribute creative, adaptive, and impactful science to the field of wildlife management.

Please feel free to contact me for further details or information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'K Lauck', written in a cursive style.

Katherine Lauck
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