

January 20, 2021

Mathematical and Statistical Sciences
Clemson University
220 Parkway Drive
Clemson, SC 29631

Dear Committee:

My name is Jim Coykendall, and I am a Professor of Mathematics at Clemson University, and I am writing to you to recommend Killian Davis for your REU (Research Experience for Undergraduates) program.

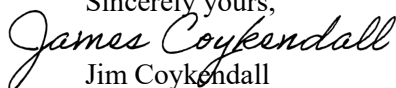
Although last semester was the first that I had Killian Davis in one of my classes (Abstract Algebra I), I have known Killian since he was a freshman at Clemson University. As the undergraduate advisor for Clemson University's Math Club, I saw Killian on an almost weekly basis from the time he entered Clemson. This is one of the evidences of Killian's many strengths; he is genuinely interested and actively pursues learning across the entire spectrum of the mathematical sciences. Almost from my initial meeting, I realized that Killian was a student to covet. He was equipped with drive, ambition, and much raw talent, and I looked forward to having him as a student.

Last semester (fall 2020) I was finally able to have Killian as a student, and although my expectations were high, they were nevertheless exceeded. Killian was the top student in the class in all almost all metrics of performance. His homework was the most independent, innovative, and accurate; Killian occupied his own tier in the class above the others. To add more insight to this, I know that Killian essentially works alone when it comes to what he submits. This is not to say that Killian does not work with others; his prowess attracts folks to him, but in this theater he functions more as a TA/tutor than a peer to his colleagues. I also looked forward to grading his solutions because not only were they almost always correct and complete, but also they were often creative and sometimes different from the standard solution. Additionally, his communication is always so clear that when there is a deficiency (which is uncommon), it is easy to spot and to correct (and he often identifies the "holes" himself). In short, his maturity and ability made it a joy to have him as a student.

Beyond my class, Killian has amassed a collection of research experiences as well as working for our department both as a teaching assistant (and he served on the search committee for our founding director). I see him as sort of an "heir apparent" to Sylvia Wu (who I think might be our most naturally talented graduating student). I have already begun working on Killian to grade for me next year! I recommend him to you most highly.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely yours,



Jim Coykendall
Professor of Mathematics
School of Mathematical Sciences

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