Blake Perry Smith

1175 Ash Avenue

Provo, UT 84604

March 6, 2018

Alan Harker

Trustee

Dear Mr. Harker,

Thank you so much for your generous contribution towards this mentored research project.

I am a linguistics undergraduate student here at BYU, and my passion is exploring the intersection of language and technology. I also study Mandarin Chinese. Specifically, I hope to one day be involved with advancing state-of-the-art technology in fields such as machine translation. My intention is to combine language ability with technical competence and knowledge of linguistic theory to allow the free flow of ideas between people of substantially different backgrounds.

Chinese in its written form, whether penned or typed, does not separate its words by spaces. The project at hand involves a quest to improve the quality of automatic deciphering of those word boundaries. High quality segmentation is crucial for downstream computational tasks such as translation.

Having research experience at this stage in my academic career will function as springboard into further research at the graduate level. Your funding enables the possibility of presenting this project at a conference in the field. I have been able to work one-on-one with Dr. Robert Reynolds for this project, and in doing so I have been exposed to the kind of mentorship that is usually only reserved for graduate study. It has been a remarkable learning experience already.

I so appreciate your contribution,

Blake Perry Smith

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Dr. Robert Reynolds

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