



Department of Biological Sciences

15 March 2025

Spring 2025 Make your Mark Scholarship
Lewer Mark International Student Health Insurance
9900 West 109th St. Suite 200
Overland Park, Kansas

Dear selection committee,

With great pleasure I support PhD student Karthik Thrikkadeeri's application for Spring 2025 Make your Mark Scholarship. Karthik is a new student at the Tropical Ecology Lab, the research group at Louisiana State University (LSU) that I lead. In the next few paragraphs, I will highlight some of Karthik's history, while addressing his research path and brilliant future, and why he might greatly benefit from this scholarship.

Karthik has completed his BS degree in India, his home country, and his master's degree in Ecology in the Czech Republic. We communicated for a year before he entered LSU, and it was based on these conversations and his strong academic and professional record that I did not hesitate to welcome him into our research group. He has been an exceptional member of our lab, discussing and collaborating with postdoctoral fellows and supporting his peers. Karthik's experiences, especially his work in conservation and scientific communication reveal an individual who works hard, is committed, motivated, and excited about making a difference.

At LSU he was accepted with a 5-year scholarship that provides stipends and tuition. The stipends provided by this fellowship, however, are very limiting and do not cover living expenses during summer months. These limitations translate into economic hardships faced by students, particularly international students, that represent a disadvantage to reaching their full potential in Graduate School. That is why I believe Karthik is an ideal candidate for the support you offer; he is not only a rising star in ecological sciences, but a human devoted to the arts -evident by his passion for poetry- and science communication. For all this, I strongly support his application to the Make your Mark Scholarship, and hope this financial aid might help him reduce some of the hardships of pursuing Graduate school abroad.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Flavia A. Montano Centellas'.

Flavia A. Montano Centellas
Assistant Professor
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Louisiana State University
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