

SAMPLE GOLDWATER SCHOLARSHIP RECOMMENDATION



MYTHIC
UNIVERSITY

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November xx, 20xx

During the fall semester of this year, I had the memorably pleasant experience of co-teaching Geosciences 310. This course is a four-credit lecture, lab and field course required of all of our Geosciences majors. My co-instructor and I gave all of the lectures and taught the labs and the seven one-day to weekend field trips. We came, therefore, to know all of the students very well. This past fall's class was unique in that 10 of the 22 students had a cumulative grade point average higher than 3.36 and 4 of the students had an average above 3.70. In my 30 years of undergraduate teaching, I have never been exposed to such an intense, strongly motivated, curious, questioning, and generally bright group of students. What a joy they were to teach!

Janet Lerner was, without a doubt, the superstar of the class. Her final course average was significantly higher than that of her peers. Her lecture notes were something to behold. They were remarkably complete and far better organized than those of my co-instructor or my own. We marveled at how she could listen, analyze, organize and write her notes without missing a word of what we were saying. Because her notes were so complete, her mind so analytical and her memory so "photographic," she had no difficulty with very challenging exams. Many students with good "photographic" minds do well in classroom settings and have more difficulty with laboratory and field experiences, but this was not the case with Janet. She was super in the lab, but what really surprised us was how well she did in the field problems. Janet is an unusually keen observer and has a talent for separating significant from trivial observations. The measured sections, cross-sections, and maps she produced from her field notes were not only highly accurate, but they were almost works of art in the quality of presentation.

The field component of the Geosciences 310 course also served to demonstrate that Janet is not only a fine analytical thinker, but also a good synthesizer. Two of our major field projects involved generating field data, which were pooled and served, in one case, as the data set to interpret the geological development of a stream system through time, and, in the other case, as a data set to mathematically model the response of the Earth's crust to a load in the development of a geologic basin. Janet's reports were the best in the class—lucidly written and well thought out.

Janet possesses exceptional potential to be an outstanding scientist. In years past, I was in charge of the Graduate Program in Geology at Mythic University, and it has enjoyed a high national ranking. In my opinion Janet compares to the best students we have had in our Ph.D. program.

Sincerely yours,

Janet Teacher

Janet Teacher, Professor of Geology