

**Sample Goldwater Scholarship Recommendation**



January xx, 20xx

Mr. John Lerner is one of the most highly motivated students with whom I have ever had the pleasure of working. John is intelligent, hard working, dedicated, consistent, and creative. He will unquestionably become a highly successful engineer in whatever career path he takes. In my more than 10 years of teaching I have literally instructed hundreds of students and dozens in research capacities. Of all of those students, John is clearly the most capable as a chemical engineer. I look for students who have a native intelligence and who are willing to use that intellect to solve research/engineering problems. John is such a student.

John is now working on a design problem in which he needs to apply reasoning, technical material, and creativity in order to get the job done. The project is also on a strict and demanding schedule. His work requires him to interact with professionals outside of Mythic University and to set up tests in the laboratory. John is particularly adept at being able to work between these two worlds while learning more about the science of the project.

An example of John's endeavors is in the selection of an ion permeable membrane for use in an electrophoresis device that must function in the space shuttle. John is responsible for finding and evaluating this material. To do so he needed to read about and understand the safety criteria for shuttle experiments; he also needed to find a material that could withstand sterilization, a bonding agent to hold it down, and the proper molecular weight cutoff for ions passing through the membrane. He has led the way for us in making those selections and dealing with manufacturers and suppliers of different materials. He has also developed a test apparatus that can be used to take samples of membrane material and determine their resistance to ion and buffer flows. He has been almost completely on his own in these efforts with only light guidance from me.

John's actions in the lab speak of his technical maturity and the ability to apply what he has learned to a specific problem. He also has personal maturity, and is always on time and ready to work when he comes to the lab. He also works on the project in his spare time and at home, bringing in with him fresh ideas for the lab that he has worked out in his room.

I can hardly think of a better candidate for this scholarship. Please give him the highest consideration for this award. From my viewpoint he deserves no less.

Sincerely,  
*John Teacher*  
John Teacher  
Associate Professor of Chemical Engineering

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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