

29 November 2024

To the Scholarship Review Committee:

I am writing to recommend that Taia MacEachern be highly considered for the Dr. Delbert Oberteuffer Scholarship. Taia has been an active PhD student in my lab over the past academic year and in the past 6 months, she has taken on a leadership role and mentor to undergraduate research assistants in our lab. She has completed at least 6 credits in her Health Education and Promotion PhD program and currently holds a 4.0 GPA. Her research experience and accomplishments place her among our top 5% of PhD students, which is exceptional. Ms. MacEachern holds a Bachelor's and Master's degree from the University of Western Ontario in Ontario, Canada. Her research interests are an excellent fit for our program of research and tightly align with the mission of FAHE to advance the health education profession with a social justice and equity perspective. Specifically, her research and health education interests focus in health inequalities and disparities pertaining to brain health and concussion education. She is highly organized and her scholarly ability at this stage of her development is outstanding compared to her peers. She is eager to do science and she has independently led projects in our lab that have elevated our health equity and social justice brain health agenda. Over the past year, she has submitted 2 first author manuscripts for publication, she has had 3 original research abstracts accepted for presentation and national and international conferences, one of which she was awarded the Trainee Travel Grant award at the Pediatric Research in Sports Medicine annual meeting. This is a prestigious award given to only 5 individuals out of 70+ applicants.

Ms. MacEachern's accomplishments are superior to most doctoral students in our program and her strong research background are noteworthy. Her exceptional drive and capacity to conduct independent research allow me to push her because I can rely on her to think deeply and drive discovery. Specifically noted is her equitable and creative solutions to conducting studies and willingness to learn new approaches. Over the past 6 months she has become highly involved in community-engaged initiatives within our lab and she has been implementing these practices and methods with patience, kindness and openness.

Taia works well with peers in our lab and she serves as a lab liaison to multiple community partners with which we collaborate for research. She is reliable, a leader among her peers, and trusted by the community. She takes initiative and thinks ahead. This is a huge asset in research and science related to health education where learning how and when to pivot is essential to success. I can trust that she will assist with lab tasks and take on projects assigned to her with diligence and professionalism. She is resourceful and would be a deserving candidate for the Dr. Delbert Oberteuffer Scholarship. Her research aims and goals will greatly impact the public health of those who sustain concussion and her scholarly contributions are already be recognized by the concussion community.

Her passion for research and her previous accomplishments set her apart from other applicants and I believe she will excel even more should she be awarded the Dr. Delbert Oberteuffer Scholarship that will help offset some costs of being a graduate student and international student.

Sincerely,

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