

April 14, 2008

Graduate Chairperson
Graduate Programs
University of Hawai'i at Manoa
1955 East-West Road, Agricultural Science Building 216
Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822

Dear Graduate Chairperson:

Shawn Murakawa has consistently displayed outstanding performance and has progressed to complex and multi-faceted responsibilities while working in my program for the past 15-1/2 years. Her duties include independent decision making and coordination for an array of critical marine turtle research program necessities, both on a short term daily basis and longer term planning. These actions include overseeing and assigning tasks to personnel, recruiting and hiring personnel, coordinating the state-wide sea turtle stranding and rescue network, creating, updating, and analyzing databases, educating the public through outreach forums, coordinating and creating training programs for visiting international biologists, and collaborating with sea turtle veterinarians to conduct and facilitate new research and to ensure the successful completion of on-going projects.

The conduction of work by Shawn Murakawa has consistently exceeded all my expectations in terms of productivity, efficiency, timeliness, and creativity. Shawn is an outstanding, dedicated and exemplary employee, contributing unconditionally to ensure the success of research and project management goals. She independently formulated and accomplished critically important work tasks with extraordinary vigor, vision, and exactness. In doing so, she has become a role model for co-workers, student employees, and volunteers for which she has oversight responsibilities. Her exemplary performance is significantly complemented by a congenial, cooperative and low-keyed, but diplomatically assertive, nature that builds harmony and team spirit in the work place.

Shawn is a pleasant person to work with and she enjoys and seeks out challenging assignments. Her goal to be a professional research biologist is intense and sincere. I am confident that she will do an outstanding job in the graduate program of the Animal Sciences Department at the University of Hawai'i. I express my highest recommendation for her admission.

Sincerely,



George H. Balazs
Zoologist and Leader,
Marine Turtle Research Program

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