



October 22, 2018

To whom it may concern:

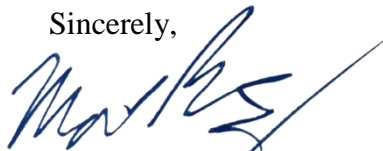
My name is Matthew Ramsey and I am an Assistant Professor in the Department of Cell and Molecular Biology at the University of Rhode Island. It is my pleasure to strongly recommend Eric Almeida's application for a URI Graduate School Enhancement of Graduate Research Award (EGRA).

Eric has been a member of my laboratory for the past two years and is becoming an excellent scientist. This reward would help his research and add to his achievements while he is at URI. I look forward to Eric's excellent work on this project and hope that we can convince you to support it as well.

Eric's work centers on the human oral bacteria *Corynebacterium matruchotii*. This organism is abundant in healthy human hosts and serves to attach to the teeth as well as a wide array of other microbes. In cases where *C. matruchotii* is absent, we typically find stronger correlations with cavities and other oral diseases. Eric's proposal will look at the ability of *C. matruchotii* to bind to other bacterial species and solid surfaces, creating an attached 'biofilm' community. By quantifying biofilm communities between different species, and with loss-of-function mutant *C. matruchotii* strains that Eric has / will generate, we will learn a great deal about how this organism contributes to the maintenance of oral health in humans.

It is my pleasure to give Eric my strongest recommendation for this award and I hope that you will agree.

Sincerely,



Matthew Ramsey  
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