



DUBLIN HIGH SCHOOL

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To Whom It May Concern:

It is my pleasure to very strongly recommend Joshua for your scholarship program. I have had the opportunity to teach him in both my Honors Medical Interventions class and the Biomedical Academy Mentorship program during his junior year. Even before joining my class, Joshua demonstrated his enthusiasm for learning by seeking out information about laboratory research and exploring ways to expand his skills in biomedical science. His proactive mindset, intellectual curiosity, and genuine passion for scientific inquiry have only deepened since then, making him an ideal student for this scholarship.

In the classroom, Joshua consistently demonstrated a strong grasp of complex biological concepts and advanced laboratory techniques. He excelled in topics such as molecular biology, microbiology, and biomedical procedures, including quantitative ELISA, bacterial conjugation, PCR, gel electrophoresis, transformation, protein purification, and SDS-PAGE. His laboratory work was always precise and well-documented, and his data consistently reflected a high level of technical skill and attention to detail. During our bacterial transformation and GFP purification lab, for example, his group's results were used as a model for other class sections due to their clarity and quality. Beyond technical ability, Joshua brings sophisticated reasoning and critical thinking to scientific problems. In our Genetic Engineering Socratic Seminar, Joshua gave nuanced ideas and thoughts that built off of other classmates' ideas and opened up new perspectives to discuss. While his classmates debated whether scientists were crossing the line from curing diseases to creating designer babies, Joshua argued that gene editing was inevitable—not a clear line but a gradient, where small edits would turn into larger ones as gene editing becomes commonplace, ultimately leading to designer babies. Through this discussion, he shifted the conversation to how legislation could slow down the development of designer babies and prevent it from widening the socioeconomic gap. These are just a few examples that demonstrate his deep and sophisticated understanding of each subject put in front of him and his ability to bring new and exciting perspectives to class.

Joshua's collaborative spirit and leadership were equally impressive. Whether working on group labs or leading discussions, Joshua always takes on a leadership role, and he consistently supported his peers, explaining challenging concepts and demonstrating proper techniques to ensure others' success. During our project gallery walk, he effectively communicated his independent research—covering advanced topics such as protein editing and viral transduction—in accessible terms that captured his classmates' interest. His ability to translate complex scientific ideas into clear explanations reflects both his mastery of the material and his dedication to fostering understanding among his peers.

In addition to his leadership in academics, Joshua has shown a passionate commitment to research and scientific discovery. For the past three summers, he has conducted biomedical research at UCSF, where he developed advanced laboratory skills and a deep appreciation for the

scientific process. His dedication was evident when he remained in the lab late into the night on the eve of the school year's start, ensuring his experiments were completed to the highest standard. Joshua's efforts have earned him significant recognition—he is a two-time International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF) Finalist, receiving 3rd and 2nd place Grand Awards in 2024 and 2025, and a two-time National Junior Science and Humanities Symposium (JSHS) finalist, the only student from the Bay Area to achieve this distinction. His achievements reflect not only his technical skill but also his ability to conduct research with purpose and independence.

Equally notable is Joshua's commitment to promoting scientific engagement among his peers. He co-founded a research club at Dublin High School, mentoring fellow students and helping them prepare for science fairs and competitions. Under his guidance, we had around 30 projects with nearly 50 participants that won prizes at the 2025 Alameda County Science and Engineering Fair (ACSEF), the highest number in the entire county. He helped his fellow students become ISEF finalists and win the ISEF Grand Award. During the ISEF competition, he compassionately shared his experiences and co-coached the finalist cohort on designing posters, giving effective presentations, and answering judges' questions. As a result, six of the nine finalists won a Grand Award at ISEF. The Fair Director highly praised his effort. As Co-VP of Mentorship on the ACSEF Student Leadership Board, he has begun his mission to promote the 2026 fair and host 6-week mentorship sessions. His selflessness and commitment to helping others succeed reflect his exemplary leadership and character and have a profound positive impact on communities around him.

I wholeheartedly recommend Joshua for this prestigious scholarship. He is exceptionally prepared for rigorous academic challenges and he is a natural leader who inspires those around him. I have no doubt that he will be a major asset to whichever institution he chooses to attend, as well as a remarkable contributor to the field of research throughout his future career.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Julianne", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Julianne Sundstrom, DVM
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