UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

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**RE: DEPARTMENT LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR RYAN L. MIZNER
TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH SCHOLARS PROGRAM 2018**

Dear Scholars Application Review Committee,

It is with great pleasure that I write this letter of support for Dr. Ryan Mizner in his submission for the Translational Research Scholars Program from ITHS. Dr. Mizner is a key component in the research enterprise of the School of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Science and he pursues his scholarly agenda with an impressive vigor. He has been making excellent progress by obtaining several sources of extramural foundation funding with which he has produced some convincing preliminary data. Ryan is a Montana native who has strong connections with the key clinical partners necessary to pursue his line of research in our rural environment.

I appreciate that the goal of the Translational Research Scholars Program is to develop a diverse group of new investigators in the WWAMI region who are successful in submitting and obtaining R-series funding from the NIH. Dr. Mizner has a strong track record of peer-reviewed publications that are indexed in PubMed. Currently, he has 5 manuscripts in review that have been well-received and point toward acceptance for publication. His manuscripts have already surpassed 3000 citations which speaks to how well his work is received by peers in his field. Dr. Mizner asks clinically relevant research questions within the field of orthopedics and rehabilitation medicine that have clear translational relevance to patient care. In short, he has all the necessary components in place to achieve his goal of R-series funding with the exception of a strong primary mentor on the UM campus. Ryan and I have discussed this issue and are confident that the Scholars program is an ideal fit to meet his needs for further growth. Ryan has identified an exceptional mentor in Dr. Jennifer Stevens-Laplsey at the University of Colorado. She has an impressive record of NIH extramural funding, and impressive publication record, and is an award winning research mentor that matches Ryan's interests and research methodology.

I believe the WWAMI region is in dire need of clinical scientists beyond those found in close proximity to Seattle and I'm so pleased to see the Translational Research Scholars Program working to address that need. Dr. Mizner consistently demonstrates personal and strong dedication to Montana. I believe this Scholars Program can go a long way to removing the barriers that limit his success associated with working in this region of the country.

I have read and endorse the budget and research plan in Dr. Mizner's grant proposal. I can attest to the fact that we have the necessary facilities, software, equipment, and resources to complete the proposed project. His career development is supported by and integrated into the education and research goals of the School and the College. His success in his scholarly pursuits is a key part of how I envision the School continuing to grow. I understand that the proposed dates of the award include one year from March 1, 2018 – Feb 28, 2019. I am personally committed to support his efforts to pursue his research agenda. **If he is selected as a Scholar, I agree to 15% effort of release time for Dr. Mizner to complete the activities detailed in his application**. I believe this will be an outstanding investment for our School which will pay out with extramural R-level funding for many years to come.

I encourage you to take advantage of the opportunity from his application to add him into your incoming cohort of Scholars.

Sincerely,

Anita M. Santasier, PT, PhD, OCS
Chair and Associate Professor
School of Physical Therapy and Rehabilitation Science