



College of
**EDUCATION, HEALTH &
HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

October 29, 2017

Dear Colleagues:

I enthusiastically look forward to serving as a primary mentor for James Becker to help him become a successful clinical trial researcher. With this resubmission, Dr. Becker demonstrates his commitment to the research and his responsiveness to reviewer input. I completed my PhD in Exercise Science at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst in 1996, and subsequently completed three years of post-doctoral training at The Pennsylvania State University-State College. I have been involved in clinical trial research for more than 25 years and have been successful in obtaining external funding from the American Heart Association, the National Institutes of Health, the US Department of Agriculture, and other sources. I have served both as mentee and mentor over the years and find the process to be mutually beneficial and very satisfying.

Over the course of the formal mentoring period Dr. Becker and I will work to build his pilot project into an R03 or R21 proposal as a likely output, although he may have sufficient pilot data to position himself for an R01 submission. Dr. Becker is a productive and highly skilled biomechanist who seeks this opportunity to develop his clinical trial research and grant preparation skills. With his own initiative and informal mentoring, Dr. Becker has already established a network of clinical partners and collaborators, participated in a research writing group, and taken part in grant writing professional development workshops. He is very well-positioned to hit the ground running and successfully carry out the proposed pilot study to demonstrate the effects of intrinsic foot muscle strengthening on foot function during walking and balance tasks. This work is highly significant because foot weakness plays in an important role in numerous pathologies than contribute to loss of mobility and independence. The innovations of Dr. Becker's work will provide new insights into the factors underlying treatment failure.

Given that Dr. Becker has established a clear and significant research direction, our mentoring process will consist of bimonthly to monthly meetings to develop the following skills and proposal components:

- Successfully conducting clinical trial research
- Developing productive collaborative relationships
- Developing specific aims
- Communicating with NIH program officers
- Analysis of successful biomechanics proposals
- Protection of human subjects policies and procedures
- Data sharing plans and clinical trial registration with ClinicalTrials.gov
- Developing the proposal and budget
- Professional development and training resources for proposal writing
- Proposal preparation assistance available through the Montana State University Office of Sponsored Programs

**Health and Human
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My mentoring experience includes graduate students and junior faculty, as well as junior members of a grant review committee for the American Heart Association. I have served as a member, co-chair, and chair of the Behavioral Science-Population Science Peer Review Committee for the American Heart Association. The co-chair has the role of mentoring new members of the committee. I feel confident that my mentoring, grant writing, and grant reviewing, and clinical trial research experience, in combination with my positive working relationship with Dr. Becker, will lead to a successful mentoring experience for both mentor and mentee.

I look forward to the opportunity to mentor Dr. Becker for the current research initiative, for career development in the future, and also to develop a long-lasting collaborative relationship over the next several years.

Sincerely,

Mary P. Miles, PhD

Professor

Dept. of Health and Human Development

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