



# UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

DEPT OF CS AND AFFILIATE IN MATH

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**Student:** Maya Murry  
**Country:** New Zealand

To whom it may concern,

## **How I know Maya Murry**

In the summer of 2022 Maya Murry (henceforth Maya) was in REU-CAAR, an REU program where students spend 10 weeks working on a machine learning project.

*Data Poisoning for Machine Learning.*

Maya was on a team with three other students (Dalal Ahmidouch, Maya Murry, Reem Al Mazroa). They worked very well as a team, so Maya is very good at working with others.

Her performance is all the more impressive because she had several issues over the summer. She had to deal with some extenuating medical circumstances that I was previously unaware of. Yet she continued to work hard and produce results of interest.

Throughout the summer she read papers, coded up algorithms, and asked very good questions about how to get this to actually work. While the program formally required students to be there from 10:00AM until 4:00PM, she often came early, worked late, and (from what I hear) worked at night in the dorms as well.

## **Very Brief Summary of the Proposed Project**

She will do research at the University of Auckland (in New Zealand) on mental health issues and solutions for the native Maori population. Computer science (which is Maya's area) will play a large part in this.

## **Feasibility of the Proposed Project in terms of the resources available and the research environment of the host country**

She will be at a University which is near the people she wants to help. The University has the facilities she needs.

## **Appropriateness of the Project and Subject Matter for the Host Country**

Many of the mental health issues that the Maori suffer are from colonization. New Zealand is interested in righting past wrongs. Hence this is extremely appropriate for the host country.

## **Suitability of the proposed research methodology given the topic and the applicants background**

See next question

**Ability of the applicant to successfully carry out the proposed research project**

The project requires both knowledge of medicine, computer science, and the ability to understand a different culture.

As a computer science major (and having worked in my program) she is clearly qualified on that front.

She has worked on two medical projects (1) At the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania a project on computationally deciphering psychiatric markers in rodents using advance computer science and math, and (2) At the University of Miami she trained neural nets to recognize paralysis cues.

She was a Gilman scholar in Mexico where she learned about the Zapotec people and how they dealt with this life after their land stopped being colonized. While the experience of the Zapotec differs from that of the Maori, there are similarities that will be helpful.

**Linguistic Preparation fo the the Proposed Plan**

The researchers she will work with speak English so thats not an issue. The Maori themselves also (now) speak English, so thats not an issue.

**Applicants Ability to Adapt to a Different Cultural Environment**

She has born in Saudi Arabia and came to America in 2017. That required a much bigger adjustment then going to New Zealand.

**Ability to represent the US at a Cultural Ambassador**

My observations about her when she was at the University of Maryland are that she works well with others and gets along with people. As an immigrant herself she will show the world that America accepts people from other countries, which is a good message to send.

Sincerely,

William Gasarch  
Professor  
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University of Maryland