[redacted]

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January [redacted]

Re: Gilead Research Scholars Program

Dear Selection Committee,

It is with great enthusiasm that I write this letter of support of Dr. [redacted] MD in his application for the Gilead Research Scholars Program. We are thrilled to have recruited Dr. [redacted] from his fellowship in Complex General Surgical Oncology at [redacted] to join the faculty at the University [redacted] in the Division of Surgical Oncology as a clinician-scientist with a focus in breast cancer and cancer genomics in [redacted]

Dr. [redacted] graduated with distinction from [redacted] in [redacted] with a degree in Biology and a concentration in cell and molecular biology. He entered the [redacted] where he received the department of surgery medical student of the year award and graduated with research distinction in [redacted]. He was recruited to stay at the [redacted] for residency where he continued to receive top accolades including multiple awards for best presentation at the departmental research day, the [redacted], and was selected as the administrative chief resident. Dr. [redacted] secured a highly prestigious fellowship in Complex General Surgical Oncology at [redacted] Most certainly, these early multiple and varying achievements highlight the promise of an outstanding academic career.

It was during residency that Dr. [redacted] developed his passion for basic and translational research, spending two-years under the mentorship of Dr. [redacted] on a highly competitive [redacted] grant. During this time, he published basic science research on the effects of [redacted] regulation of the [redacted] Clinical Cancer Research and Annals of Surgery. He participated in many other projects in the lab regarding regulation of the ER+/luminal phenotype in breast cancer resulting in publications in Cancer Cell and multiple publications in Oncogene. As faculty at [redacted], Dr. [redacted] has fused his passion for basic and translational research with his training in Surgical Oncology, developing novel tools and translationally relevant models to study how ER+ breast cancers become resistant to endocrine therapy.
Dr. [redacted] has also been extremely productive resulting in total in 55 peer-reviewed articles in top-tier publications, including 18 as first author and 12 as senior author. Notably, in this past year he has senior author publications in Clinical Cancer Research and was just notified of acceptance in [redacted]. He has co-authored three book chapters, presented numerous oral and poster presentations at regional and national meetings and already mentored eight trainees to national presentations. He has already been awarded 3 external grants to fund his lab including the Junior Faculty Award from the [redacted], the Young Investigator Award from the Society of Surgical Oncology, and he recently received a K-08 award from the National Cancer Institute. In addition, he is an active member in numerous professional and surgical societies including the Society of Surgical Oncology, the American College of Surgeons, the Association for Academic Surgery, and the American Society of Clinical Oncology. As a budding surgeon scientist, he has already demonstrated creativity and productivity with his research and has had an impact in the field of surgical oncology. With this prior track record, we expect significant ongoing productivity from [redacted] and his lab.

Dr. [redacted] was recruited with a strong mentorship team lead by [redacted], who is his mentor on this proposal and his funded K-08. His research crosses the disciplines of genomics, genetics, cancer biology, bioinformatics, epidemiology, and clinical research. He has an innovative and multidisciplinary approach as well as a strong track record of mentoring junior clinician-scientists. [redacted] share common interests in breast cancer genomics, and it was Dr [redacted] who originally described breast cancer subtypes based on gene expression patterns, thus he is the ideal early career mentor for Dr [redacted]. As such, the [redacted] lab is in physical continuity with the [redacted] lab based in the Department of Genetics. This space includes 65 square feet of wet lab with an adjacent 25 square feet for workstations. Additionally, Dr. [redacted] participates in our department mentorship program where his mentorship committee consisting of two R01 funded surgeon scientists meets to review progress on a regular bi-annual basis. Therefore, it should be apparent that Dr. [redacted] has incredibly strong support from well-respected, successful, senior investigators.

As Chair of the Department, I provided Dr. [redacted] with 50% protected time for research, which is now fully supported by federal grants. He has startup funds for his lab, lab space, mentorship, and access to Cancer Center facilities and all research core facilities at [redacted]. This award will provide Dr. [redacted] with an opportunity to do meaningful research that will advance the field and generate data for NIH funding applications. Funds received from this Gilead Research Scholars Program will specifically support his sponsored research project for research personnel and supplies and will not be used to support [redacted] salary, which is already protected, and will support indirect costs at 10%. I will also guarantee that Dr. [redacted] will execute all requirements for this award, should he receive it.

I have no doubt that Dr. [redacted] will continue to accomplish great things as he continues on this career trajectory as a surgeon scientist and leader in academic surgery. I am confident will make the most of the opportunity to continue productive investigation. I have no doubt will subsequently transition to an R01 funded investigator. As Chair of the Department of Surgery, I wholeheartedly support his research endeavors and am committed to his success.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have additional questions.

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