

Thursday, April 12, 2012

Dear Members of the Search Committee,

I'm writing to support Dr. Diana Sarko's application for the position at Brown University. Diana Sarko worked in my laboratory as a post-doctoral fellow from 2007 to early 2010. During that time, she was an outstanding and productive member of the laboratory and demonstrated a passion for research. She led a number of diverse investigations that resulted in several publications. These include a study a neuronal cell numbers and brain scaling in insectivores, the first cortical mapping study of carnivorous grasshopper mice, quantification of sensory areas and afferent pathways in water shrews, and analyzing data from neuronal tract tracers from dental afferents in mole-rats. She also investigated the somatotopic organization or cerebellar inputs from the teeth in mole-rats. You will see from her CV, that she has been able to not only conduct these many diverse studies, but also was able to publish the results for all but the last investigation, which is currently in preparation. This is an impressive record that she continues to build. Her background is diverse and includes comparative neuroanatomy and electrophysiology. She is a very capable teacher and has taught guest lectures in my own course and for other faculty here at Vanderbilt University. She is currently in Dr. Mark Wallace's lab, where she is part of a thriving and interactive neuroscience group. In Mark's lab she has been extending her training to include investigation of multisensory integration using microelectrode arrays. This is a natural extension of her training and will further extend her expertise in systems neuroscience and neuroanatomy. In addition to her abilities in the research and teaching arena, she is personable and able to work well with a laboratory group. I think she has all of the qualities needed to develop into a teacher and investigator in an academic setting. I strongly recommend her for your position.

Sincerely,

Ken Catania

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