



March 6, 2015

Dear Abdeldjelil "DJ" Belarbi Graduate Scholarship Committee Members,

It is my great pleasure to write a reference letter for Mr. Omar Abdelkarim. I have known Mr. Abdelkarim for about two years in the capacity of his thesis advisor. Omar also worked with me as Graduate Teaching Assistant for few courses. Finally, he was a student in one of my graduate courses.

During the last few years, I was the main advisor and committee member for approximately 20 graduate students. Out of all these students, Omar is by so far the best graduate students that I have ever seen. Technically, he is very competitive and eager to learn. He finished the required course work at Missouri S&T with GPA of 3.9. He shows strong enthusiasm for research and development in the area of concrete structures. One of the differences between Omar and the other graduate students is his motivation to serve the society. His first question to me when we started his thesis was how this topic would serve and benefit the society. His mind set for building structures that are safer for our communities. Currently he is mid-way in his thesis and was able to publish 12 technical papers which is significantly higher than most of his peers.

Mr. Abdelkarim always tries to develop technical information that is useful for his fellow students and other researchers. For example, when he learned new software he started to held sessions for his colleagues where he taught them how to use the software. He plans to post-these lessons to YouTube; hence, other students can learn from his experience with this sophisticated software.

When we have any issue with any student in our High-bay Research Lab (structural engineering lab), Omar is always one of the few students that jump in and demonstrates his willingness to participate to remediate this issue. Whether it is just cleaning of the lab, preparing the lab for visitors, or even helps other students in their research experiments, Omar always tries to help.

Mr. Abdelkarim has excellent presentation and teaching skills. He worked as a teaching assistant for Steel Design Course at Missouri S&T. His interaction with students was very good. I am sure that Omar will be one of the best teachers and very soon in his career will win some teaching awards.

Based on all of the above, I firmly believe that Omar deserves to be recognized by the ACI Scholarship. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions about my recommendation.

Sincerely,

Mohamed ElGawady, PhD.

Associate Professor,

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