

February 28, 2019

The Developmental Psychology Laboratories
Rutgers University
Newark, NJ 07102

Dear Dr. Vanessa LoBue and Dr. Elizabeth Bonawitz,

I am writing in reference to the available Lab Manager position with the Computational Cognitive Development Lab and Child Study Center, as I feel my interests and experiences make me a good candidate. In June 2019, I will obtain my B.S. in Child Development from Cal Poly San Luis Obispo with a minor in Psychology. I have spent my senior year working in Dr. Jennifer Jipson's research lab and am seeking postgraduate positions in which I can gain additional experience in research settings before applying to Ph.D. programs in Developmental Psychology. I am highly interested in the work that your labs are doing in cognitive and behavioral developmental psychology and would be enthusiastic about joining these projects as a lab manager.

As a research assistant in Dr. Jipson's lab, I have helped to plan and conduct data collection at local children's museums, transcribed video data using Datavyu software, and designed and adapted a coding scheme which detects utterances indicative of children's science learning. We are currently in the process of achieving inter-coder reliability on this coding approach. With just four research assistants, the relatively small size of our lab has allowed me to gain practical experience in a range of lab activities, as well as to be intrinsically motivated to take on many responsibilities, such as the submission of independent work to undergraduate research conferences.

Several other experiences have also prepared me for the organizational and managerial duties of a lab manager position. I serve as a teacher's assistant for a large introductory-level course in developmental psychology, aiding in exam design, instruction, and overall student engagement. In this position, I have strengthened my leadership and task coordination abilities by organizing and facilitating study sessions before exams, engaging with students through my weekly office hour, and presenting a guest lecture.

I have a total of five years of experience working with children and families, and am currently a Student Teacher at the Cal Poly Preschool Learning Lab. My resulting communication and interpersonal skills prepare me to oversee and engage in data collection with children of multiple ages and families of diverse backgrounds. I am very comfortable with community outreach and engagement, as evidenced by my role planning community and volunteer events as Vice President of the Poly Child Development Club, as well as by my senior project, in which I am currently working with parents of a local Head Start preschool in an educational workshop setting. Additionally, my coursework as a Child Development major and Psychology minor has provided me with an understanding of and interest in developmental psychology, an appreciation for diversity in educational and research settings, practice writing IRB protocol submissions, and skills using empirical research methodologies and statistical software packages, such as Minitab and SPSS.

Within about three years, I plan to pursue a Ph.D. in Developmental Psychology. My research interests lie primarily in social and cognitive development, investigating the processes by which children construct an understanding of the world through various social influences. The work in your labs align with these interests, and I would therefore be delighted to assist you in your efforts to better understand young children's exploratory, causal learning as well as detection and response to environmental stimuli.

Thank you for your consideration of my application for your lab manager position. I would be thrilled to be a part of your team, and I am eager to speak with you further regarding your labs and this position.

Sincerely,

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