

3 May 2021

To whom it may concern

Re: Letter of reference for Christopher Conroy

Christopher Conroy joined Graphene Economics (Pty) Ltd in May 2018 as a consultant computer programmer. He has been studying at university throughout the time that he has worked for our company, so he predominantly programs for us during his June and December university holidays.

I was introduced to Chris by my wife who was his high school science teacher. Through her 16 years of teaching many top pupils, she regarded Chris as one of the brightest students that she has ever taught. When I spoke to my wife about needing to employ a software developer, she spoke to the high school Computer Science teacher who recommend Chris, even though he was only in his first year at university.

Since joining our company Chris has developed the main software program that we now use to prepare complex client tax reports. The software program that Chris developed has enabled us to successfully compete with the largest accounting companies in South Africa to deliver the best possible services to our multinational enterprise clients. The software requires the analysis of large volumes of qualitative and quantitative data, and the reason that we wanted to have this software developed was because the commercially available options were not sufficiently customisable and therefore did not sufficiently meet our client's needs.

I personally worked with Chris to explain the system requirements and was very impressed by his ability to grasp complex concepts that were highly nuanced. Even experienced finance personnel often take several months or years to understand important aspects of tax, but Chris grasped them very quickly. It was evident that he had a good understanding of this project because he regularly surprised me with additional considerations which I had not yet suggested to him. For example, I remember him asking about the implications of the companies in a group having different financial year ends which is something that would only have been identified by someone who thought very carefully about the details of the project.

One of the things that really impressed me is his tenacity and his determination to achieve excellence. I remember Chris providing a status update and explaining that he had spent several hours working on the processing time for a particular phase of the program to reduce it by fractions of a second in order to speed up the overall project. He achieved this by deciding that he would not go to sleep that night until he had solved it. And he did!

Our team members that frequently use the computer program that Chris wrote are extremely complimentary of it. One individual who joined us from a very large competitor company commented that our system is much more user friendly than the one that they had used. Essentially, as a university student, Chris developed a program that competes with a specific solution of the largest accounting firms in the world.

While Chris' level of excellence is phenomenal, I would also like to refer to his character and personality. Despite his very busy varsity deadlines which we had agreed he should always prioritise, not once in three years has he missed a deadline. He also made himself available during the course of the semester to solve bugs and assist users where required, all while obtaining a 89% - 93% average at university.

Chris is a very likeable individual, and this was easy to see at our company's team building and other social events that he enthusiastically participated in. He built good relationships with those in our team, many of which are much older than him.

In conclusion I would highly recommend Chris for the Fulbright Foreign Student Program. He has exceptional ability, a passion for excellence and an aptitude to learn extremely complex concepts in a short period of time. If I thought it was in his best interests, I would not hesitate to offer Chris a full-time opportunity at our company. However, I firmly believe that Chris would excel if given the opportunity to be part of a leading international program where he could be exposed to world class software developers and business leaders.

Should you require any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Warm regards



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