

31 October 2017

To the Board:


It is my pleasure to write a letter of recommendation on behalf of Cameron Ashdown, who is applying for the Army Social Work Internship Program. Cameron worked for me in my research lab at The University of Utah for approximately six months, from 2014-2015. As an undergraduate research assistant, Cameron assisted me with a NASA-funded project focused that required him to conduct literature reviews. Overall, Cameron was a reliable and hard-working student; I therefore fully endorse his application.

As noted above, Cameron's work in my lab was focused on a NASA project aimed at identifying novel and innovative methods for identifying and tracking behavioral health issues among astronauts engaged in long-duration space exploration missions (e.g., missions to Mars). As a part of this project, Cameron helped me to identify and organize published research studies focused on various assessment methods like implicit association tests, startle reaction tests, and cognitive bias tasks that could reliably measure behavioral health issues (e.g., depression, anxiety, substance use, neurocognitive degeneration) using objective, validated measures. Because many astronauts are reluctant to report behavioral health concerns—similar to many military groups—our task was to provide recommendations that could circumvent these barriers. Cameron quickly identified a large number of published studies, thereby ensuring timely project completion that received very positive feedback from NASA leadership and personnel.

Interpersonally, Cameron is friendly and warm, and gets along well with others. He understands and appreciates the value of teamwork, and carries himself with a high degree of professionalism. As a licensed clinical psychologist who previously served on active duty in the military, I believe he has all of the best qualities we look for in a military behavioral health provider.

In summary, I recommend Cameron without reservation and have no doubt that he make a positive impact on the health and well-being of Soldiers, and hope you give him strong consideration. Please feel free to contact me via email or phone (listed below) with any questions you may have about Cameron or this recommendation.

Regards,



Executive Director, National Center for Veterans Studies
Associate Professor, Department of Psychology
Presidential Scholar
The University of Utah

