

Kate Meyer, Director
Whale Shark and Oceanic Research Center
Utila, Bay Islands, Honduras

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To whom it may concern;

It is my pleasure to recommend a good friend and former intern Kate Sutter for the Our World – Underwater Scholarship in 2018. I worked closely with Kate as her advisor for three months last year while she completed a demanding marine science internship with us at the Whale Shark and Oceanic Research Center (WSORC) in Utila, located on the Caribbean coast of Honduras. Kate is a hard-working, dedicated, and passionate young diver who I am confident represents everything this scholarship stands for.

The mission of our research center is to *facilitate local marine conservation efforts through research and education*. Interns at our facility are intimately involved in all aspects of our operations, including creating and delivering community outreach presentations in local schools, filling leadership roles on our whale shark encounter eco-tours, collecting data on fish diversity, coral diversity, and benthic cover, and undergoing all necessary training in order to complete the required tasks. As a prerequisite to her internship, Kate joined us already certified as a Divemaster and began her three-month research internship ready to train in leading and managing research dive groups. During her internship, she chose to add the intensive Instructor Development Course (IDC) to her curriculum which furthered her professional dive education and made her an even more valuable member of our team.

From a research perspective, Kate was quick to pick up on all marine research methodology required of her, and she dove into studying the local marine life with gusto, passion and a sense of humor that kept our team in stitches at every turn. Kate scored a 95% on our rigorous Caribbean coral identification exam, and performed exceptionally well on the in-water tests associated with fish, invertebrate, and coral identification trainings. Her seasoned experience diving made her an ideal member of any research team, and was soon trusted to lead research dives and conduct herself professionally on boats and underwater.

In terms of work ethic, Kate is an employer's dream. She made a habit of completing necessary tasks before they were even asked of her, and never gave less than 100% effort to anything she was involved in doing. She offered to take responsibility on several large projects during her time here (notably helping organize and advertise for a community outreach event we supported to benefit local schoolchildren) and constantly impressed me with the whole-hearted effort put forth every step of the way. Although Kate may not have an idea of the exact path in marine conservation she wants to follow yet, I have no doubt that she will excel in any she chooses.

I have worked with over 80 volunteer interns in the 2 years I have been employed at WSORC, and there are none more passionate about diving or who conduct themselves as well underwater as Kate. Kate's drive to learn, intellect in the field, and boisterous passion for anything ocean-related make her a marvelous conservationist who I am confident will do great things in her career. It is my sincere hope you are able to give her application to this scholarship careful consideration.

Sincerely,



Kate Meyer
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