

Department of Health and Human Services  
Public Health Service

**Reference**

**Ruth L. Kirschstein National Research Service Award  
Individual Fellowship**

(Applicant completes this block.)

NAME OF APPLICANT (*Last, first, middle initial*)

Wangerien, Lisa, A.

PROPOSED SPONSORING INSTITUTION

University of Illinois at Chicago

**Compare the applicant with other individuals of similar training and experience with whom you have been associated. Use the following numerical scores, from 1 (best) to 5 (poorest). Mark every block; insert "X" if insufficient knowledge to rate and "NA" if not applicable.**

- |  |                    |
|--|--------------------|
| 1 Comparable to the best individual in a current class or research laboratory (upper 5%) | 4 Middle 41 to 60% |
| 2 Upper 6 to 20%   | 5 Lower 40%        |
| 3 Upper 21 to 40%  |                    |

**Use black ink.**

☐ Research Ability and Potential

☐ Originality

☐ Written and Verbal Communications

☐ Accuracy

☐ Perseverance in Pursuing Goals

☐ Scientific Background

☐ Self-Reliance and Independence

☐ Familiarity with Research Literature

☐ Clinical Proficiency, if relevant

☐ Ability to Organize Scientific Data

☐ Laboratory Skills and Techniques, if relevant

Describe your association with the applicant. Comment on the above items, including other areas as appropriate, identifying the strengths and weaknesses that should be considered in evaluating the applicant's potential for a research career.

I am delighted to write this letter of recommendation in support of Lisa Wangerien's application for a National Research Service Award predoctoral fellowship. Lisa is eager and very well prepared to advance her education in the area of public health. I have known Lisa for about nine years, and each year, I have been increasingly impressed by her dedication to improving her range of knowledge and ability to help others. Lisa was a student of mine during her undergraduate years, and we have stayed in contact as she has gone through nursing school to become a nurse-midwife and now a researcher. She is an extraordinarily caring person who is especially effective in her work, since she truly loves helping other people while simultaneously keeping a scientific perspective on the situations surrounding her.

I first came to know Lisa nine years ago when she earned an outstanding grade in my large lecture course on human sexuality (Soc 152A). Next she took my smaller courses on Socialization (Soc 142) and Pragmatism (Soc 185P). She earned high "A" grades in all these classes, and she came into my office frequently to talk seriously about the topics in all three courses. She always had intelligent and thoughtful insights and questions. She also did an honors contract for Soc 152A, and wrote such an outstanding research paper that it was posted on our university's website, SexInfoOnLine.com. Lisa has very high standards for her work and a great eye for detail. It is a pleasure to work with her and I am certain that you will always find her work to be of the highest quality.

When she was an undergraduate, Lisa was active in several advanced research projects here at UCSB, allowing her to develop considerably greater clinical and research techniques than most other undergraduates. She worked at the UCSB Autism Center, run by Drs. Robert and Lynn Koegel, where she learned a great deal about Pivotal Response Therapy in both classroom and clinical settings. The Koegels' set extremely high criteria for their student clinicians, and Lisa rose to the occasion and gained considerable research and clinical skills. In addition, she volunteered for the Family Literacy Program, serving as a reading tutor. She helped organize the Komen National Race for the Cure for breast cancer to raise money for research on that disease. She was active in the Santa Barbara Council on Alcoholism and Drug Abuse. Her work with the Jagriti Foundation left a deep impression on her, since she interacted with women from India, Pakistan, Nepal and Afghanistan, helping them learn the multiple methods Americans use to advance the condition of women in many poorer sectors of our society.

During her graduate training, Lisa has become a skillful and caring nurse and nurse-midwife. She has seen poor women suffer conditions that have shocked her—and motivated her to delve deeper into

understanding and solving their problems. During her work as an Albert Schweitzer Fellow, she has taken on the high ambitions of Albert Schweitzer and Margaret Sanger for solving some of the most serious problems facing people in our nation and poorer countries around the world. Can we empower poor women to make wise choices about their own reproductive health and the futures of their children? How would we go about doing that the best? How can we deliver such services most efficiently? Lisa has had enough research and grant writing experience as an undergraduate and a graduate student that she sees the power of scientific research for approaching these problems—though solving them will not be easy. You could not have a better-prepared candidate for your program than Lisa. She is driven to use public health as a career for advancing some of the noblest goals that a civilized society can pursue.

Lisa is very creative in solving problems and helping people work together cooperatively. She is a team player who motivates others to function well in group projects. She is exceptionally well organized and makes sure that her work and the contributions of others are blended professionally, carefully, and with attention to detail. She is cheerful and well liked by both her fellow students and by the other people with whom she works. Lisa is one of the most hard-working and honest people you could hope to know. She carries responsibility well and is one of the most trustworthy people I have ever met.

Lisa has outstanding communication skills, which make her quite effective as a member of a professional organization. She speaks clearly and dynamically, capturing people's attention by the logical direction in which she takes her conversations. She is also an outstanding writer, which is a wonderful asset in any profession. Judging by her personality and intellect, I am certain that Lisa will continue to make many contributions in graduate school and later as a wonderful researcher.

Lisa's NRSA application proposes an ethnographic study to explore determinants of inequitable maternal health care use in Malawian women and explain the mechanisms by which socioeconomic status influences service accessibility. I have carefully read her proposal and I find it to be both persuasive and significant. Lisa's proposal evolved from her clinical experience providing obstetrical and gynecological care to underserved women in Chicago. Lisa has explained how through access to basic medical care, we prevent almost all maternal deaths in the United States. While social injustices can be found all around the world, Lisa has expressed particular dismay at the failure to protect the most basic of human rights, which is the right to survive. This particular right for women differs by virtue of power and status. Lisa is determined to understand the mechanisms through which this occurs, and develop interventions to protect this basic human right for all women.

While in the doctoral program, Lisa has continued her development as a scholar and a researcher. She has conducted an in-depth review of the literature, and evaluated and synthesize the literature that is pertinent to her planned research. She has the capacity and the motivation to conduct outstanding research and will develop a highly productive research career. Lisa is solely motivated to improve public health and she believes that she will make the greatest impact through research. Her dissertation research will be used to make recommendations to improve access to maternal health services for Malawian women, and will lay the groundwork for an interventional study. She has assembled an outstanding research team. This fellowship will provide her with the resources she needs to develop a program of research. I endorse this proposal with confidence and enthusiasm.

In summary, I think Lisa is a truly outstanding person who is well prepared for a fantastic research career. She has a deep commitment to comprehensive patient care, including both health promotion and preventative care programs. She is a forward-looking and caring person, with the ability to plan her time and activities to attain long-term goals. In addition to having a keen mind, she is serious, conscientious, hard working and very responsible. Lisa is both an excellent student and a happy, well-adjusted person with whom it is a pleasure to work. I am pleased to give Lisa my very highest recommendation. She is truly exceptional.

DATES ASSOCIATED WITH APPLICANT September 2003 - present	CAPACITY AT THAT TIME ( <i>Teacher, dissertation advisor, supervisor, or other</i> ) Teacher
RESPONDENT ( <i>Name, title, department, and institution</i> ) John D. Baldwin, Ph.D., Professor Department of Sociology University of California, Santa Barbara	
TELEPHONE NUMBER (805) 967-4995	DATE November 9, 2011