



**Physicians for Social Responsibility  
San Francisco Bay Area Chapter**

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9 December 2010

UC Davis  
SAREP 2010 Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems  
Competitive Grants Program Review Committee  
One Shields Ave.  
Davis, CA 95616

Dear Review Committee:

Please accept this letter of recommendation for Kendra Klein on behalf of San Francisco Bay Area Physicians for Social Responsibility. Kendra Klein is a 5th year doctoral student at the University of California, Berkeley, who is working to bridge the often-disparate fields of sustainable agriculture and public health. Her work is centered on the crucial question of how sustainable agricultural systems can retain their integrity while simultaneously growing to be able to meet large-scale demand. This line of inquiry remains one of the most vexing challenges of the sustainable food movement today.

I had the privilege of working with Ms. Klein for close to three years during her tenure at Breast Cancer Action. Our respective organizations were often aligned in coalitions working to improve environmental health and justice for California communities, and I consistently appreciated Kendra's insightful and varied contributions to those efforts. Our professional trajectories led to the issue of sustainable food systems, hers from an academic perspective, and mine in the advocacy arena.

Kendra's chosen focus of research is the Farm-to-Hospital movement, in which my professional work is deeply steeped. This realm demands systems-level thinking to both understand the nature of the challenges as well the opportunities of solutions. Through her academic work at Berkeley, her professional experiences, as well as her desire to link action with education, she has demonstrated a deep capacity to contribute meaningful change to an emerging field of study. Reforming hospital food is a crucial pathway to both agricultural reform and true health care reform. Health care as a sector purchases billions of dollars of food annually, and the sector represents 1/7 of the US economy. At the same time, health care institutions, and the clinicians that work within them, hold a significant moral authority in our country.

The work of organizations like Health Care Without Harm, Physicians for Social Responsibility, and many others throughout the country have shown that healthcare facilities can promote better health and responsible farming

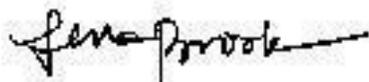
practices by purchasing and/or providing access to fresher, good tasting, and nutritious food for their patients, staff, and broader community.

Health care is a critical node in the sustainable food systems movement, and I have strong reason to believe that through her doctoral research, Kendra will make significant contributions that will lead to transformations on the ground related to building regional food systems. Particularly valuable will be her work to address the roadblocks that Group Purchasing Organizations (GPOs) pose to health care procurement of local, regional, and sustainable food. For the past four months, Kendra has interned with SF Bay Area Physicians for Social Responsibility, assisting with various local and national projects that consistently demonstrate her depth of knowledge for this issue as well as her capacity to advance our work by furthering her research. We look forward to collaborating with her on her proposed research on GPOs.

I wholeheartedly recommend Kendra as a graduate student research grantee for this funding program. Her work dovetails with the priorities of your mission, and her track record of commitment and dedication to the issues of community and sustainable food systems speaks for itself.

Should you have any questions or desire additional information, please do not hesitate to contact me at 415.601.0504 or [lena@sfbaypsr.org](mailto:lena@sfbaypsr.org). My biography is presented as an addendum to provide more information about my background.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lena Brook". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Lena Brook  
Senior Program Associate  
San Francisco Bay Area Physicians for Social Responsibility