

February 8, XXXX

SAMPLE LETTER #1

Dear Dr. XXX:

I am writing to support the election of ***, M.D., from Member to Distinguished Fellow in the American Psychiatric Association.

I have known Dr. *** since 19** when he began his residency program in psychiatry at *** University School of Medicine. It was clear to me early on that *** was a hardworking, bright young physician who could eventually make important contributions in the field of substance abuse. Even during his residency, he worked part time with our drug dependence unit, especially with the pioneering studies we were doing with the narcotic antagonist, naltrexone. He has since residency gone on to fulfill that early promise, as I shall detail in the paragraphs below. He is considered one of the outstanding researchers in the United States in psychopharmacologic aspects of substance abuse treatment. He is a prolific writer and lecturer, and a superb mentor for younger faculty and residents. At the same time, he has maintained an active schedule of being involved in other activities that improve mental health in the community and in the larger arena as well. I thus consider it an honor to be able to nominate him for election to Distinguished Fellowship in the APA.

Let me now address the specific requirements of the guidelines for election to Distinguished Fellowship.

1. Certification

Not only is *** certified by the ABPN, he has taken an active role in working for the new subspecialty of addiction psychiatry.

2. Involvement in APA Activities

Individuals make their contributions to the APA in a number of ways. Some do it through active involvement with district branch activities. ***' Contributions have been more with the work of the APA at the national level as it pertains to improving the knowledge and practice regarding addiction in psychiatry. Thus, he has been involved in both the DSM-III-R field trials and the DSM-IV Work Group for ***. He has represented the APA at FDA hearings on topics such as interim methadone and was on the APA work group for revising the methadone guidelines. *** will, I believe, continue to be an important contributor to these activities. Given his reputation in the field, it is clear he will continue to be called upon by the APA to be one of their substance abuse experts. He has been a corresponding member of the Council on *** since 19**.

3. Activities in Other Medical and Professional Organizations

*** was a founding member of the American Academy of *** and is Co-chairman of their Committee for ***. Inasmuch as I also have been involved with that organization, since its inception, I can attest to the very active role that he has taken in helping this fledgling organization get off the ground. In addition, he has been elected to membership in American College of Neuropsychopharmacology, one of the most prestigious scientific organizations. The Committee on Problems of Drug Dependence is one of the oldest organizations dealing with policy and research issues in the area of drug abuse. *** has been a member of their Board since 19**. He is also on the Scientific Advisory Group of two major academic research centers at *** and at ***. In short, in spite of his busy schedule and numerous grants, he has taken the time to reach out and be helpful to other organizations involved in research and policy issues in the substance abuse arena. Nor is his membership in these groups perfunctory. Once he joins an organization, he takes an active role in furthering its activities and goals.

4. Participation in Non-Compensated mental Health and Medical Activities

***'s activities in this arena again reach the level of excellence expected of Distinguished Fellow. He is on the Editorial Board or Editorial Consultant for a number of journals, is very active in ad hoc and standing committees both at NIDA and at the Veteran's Administration and has consulted to Congress. I know from my own involvement with a number of congressional committees that ***'s testimony and advice about issues relating to medication development for substance abuse is highly prized.

5. Participation in Community Activities Unrelated to Income Producing Activities

Perhaps the best example of this category is his work with United States *** Association and the *** Group. He has been a member of the Sports Medicine Committee of the U.S. *** Association for over 5 years and has actively worked with the *** group as well, being treasurer and president in the recent past. *** loves *** but, instead of just enjoying it himself, he has reached out to help others and the sport in general.

6. Clinical Contributions

An Award that speaks to the high regard in which his clinical and research peers regard him is the *** Award from *** for developing new pharmacotherapies for substance abuse. I was one of the individuals who nominated him for this award because of my belief that he has made major contributions to our field in this endeavor. I am also well aware of all the important contributions he made to the Substance Abuse Treatment Unit at *** which I headed for many years. He is frequently sought out by his peers for medication consults both locally and nationally.

7. Administrative Contributions

When I headed the program at ***, *** was the Associate Scientific Director of our research endeavors. When I left to take a position in Washington, he became one of the two co-directors running the Substance Abuse Treatment Unit and is now head of the Substance Abuse Research Center. He fulfills his administrative duties with great conscientiousness and competence, and I know that he is being considered by Departments of Psychiatry for potential chairman positions. If he does take one at some point in the future, I am sure he will do as good a job with that as he has done with the Substance Abuse Unit at ***.

8. Teaching Contributions

*** has advanced to become Associate Professor of Psychiatry at ***. He has lectured both nationally and internationally and is sought out by Departments of Psychiatry across the country to lecture and consult. He enjoys working with medical students and residents and is both a good lecturer and a good mentor.

9. Scientific and Scholarly Publications

In this area *** has made substantial contributions. He has over 100 published articles and he and I have recently co-edited a book on the treatment of cocaine dependence. His writings have been published in the top ranked peer reviewed journals in our field.

*** is an extraordinarily hardworking, productive psychiatrist, but, more than that, he is an individual of integrity and compassion. He is a credit to his profession and I believe will remain one of the leaders in the substance abuse field for decades to come. It is my considered opinion that in the various nine categories he not only meets the qualifications, but is outstanding in most of them. I can without hesitation support his election from Member to Distinguished Fellow in the American Psychiatric Association.

Sincerely yours,
