

Model Letter

It is important for the letter-writer to be enthusiastic about the nominee, sincerely believe him or her to be worthy of the honor, and then support this enthusiasm and conviction with detailed information and examples.

The following model letter is a composite based partly on actual letters submitted for the Awards Committee's review. It is intended as a guide. Not all paragraphs may be applicable to any one nominee. Please add, delete, or change headings and customize as appropriate to convey the best features of a nominee in relation to the award or Mastership. If the supporter's experience is specific to certain areas of a nominee's background, the letter should focus in detail on those areas rather than attempting to cover all the possible headings. Letters should not overlap substantially but present new information.

Please note that letters should not simply summarize the curriculum vitae or consist of a few paragraphs stating that the individual is worthy. Letters should come from the personal viewpoint and experience of the letter-writer regarding the nominee and may include, as appropriate, personal stories and anecdotes illustrating qualities pertaining to the honor under nomination. Someone who is invited to write a letter for a nominee but is not enthusiastic about that individual should politely decline or suggest another supporter.

* * *

Date

Chair, Awards Committee
American College of Physicians
190 N. Independence Mall West
Philadelphia, PA 19106-1572

To the Chair of the Awards Committee:

I am very pleased to write a letter in support of the nomination of my friend and mentor Dr. ____ for ____ [name of award or Mastership] in the American College of Physicians. I worked with Dr. ____ during my [training, work for ____ organization, etc.], and I developed the highest respect for his/her competence [leadership, encyclopedic knowledge, etc.]. I always felt I could rely on him/her for ____ . [Can insert here brief information on how supporter knows the nominee and overall impression of him/her.]

CURRENT AND PAST POSITIONS: [Summarize only very briefly. If the nomination letter covers this, the supporting letters need not. Focus on most outstanding or interesting areas in reference to the award or Mastership and/or the areas most familiar to the letter-writer.] Dr. ____ graduated at the top of his/her class at [medical school], was one of the very best internal medicine residents, and then was selected as chief resident at [name of program]. He/she

distinguished him/herself during fellowship by [brief details]. By the time Dr. ___ joined the faculty at ___, he/she had established him/herself as an outstanding clinician and consultant, had authored or co-authored more than # publications, and had presented original research at national scientific meetings, including [examples]. After several other positions, he/she became the head of [name of major organization] and went on to [brief examples of significant accomplishments at the most major or current position; repeat if several major positions].

CONTRIBUTIONS TO ACP: Dr. ___ was very active as a young physician in the ___ chapter. He/she oversaw the medical student and Associate poster and Doctor's Dilemma competitions at the chapter meeting for three years running, chaired the ___ Chapter Council of Early Career Physicians, represented the chapter as a Chapter Leader and faculty at the annual meeting in (year), and served as a member of the ___ Chapter delegation at Leadership Day in (year) and (year). Later, he/she chaired several other committees for the ___ chapter and served as Governor in [dates]. When Governor, he/she [insert example of innovations or accomplishments]. Dr. ___ received the chapter Laureate Award in [year] and has served on the chapter council for every Governor since.

RESEARCH: During his/her long and productive investigative career, Dr. ___ published more than ___ research papers, book chapters, and other writings and gave hundreds of research presentations at national and international meetings. I attended the meeting of [organization, date, place], and I well remember the enthusiastic reception of his/her ground-breaking work on [topic, impact]. He/she is the author of one of the most influential books in [name of field]: [title, date], and he/she has obtained over ___ grants in support of his/her research on [topics].

EXCELLENCE AS A CLINICIAN: Dr. ___ has always impressed me as a physician who strives to deliver superb health care at every opportunity. He/she takes personal responsibility for all aspects of patient care regardless of patients' socioeconomic status, advocates persistently for their welfare, and remains reachable by pager and is receptive to all calls and all callers practically 24/7. He/she regularly rounds on inpatients twice daily, and his/her outpatient practice has a very high new patient accrual with an incredibly low turnover. Dr. ___ has received praise in every survey of patient and referring physician satisfaction. His/her patients revere him/her, and the group includes hospital employees, university professors, and leaders in the local business community. At group discussions of interesting cases, he/she can always be counted on to describe a truly fascinating case during which he/she clearly treated the patient with great care and warmth.

EDUCATIONAL AND TEACHING SERVICE: Dr. ___'s career has involved all levels of teaching, from first- and second-year students first encountering clinical problems to third- and fourth-year students, to interns and residents, and finally to postdoctoral fellows. Year after year, his/her evaluations are among the highest in the internal medicine department. For 20 consecutive years, students and residents have ranked him/her among the top five teaching faculty. Alumni frequently comment that Dr. ___ is an outstanding lecturer and teacher at rounds, a superb outpatient clinic instructor, and one of a select few faculty who help shape their career. He/she has received a number of teaching awards, including [examples]. In

addition, Dr. ___ designed a model curriculum for [area of knowledge] and developed a number of innovative lectures for addressing state-of-the-art treatment of current problems in [area of knowledge].

NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL SERVICE (not ACP): Despite a heavy patient and teaching load, over the last 20 years, Dr. ___ has served on numerous major university and medical school committees and has held offices in the [state] chapter of [name of organization/s]. He/she has served as president of [names of organization/s] and has chaired three national scientific meetings for [name of organization].

VOLUNTEERISM AND COMMUNITY SERVICE: Dr. ___ has served on the board of the [free clinic, medical rescue unit, etc.] for over # years and regularly vacations with his/her family as staff at a mission hospital in South America for [name of organization]. One night a week, he/she volunteers at a shelter for abused women and children. He/she also organized a group effort of [name of hospital] to send medical supplies to health workers during the aftermath of [natural disaster].

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS: [Include any accomplishments that do not fit other headings.]

CONCLUSION: I know of few physicians who have had as great an impact as Dr. ___ , not just in clinical excellence and administrative leadership, but on a personal basis as mentor and trusted physician partner in health. I consider it an honor to have had Dr. ___ as a colleague these many years, and I feel that he/she is richly deserving of [name of award or Mastership].

Sincerely,

Name

Title

Contact information, including e-mail