7 July 2020

To: The Mozes S. Schupf Fellowship Program Committee

Recommendation for Mr. Nathaniel Palmer

With respectful greetings,

I am writing to wholeheartedly recommend Mr. Nathaniel Palmer as the most deserving candidate for the prestigious Schupf Fellowship. I first met Nathaniel in the spring of 2017, when he was a candidate for the doctoral program of the Kohelet Policy Forum (Eitam or ‘together’ program), of which I am the head. This program offers a full two-year scholarship to outstanding research students, and a rich program aimed at empowering the future generation of the Israeli Academy of Social Sciences and Humanities to positively influence the design and nature of Israeli state institutions and society. During the various screening stages, particularly the interview, Nathaniel stood out as displaying a special combination of academic excellence along with a solid inner world of values, unique character traits, and cognitive skills regarding both theoretical and practical issues. Once Nathaniel was accepted into the program, I got to know him personally over the course of two intensive years, and closely observed how he expressed these traits.

In the realm of academics, Nathaniel demonstrates a deep understanding of the world of research. He knows how to correctly formulate and frame the research question and the issues that need to be addressed, and to formulate an orderly methodology for answering the research question. He works diligently and creatively in order to locate the necessary resources. In addition, he has strong intellectual capabilities that enable him to analyze and synthesize information and produce meaningful and original insights. Finally, he has the rhetorical skills that enable him to express these ideas, both orally and in writing, in a clear and understandable way. He carries all this out with seriousness, thoroughness, depth, and an interdisciplinary understanding of his field of research. Participants in this program are required to present position papers and to express their learned opinions in various forums. The products of Nathaniel's work are always original and "out of the box", combining theoretical concepts with practical applications, and they are presented fluently. These capabilities, it seems, led him to have great success in the research he conducted in the framework of the doctoral program, and they will enable him to be a productive researcher in the future.

In addition to the professional realm, Nathaniel's work is always accompanied by first-rate ideological dedication. Nathaniel's Zionist outlook, which combines Torah and facts, is tangibly evident in his every action and idea. He experiences and suffers from the problems of Israeli society, thinks tirelessly about how they can be solved, and strives to correct them and bring about change. Nathaniel does not settle for superficial and shallow statements, but rather seeks to get to the root of the problem and probe the depths of the nuances within them. He understands that only in this way will it be possible to provide a cure and an appropriate response to the needs of the various components in the mosaic of Israeli society. His choice to specifically teach the subject of citizenship in a secular school that has a progressive outlook (he consulted with me personally regarding this decision), testifies to this more than anything. Nathaniel did not in any way give up his inner world of values as an observer of the Torah and its commandments, yet he managed to create bridges, friendships and educational processes with secular teachers, parents, and students, making connections across the divide.

In the personal realm, Nathaniel is characterized by a very high level of emotional intelligence, with the ability to read and respond to various personal and social situations in an informed way, which gets to the heart of the matter. He also excels in group settings, with a strong ability to promote fruitful discourse and real dialogue during various discussions and debates. He stands up for the truth, while simultaneously listening to and including others. In the social realm, Nathaniel is able to create both personal and professional relationships with colleagues. He displays a strong capacity for leadership and teamwork, and demonstrating collegiality.

In light of all these professional, academic, personal, and ethical aspects, I believe that Nathaniel is the most deserving candidate for the Mozes S. Schupf Fellowship Program. I am certain he will faithfully represent the values of the program, as he already expresses them in his life.

Sincerely yours,

Prof. Gideon Sapir

Faculty of Law, Bar-Ilan University

Head of the "Eitam" program, Kohelet Policy Forum