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October 14, 2021

RE: Jesus M. Melendez Montañez

To: Intellectus Foundation

It gives me great pleasure to write a letter of support on behalf of Jesús M. Meléndez Montañez as part of his application to the Research Grants program. Jesús is currently enrolled as a second-year medical student at the Ponce Health Science University, accredited LCME Medical School in Puerto Rico.

Jesús has a curious and inquisitive thirst of knowledge that motivated him to contact me by email last November 2020 after he took his clinical respiratory physiology course. On that email, Jesús stated clearly how much he enjoyed the respiratory course and started to consider pulmonary as a future medical career. Since then, Jesús has been in contact with me to provide mentorship for his medical career and research goals.

His interest in pulmonary disease and passion to medicine and his community were translated into the development of various educational LIVE webinars, one about Cystic Fibrosis and COVID-19 on social media, another webinar about asthma conscientization for the EcoExploratorio: Museo de Ciencias en Puerto Rico. In addition, he co-authored an educational article for the Revista Mi Pediatra de la Sociedad Puertorriqueña de Pediatría regarding Cystic Fibrosis. He is committed to continue increasing awareness of pulmonary diseases including: Cystic Fibrosis, Asthma and Obesity-related lung diseases. His motivation to get involved in extracurricular activities are not the only skills he has. Also, Jesús completed various shadow visits to our pediatric pulmonary clinics during his vacations and was able to participate in a pediatric bronchoscopy. During the fall of 2020 and spring of 2021 Jesus, presented two case reports in which he is co-author in the San Juan Bautista School of Medicine 5<sup>th</sup> Interdisciplinary Research Symposium, University of Puerto Rico Medical Sciences Campus 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Research and Educational Symposium and Ponce Research Institute 16<sup>th</sup> Virtual Scientific Conference. This past summer, Jesus conducted and completed a research project sponsored by the Ponce Research Institute under my mentorship titled: *CFTR-related Metabolic Syndrome Genetic Variants and their Role Increasing Pancreatitis Risk in the Pediatric Puerto Rican Population* which was completed successfully during this time and received the Best Summer Research Award for his outstanding performance during the summer and for his oral presentation.

Jesús has always showed great enthusiasm when we talk about the possibility to take care of patients and be an advocate for children at the same time using new health delivery approaches like Telemedicine. He has a positive attitude, analytic mind, and continuous interest in learning more about health disparities and the impact of obesity in the pediatric pulmonary health. Jesús enjoys academic discussions and seeks intellectual challenges constantly. At the personal level, he is a young man with strong moral values and empathy evidenced with every encounter and communication we had. A part of his interest in pulmonary disease, he decided to continuously work with pulmonary diseases research due to personal motivations. Pulmonary research is important because it affects Hispanics, and Jesús can be one of the future leaders in this field.

I'm convinced that given this research scholarship funding opportunity to Jesus M. Melendez Montañez by the Intellectus Foundation, will help him to develop more interest in medical research as a future career. I will work as Jesús mentos, hand-by-hand to guarantee the success of his research project.

In summary, Jesus M. Melendez Montañez is a well-rounded, outstanding mature young man who has all the qualities to succeed in medical research and support your mission of helping future researchers. I give him my strongest recommendation. If you have a question, please, do not hesitate to contact me at 787-375-8914 or wilfredo.dejesus3@upr.edu.

Sincerely,

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