January 6, 2020

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you in advance for writing a letter of endorsement and assessment for this applicant for a DARE (Diversifying Academia, Recruiting Excellence) Doctoral Fellowship. To provide some context for your letter, we would like to explain the goals for the program and expectations for DARE Fellows.

The DARE Doctoral Fellowship Program reflects Stanford’s commitment to diversify the professoriate in the United States. DARE is a program intended to better prepare Stanford doctoral students from diverse backgrounds to have successful faculty careers, and, at the same time, contribute to the richness of the educational environment at Stanford. The program expands the academic “pipeline” in two ways. It positively influences the career trajectories of its participants, while also enriching the education of other Stanford students.

Created in 2008 as a four-year pilot program, the success of the Fellows’ and the Provost’s commitment to diversifying the professoriate has led to DARE’s continuation. The 13th cohort of Fellows will be selected in Spring 2020. The Office of the Vice Provost for Graduate Education (VPGE) administers and evaluates the program.

DARE Fellows are students who see diversity as a resource for enriching the education of others. This means that we seek candidates who are committed to actively diversifying academia throughout their careers and whose background and life experiences would diversify the professoriate in their own academic fields. Stanford’s commitment to diversity is broadly conceived to include (but is not limited to): underrepresented racial and ethnic minorities; first-generation college students; women in natural science and engineering fields; gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender students; students with disabilities; as well as others whose backgrounds and experiences would diversify the professoriate in their academic fields. Applicants from all backgrounds are welcome.

Diversifying the next generation of faculty requires preparing students to be successful in the many roles and responsibilities expected by contemporary colleges and universities. Therefore, we seek applicants who are already planning an academic career, and for whom this program will enhance their preparation. At the same time, we recognize that some students are questioning whether a faculty career suits them. Through DARE, those students “on the fence” will better understand the opportunities and challenges of academic careers. Moreover, we recognize that Stanford graduate students become successful faculty members at a wide variety of U.S. colleges and universities — research universities, teaching-focused comprehensive universities, liberal arts colleges, special mission institutions, and two-year colleges; and the program will enable them to make more informed choices.

DARE Fellowships provide a generous annual stipend ($11,500 per quarter for AY 2019-20) and TGR tuition for two full academic years, with preference given to those in the last two years of their Ph.D. program. However, DARE Fellowships are much more than a funding source. The DARE Program also provides an integrated set of activities in which DARE Fellows participate. The structured experiences — including seminars on navigating the academic profession, skill-development modules,
opportunities to interact with faculty, conducting a small project to enrich the educational experience of the student community— are built on successful models of preparing future faculty at other universities. The DARE curriculum is most relevant for students in the final two years of the Ph.D. program. Contrary to some initial concerns, participation in DARE has not extended time to degree.

Ensuring that DARE Fellows make the best use of the program requires a three-way partnership between the Fellow, the faculty advisor, and VPGE. VPGE will be vigilant to ensure that participation in this program does not place demands on Fellows’ time such that it would distract from their dissertation research and writing. Fellows must work hard and use their time effectively. The encouragement of the Fellow’s dissertation advisor is crucial to achieving this goal.

More information about DARE can be found at http://vpge.stanford.edu/dare.

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**Advisor’s Letter of Assessment and Endorsement**

Please provide your candid assessment of this student’s qualifications for this program.

Five positive factors are:

- Potential for a successful career as a faculty member in a U.S. college or university.
- Ability to diversify the professoriate within the student’s primary academic field. Diversity is broadly conceived to include (but not limited to) race, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, gender, sexual orientation, disability, as well as other backgrounds that would add diversity.
- Engagement with one or more communities that are underrepresented in the academy, and a demonstrated commitment to use diversity as a resource for enriching the education of others.
- Demonstrated potential to become an academic leader
- Likelihood of completing doctorate in spring or summer 2022.

Please indicate your support for this student’s participation in the DARE program. Letters should be submitted via the on-line application system by March 30, 2020. You will receive an email with submission instructions. We request that letters be limited to two single spaced pages.

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Please let us know if you have questions or concerns. Thank you again for your help.

Sincerely,

Stacey F. Bent
Vice Provost for Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs