



August 30, 2021

Kathryn Hansen, BS, CPC, CPMA, REEGT
Society of Behavioral Sleep Medicine
1522 Player Drive
Lexington, KY 40511

Dear Ms. Hansen and Fellow Selection Committee:

It is my great honor and privilege to write a letter supporting Dr. S. Justin Thomas for SBSM Fellow status. I know Dr. Thomas is well known to you as the 2020 Arthur Spielman Early Career Distinguished Achievement Award recipient and member of our board. I have had the opportunity to work with Dr. Thomas for the last several years collaborating on research, discussing challenging clinical cases, and serving on committees for the society. During this time, I have gotten to know Dr. Thomas and his record well and I can say, without reservation, that he has my full support for fellow status.

Dr. Thomas is truly outstanding in many domains that I believe qualify him for fellow status. First, his scholarship is truly superb for a junior faculty member. He has published more than 25 manuscripts in leading journals in the field such as Behavioral Sleep Medicine and the Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine in addition to leading health psychology journals. This work is well-read and well-cited, as evidenced by his 1,006 citations, h-index of 13, and i-10 index of 15. Thus, not only is Dr. Thomas publishing, but his work is actually having an impact on the field and guiding further research. He has also been very active (and successful) in seeking and obtaining external grant funding. He currently is PI on a Career Development Award funded by the American Heart Association to conduct a 30-hour constant routine protocol to examine circadian control of blood pressure, a research skill not many behavioral sleep medicine (BSM) specialists have. He was invited by Drs. Dan Buysse and Katie Stone to serve as a site PI for a large multi-site PCORI grant (COZI trial). He also serves as a Co-Investigator on 4 current R01 awards ranging from a sleep ancillary study to the CARDIA cohort to an investigation of mechanisms underlying insomnia and pain sensitivity among individuals with HIV. In many of these studies, Dr. Thomas is collaborating with individuals outside his home institution, which speaks to how highly regarded he is across the country. He currently has one R01 application under review (sleep, circadian rhythms and sickle cell disease), one R01 application being submitted in October 2021 (insomnia, hypnotic medication use, and falls), and another R01 application being submitting in February 2022 (circadian misalignment and blood pressure). Thus, he will likely continue his research productivity long beyond when his currently funded projects end.

I believe Dr. Thomas' service and standing in the field is just as impressive as his research achievements. Dr. Thomas played a leading role in the last two SBSM meetings in Birmingham, both of which were great successes. This is a major service role to take on as an assistant professor, and he showed tremendous leadership and commitment in this role. He has also served as a member of the practice committee, liaison to the education committee, and also

chaired the practice committee (he just couldn't get enough of it). Due to this, it was unsurprising to me that Dr. Thomas was elected to the SBSM board of directors. In fact, I must admit that his candidacy made me nervous as someone also running for a position because I know how respected he is in our field and society, and rightfully so.

Lastly, I would like to comment on Dr. Thomas' commitment to training and mentorship. I believe this often gets overlooked in these decisions, which is unfortunate because it is one of the most important ways an individual can impact a field. For instance, Dr. Lichstein did amazing work in his career, but having spoken to him many times I have no doubt that he would say his greatest accomplishment is the careers he launched, and looking at the folks he mentored, I believe he is right. Although Dr. Thomas' academic and service achievements are outstanding, I believe his greatest contribution will be through his training and mentorship. Upon graduation he immediately worked toward board certification and establishing an accredited training program at break-neck speed. As someone who has done neither of these things yet, though I have started many times, I have an appreciation for the effort and commitment this takes. Dr. Thomas has already graduated two individuals from his BSM training program, is graduating another trainee this year, and currently has an additional four graduate student trainees (two trainees in his lab and two trainees from other faculty members' labs) who provide BSM services under his supervision. He also serves as a research mentor for the Sleep Research Society and SBSM. Having worked closely with Dr. Thomas and one of his mentees, I can tell you that his mentorship is top-notch. He has high expectation but provides support that allows for students to scaffold in order to achieve more than they are capable of independently. I have been impressed by the growth I have seen in his mentees, and I have no doubt that he is going to produce many leaders in the field.

As such, it is my great honor to nominate and strongly support Dr. Thomas for fellow status in the SBSM. He not only already has a national/international reputation, he is already a national leader in the field, and he is as promising as any assistant professor I have come across in a long time! He has my full support without any reservation.

Sincerely,



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