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Selection Committee, IPITA Scientific Abstract Travel Award
Re: Braulio MARFIL-GARZA

Dear Colleagues,

I am pleased to write this letter in support of Dr MARFIL-GARZA's application for this travel award. I have been extremely impressed by Braulio in my role as a member of his PhD thesis committee, and now as his direct supervisor in his current role as Clinical Islet Transplant Fellow.

As can be seen from his CV, Braulio has had a diverse and broad training as both a clinician and scientist. It is unusual for someone with expertise in internal medicine to pursue doctoral studies which require the development of skills in micro-surgery and rodent transplantation. It would be a mistake to perceive the diverse training as reflective of lack of focus – but rather than a deep curiosity and desire to understand more deeply and an unwillingness to accept one perspective as sufficient for understanding. This view is supported by the very impressive track record of publications – demonstrating the ability to follow ideas through to publication.

Braulio has acquired significant skills across a broad range of domains (clinical, data handling, experimental, epidemiology, meta-analysis) that will make him a uniquely complete clinician scientist. As a result we hope to recruit him to a junior faculty position at the University of Alberta to bolster our expertise in clinical and basic research in islet and pancreas transplantation. The IPITA Scientific Abstract Travel Award would afford an excellent and timely opportunity to support Braulio in attending the most important global conference in the field of islet transplantation and help him establish and grow collaborations that will help launch his independent career.

Braulio has excellent inter-personal and communication skills and is a warm and generous human being. He is anxious to fill any gaps he perceives in his skill sets and has actively sought opportunities to expand his clinical expertise in the management of Type 1 and post-transplant diabetes, HLA and Transplant Infectious Diseases with a view to a career as a physician working in islet and pancreas transplantation. I would consider Braulio to be in the top three of doctorate / post-doc students who I have evaluated or supervised (directly, indirectly as thesis committee membership, or external reviewer) over the 19 years since my academic appointment. The other two are successful clinician scientists whose academic impact have superseded mine. I expect Braulio's career to take a similar trajectory and cannot overstate my support for his application.

Braulio comes with a maturity and broad perspective which is not common and his CV speaks to his leadership skills – he will be a future leader in the pancreas and islet transplant community. I trust that my comments will be helpful as you consider Braulio's application.

Yours faithfully,

