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February 20, 2018

Committee on Fellows

American Statistical Association

It is a pleasure for me to support the ASA Fellow nomination of Milo Shield. I met Milo six years ago as a participant in an ASA invited session he had organized for authors of recent statistical books. After the session, we talked at some length about his efforts to promote statistical literacy, and the StatLit.org website in particular. I was greatly impressed by his obvious passion and effort devoted to the ideal of promoting clear quantitative thinking and analysis in our society.

Since then, we have spoken occasionally and interacted through the website. What Milo has accomplished is truly extraordinary. The quality of the projects and activities he has undertaken are evident in his CV and supporting letters from those who have worked closely with him. I would like to address some reasons why these contributions merit recognition. I speak from the perspective of a statistical practitioner, with 45 years of experience as a consultant, researcher, author and entrepreneur.

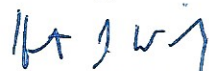
Most ASA Fellows have traditionally been selected for technical achievements in the academic, industrial and governmental spheres. Individuals whose careers fall outside these areas have a much lower chance of coming to the attention of current ASA Fellows. Consequently, they are far less likely to become Fellows. However, precisely because they work outside the mainstream, such folks may have unique contributions with powerful impacts on our profession and society. I believe it is particularly important and appropriate for ASA to give visibility to such individuals, as it seeks to remain vital and relevant.

Promoting statistical literacy is certainly one of the most important missions of the ASA. Many ASA Fellows pursue this objective, often implicitly, in many worthwhile ways. However, Milo is highly unusual in choosing to make this the centerpiece of his efforts. These tireless and creative efforts are carried out in part through his teaching and related educational activities, and in part through his website. Their broad impact is felt not just by mathematically sophisticated students, but by anyone who wants to understand basic quantitative reasoning. In my own career, I have seen the importance of such skills for those who possess them, and the disadvantages for those who do not. Furthermore, Milo often serves as an unofficial "ambassador" for statistics by connecting with a variety of outside organizations, as well as the press.

The StaLit.org website he created and manages entirely on his own is a unique resource. Its impact has been enormous, with over two million visits since inception, and an increasing volume each year. The site allows anyone to become aware of new publications relevant to statistical issues. As an author, I especially appreciate the exposure he has provided for my own books. Milo reviews, curates, and often comments on various current developments and publications. His site is a free one-stop shop for finding current information about quantitative reasoning and related issues.

For his tremendously valuable service to the statistical profession and society, I strongly endorse Milo's nomination.

Sincerely,



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ASA Fellow