April 10, 2013

Berhane Tsegai has asked me to write a letter in support of his application for the Internship Program for Diversity in Nonprofit Housing and Community Development. I am happy to do so. Berhane is a student of mine in Contemporary Social Theory, an upper division required course in the Sociology Department at San Diego State University. Even though, I have only known Berhane a short time, I feel that I can comment on several factors that would be helpful for making a determination about Berhane’s application.

To this point in the semester, he has excelled academically in the course, and the evaluation process is quite comprehensive. He got an A on each of the first two exams which include multiple choice, true/false and short answer questions. And he got an A on the first paper. The papers in the theory course are usually more difficult because they require the ability to think critically and abstractly. Berhane’s paper was well written, thoughtful and demonstrated a sensibility to and a comprehension of the issues that were raised in the prompt. He also got full credit for the out of class assignments. I got to know Berhane better than most of the students through these out of class assignments. I give the students a series of documentaries to view and then have them come to office hours to talk with me about them. Berhane demonstrated a genuine interest in the documentaries and a genuine concern for the problems and issues raised in the documentaries.

In the short time that I have known him, I have been able to see a young person who has a larger view of the world, perhaps because of his background, who, also because of that background, is more mature than most of the students with whom I interact. I believe Berhane would be an excellent choice for the internship and hope that my letter reflects that belief. If I can be of any further help, please let me know. I can be reached at [psemm@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:psemm@mail.sdsu.edu) or 619-594-5906.

Sincerely,

Paul Tom Semm

Professor of Sociology

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