**Expert Opinion Letter for Exceptional Ability and National Interest Waiver (NIW)**

Evaluator: Jeffrey Hammer

Assistant Dean of Academics/Associate Professor of Screenwriting

University of North Carolina School of the Arts School of Filmmaking

# AREAS OF EXPERTISE

# Screenwriting

# Film Production

# Education

# EMPLOYMENT

# University of North Carolina School of the Arts - 2019 to Present

# Associate Professor of Screenwriting – 2025 to present

# Assistant Dean of Academics – 2024 to present

# Assistant Professor of Screenwriting – 2019 to 2025

# Adjunct Assistant Professor, University of Southern California – 2017 to 2019

# Adjunct Faculty, Academy of Art University – 2018 to 2019

# Teacher, Kehillah Jewish High School – 2012-2015

# Teacher, Ramona Convent Secondary School – 2006-2012

# Director/Administrative Positions, One Heartland – Summers 1999-2006

# Entertainment Writer, The Badger Herald – 1998-2000

**FILMS AND RECOGNITIONS**

FEATURES

* Producer/Writer of feature film ***Emi’s World*** (dir. Eric McEver)
  + - February-March 2025 production
    - Currently in post-production for 2026 release
* Producer/Writer of feature film ***Iké Boys*** (dir. Eric McEver)
  + - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FAhvH1dJlYs>
    - Released by Shout! Studios for domestic distribution (October 11, 2022)
    - Nationwide theatrical release in Japan (June 14, 2024)
    - 100% rating on Rotten Tomatoes
    - World Premiere at Fantastic Fest
    - International Premiere at Bucheon International Fantastic Film Festival (BIFAN)
    - Official exhibitions at San Diego Comic Con, G-Fest XXVIII, Otakon, and Anime Boston
    - Official Selection and Opening Night Film of Phoenix Film Festival as part of its International Horror and Sci-Fi Film Festival programming
    - Official Selection of Yubari International Fantastic Film Festival
      * Winner: BEST EDITING, Boston Sci-Fi Film Festival
* Producer of documentary feature film ***American Gadfly*** (dir. Skye Wallin)
  + - <https://americangadflymovie.com>
    - Released by Gravitas Ventures for domestic distribution (January 3, 2022)
    - Audience Award Winner for Best Documentary Feature at Ashland Independent Film Festival
    - Official Selection of Mill Valley Film Festival, Heartland International Film Festival, Woods Hole Film Festival, Mountainfilm Festival, Port Townsend Film Festival, BendFilm Festival, Dallas VideoFest, Doctober

# Script Consultant on feature film *Skylines* (dir. Liam O’Donnell)

* + - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oxhD5g2rnqg>
    - Released by Vertical Entertainment in theaters & Apple TV in December 2020
    - Available on Netflix, Amazon Prime, and other major streaming platforms

# Associate Producer of feature film *Curtiz* (dir. Tamás Yvan Topolanszky)

* + - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sYzDlLiuKaQ>
    - Nominated for 12 Hungarian Film Awards: Picture, Director, Screenplay, Actor, Actress, Supporting Actor, Supporting Actress, Music, Sound, Hair/Makeup (won), Costume Design (won), Production Design (won)
    - Acquired as a Netflix Original Film, released in March 2020
    - WINNER: Grand Prix des Amériques (Best Film), Montreal World Film Festival
    - WINNER: Best Foreign Film, Burbank International Film Festival
    - WINNER: Best Director, Riviera International Film Festival
    - WINNER: Best Cinematography, Boston International Film Festival
    - Official Selection of Beijing International Film Festival, Shanghai International Film Festival, Phoenix Film Festival, Newport Beach Film Fest, Hungarian Film Festival, Pendance Film Festival, Camerimage International Film Festival, Cottbuss Film Festival, Washington D.C. Independent Film Festival, NYC Independent Film Festival, Jewish International Film Festival, Toronto Jewish Film Festival, Miami Jewish Film Festival, San Francisco Jewish Film Festival
* Producer/Writer/Director of the feature film ***Live or Die in La Honda*** 
  + - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8J3xkKJwhtg&t>

SHORT FORM CONTENT

* Producer of the short film ***A Blossom in the Night*** (dir. Tayo Amos)
  + - <https://vimeo.com/364193747> (PW: staff)
    - Official Selection Urbanworld Film Festival, Boston Sci-Fi Film Festival, London Lift-Off Film Festival, Berlin Lift-Off Film Festival, Denton Black Film Festival, Istanbul Film Awards, ARFF Berlin International Awards, Bridges International Film Festival, Halifax Black Film Festival, Baltimore International Black Film Festival, Hollywood Women’s Film Festival, Artemis Women in Action Film Festival, Rhode Island Black Film Festival, Charlotte Black Film Festival, Black Warrior Film Festival, New Filmmakers Los Angeles, Indie Short Fest, Global Film Festival Awards, Festigious Los Angeles
* Producer of the short film ***Death of Sam Wolf*** (2020, dir. Skye Wallin)
  + - <https://vimeo.com/357855468> (PW: LeapOfSam)
    - Official Selection of Philip K. Dick Science Fiction & Supernatural Festival and Raleigh Film & Art Festival
* Producer of the short film ***Iago***(2019, dir. Amit Bhalla)
  + - https://vimeo.com/289916861 (PW: shakespeare)
    - WINNER: Best Drama, LA Shorts International Film Festival
    - Official Selection Pan African Arts and Film Festival, Roxbury International Film Festival, Harlem International Film Festival, Sulmona International Film Festival, Oakland International Film Festival, San Francisco Black Film Festival, Greater Cleveland Urban Film Festival, TIDE Film Festival
* Producer of the original web series ***Personal Space*** (2018, created and directed by Tom R. Pike, Dana Luery Shaw, and Zach Wallnau)
  + - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i3qxPekkEs0>
    - 1st Season of 28 episodes premiered on Amazon Prime in March 2018
    - Official Selection of Boston Sci-Fi Film Festival, Berlin Sci-Fi Filmfest, Vancouver Web Fest, Philip K. Dick Science Fiction & Supernatural Festival, HollyWeb Festival
* Producer of the short film ***Leave*** (2018, dir. Caatje van Leeuwen)
  + - <https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/263253922> (PW: Leave2018)
    - Official Selection of LA Femme International Film Festival

# EDUCATION

# West Bend West H.S. valedictorian (West Bend, WI), 1996

# B.S. w/ Honors in English, Creative Writing Emphasis & Molecular Biology (University of Wisconsin-Madison), 2000

# Medical College of Wisconsin (Milwaukee, WI), 2000-2003

# M.F.A. Screenwriting (University of Southern California), 2006

Dear USCIS,

I am providing this opinion letter based on my experience in the field of Art and Culture. With regard to my academic background, I received my B.S. in English and Molecular Biology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and my M.F.A. in Screenwriting from the University of Southern California.

To briefly introduce myself, I am an experienced filmmaker living in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. Among my many projects, I produced and co-wrote the feature film *Iké Boys*, which was acquired by Shout! Studios for domestic distribution and Jackrabbit Media for international sales, and I produced the documentary feature *American Gadfly*, which was acquired by Gravitas Ventures for domestic distribution. Most recently, I shot the feature film *Emi’s World*, which is currently in post-production with a planned 2026 release. I am also the Assistant Dean of Academics in the School of Filmmaking and an Associate Professor of Screenwriting at the University of North Carolina School of the Arts. I teach courses in the School of Filmmaking, mentor Screenwriting majors, and provide service to the university in various capacities.

As an evaluator, I am responsible for reviewing academic and experiential qualifications to form part of a candidate’s credential evaluation report, providing a detailed analysis of the academic background and occupational experience that a person has received outside the United States.

Sincerely,

Jeff Hammer

Assistant Dean of Academics, School of Filmmaking

Associate Professor of Screenwriting

University of North Carolina School of the Arts