

Aram Schefrin

Monday, May 18, 2009

National Medal of Technology and Innovation
Attention: Jennifer Lo, Program Manager
United States Patent and Trademark Office
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Re: Nomination of Zalman M. Shapiro

Dear NMTI Committee Members:

I'm an attorney and author. Zalman Shapiro is my uncle. I have no personal familiarity with his work – but I know *him* very well. And I cannot imagine anyone more qualified, as a human being, for your award.

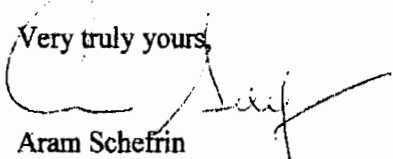
Dr. Shapiro's lifelong dedication to science has extended from his initial work at Johns Hopkins in 1942-45 to now when, at age 89, he has received his fifteenth patent (for a new method of synthesizing diamonds). He is one of the oldest persons now alive to receive a patent.

I am not surprised at his success at his age. Where science is concerned, I have never known him to sit still for a moment. From his work at Westinghouse's Naval Nuclear Power Laboratory (where he developed processes to produce commercial amounts of pure zirconium necessary to the cladding of nuclear reactor fuel rods, making the first nuclear submarine feasible) through his work at Nuclear Materials and Equipment Corporation (where his innovations in uranium-oxide processing helped to make nuclear power competitive with fossil fuel in power plants, and developed a fuel for the first time using surplus plutonium) to his participation in the development of the first-successful nuclear-powered pacemaker and commercial applications of radiation for food preservation and sterilization of medical supplies, he has been entirely dedicated to using science to improve the human condition. That is not solely because of his intellectual skills in science, but also his great concern and respect for humanity, which has expressed itself in his lifelong and extensive contributions of his time and money to charities (including, at age 80, the Pittsburgh Tolerance Project, dedicated to raising youth awareness of the effects of prejudice) and in his gentle and considerate way with everyone.

I'm sure with your acumen and the assistance of other letters, you can assess Dr. Shapiro's scientific accomplishments. What I want to point out is that if you want to

honor a great human being and a shining example to all those who have reached the age of retirement and believe there is nothing left for them to do, Dr. Shapiro is your man.

Very truly yours,


Aram Scheffrin

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