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October 12, 2001

Mr. Daniel M. Hull
President
Principal Investigator for STEP II
CORD
601 Lake Air Drive
Waco, TX 76710

Dear Mr. Hull:

I am writing to give you our full support in your efforts to obtain a National Science Foundation ATE Grant. I understand that this grant will enable you to revise and update Photonics skill standards, curriculum framework, and module outlines. Howard Community College is very pleased that you have included us in this grant effort.

I know that approximately 4,500 people are employed by optical communication companies in central Maryland and that a workforce is expected to double every year for the foreseeable future. I am alarmed that the supply of technicians lags far behind the demand for the skilled workforce necessary to meet the demands of this fast growing industry. It is essential that the need be met if this industry is to continue to grow and thrive in Maryland. That is why the efforts of Howard Community College, in partnership with several local fiber optics businesses and the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, to establish a Photonics curriculum are so critical.

Also the college is interested in piloting the module outlines at Howard Community College. I am looking forward to working with you to enforce that this initiative be successful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Daniel Friedman".

Daniel Friedman
Chairperson, Science and Technology Division