Letter of Support for OP-TEC: OPCN Colleges

August 25th, 2016

Dr. V. Celeste Carter
Lead Program Director
Advanced Technology Education
National Science Foundation

As an Adjunct Instructor of Northwestern Michigan College I am writing to express support and commitment for the continued funding of OP-TEC the National Center for Optics and Photonics Education, and its efforts to educate optics and photonics technicians for the US workforce.

OP-TEC provides a clearinghouse of photonics related instructional materials to community colleges.

OP-TEC has provided us with scholarship money and access to free textbooks that enable high-school students to participate in dual-enrollment courses at no cost to them or their school.

As we continue to petition for an upgrade of our course to a Level I Science Course at NMC, OP-TEC will be instrumental in supporting our efforts by providing data, coordinating with other photonics community colleges, and justifying the upgrade of our rating for our photonics course. A consolidated list of classes taught at all OPCN colleges and their transferability will allow us to compare our courses taught at NMC to that of other colleges and universities, thus establishing a criteria upon which we can support the transfer of credits students earn at our college to other colleges. OP-TEC is the logical avenue for pursuing this historical documentation regarding photonics education at community colleges.

We are committed to continuing to provide OP-TEC reports and feedback on the effectiveness of the products they provide to the photonics community.

Over the past three years since reinstating our photonics program as part of the Engineering Technology AAS at NMC, all graduates of the photonics program have been employed, or were offered employment, at the local Electro Optics Technology company located in Traverse City.

OP-TEC’s mission is critical to the success of the optics and photonics programs at two year colleges. These efforts are also critical to the United States to provide the workforce to retain its security and leadership position in vital applications of emerging technical technologies.

Sincerely,

Brian Sweeney
Adjunct Instructor, NMC