



The University of Vermont

February 25, 2015

A letter to Vermont's Legislators:

This is written to support and emphasize the need for the services provided by Vermont Interactive Technologies (VIT).

When the University of Vermont began offering distance learning classes we turned to VIT to extend our reach beyond the campus and connect with students statewide. Even though you can "get there from here" in Vermont, potential students don't often have the luxury of time or job flexibility to meet their educational needs by driving to campus for a course let alone an entire degree program.

VIT offers the regional convenience of a professionally run organization that supports students' educational goals while building a sense of community among participants.

When the UVM's RN-BS nursing degree program began it was offered in part on VIT. Without this opportunity, nurses in Vermont's hospitals would not easily be able to gain new skills and advance their educational goals, potentially forcing them to take a leave from work or to leave Vermont to meet their educational needs. We're able to keep an increasingly skilled nursing workforce here and employed as they take their courses.

UVM's School Library Media Sequence books several sessions each semester. The program offers licensed educators the opportunity to gain an additional endorsement as a School Library Media Specialist on their license. Thus, as older librarians retire, their jobs may be filled with qualified Vermont residents. Again, keeping the talented and skilled workforce here to serve our K-12 students.

The courses offered by the Communication Science department at UVM focus on Autism and Language Disorders. They involve teachers, parents, UVM students and community members who come together to learn how to build support systems for Autistic children. This is an invaluable service for communities throughout the state.

Lastly, the very important economic factor of using VIT:

We are able to keep tuition dollars in Vermont because we're serving Vermonters statewide with VIT, and, especially this year, we all know how valuable every dollar is to one's bottom line.

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We're able to keep people employed as they gain new skills.

I urge you to seriously reconsider the effect that would be felt state wide if we were to lose VIT services.

Sincerely,

Ellen Morris

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