February 27, 2015

Representative Mitzi Johnson
Chair, House Appropriations Committee
Grand Isle

Dear Rep. Johnson,

I am writing to share my thoughts on Vermont EPSCoR's partnership with the Governor's Institutes of Vermont. Vermont EPSCoR is the NSF funded Experimental Program to Stimulate Research Competitiveness in Vermont that carries out important research on adaptation to climate change in the Lake Champlain Basin but also supports programs that provide STEM education opportunities to low-income young people and girls. The Governor's Institutes of Vermont is an important partner for us since it very effectively attracts disadvantaged students and particularly girls to STEM careers. GIV also successfully reaches low-income teens – those Vermonters whose risk of academic underachievement is highest. In 2014, 24% of GIV STEM students came from Vermont's six highest poverty counties.

Each year Vermont EPSCoR conducts its own independent review of the programmatic outcomes of GIV programming. This year's results are typical:
- o 81% of summer and 77% of winter participants reported that participation in the GIV program increased their interest in further STEM studies.
- o Among summer Institute participants, young women were significantly more likely to report that the program increased their interest in pursuing STEM studies than did young men.

There are many more glowing statistics that the GIV staff can provide to you. As we all strive to keep talented Vermonters in our state to fill technology jobs, I hope that you will take these thoughts into consideration when deciding on budgets.

Sincerely,

J. Van Houten

Judith Van Houten
Vermont EPSCoR State Director
University Distinguished Professor, UVM

Cc: Karen Taylor Mitchell, Executive Director, Governor's Institutes of Vermont

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