

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA - CHAMPAIGN

College of Engineering

Office of the Dean
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March 23, 2015

President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President,

As one of the premier engineering colleges in the world, the College of Engineering at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign is educating tomorrow's leaders to address the 21st century's Grand Challenges. With 400 faculty and more than 10,000 students in engineering and more than 2,500 faculty and 44,000 students across 17 colleges campus wide, our program is strong, diverse and leading the way in preparing young minds for tomorrow. They are all amazing talents, and they do the impossible every day. It's a very exciting place.

At Illinois, we integrate ways of thinking about Grand Challenges throughout our curriculum. Our program provides opportunities for experiential learning, international experiences, and service learning, as well as a strong entrepreneurial program through our Technology Entrepreneur Center. We are also continually forging new partnerships with other disciplines so that our engineers are well-rounded and have a strong understanding of societal, cultural and economic issues.

We are developing cohort themes around which groups of students can build their entire 4-year curriculum. Our first cohort, "Cancer Scholars" is now in its second year, and we are growing into other themes. We also feature courses that are specifically designed for the Grand Challenges, ranging from infrastructure to medicine to solar energy to clean water. Courses include "Honduras Water Project," "Innovation in Ecuador," "Innovation for Social Good" and "Learning in Community." The aspirations are massive and the undertakings are global. And our students are responding. A company started while its founders were students called GreenLight Planet, for example, has already delivered more than 1,000,000 solar-charged LED lanterns throughout India and Africa, creating thousands of entrepreneurs across these regions in the process.

Innovation at Illinois includes the classroom, the field and the laboratory. We continue to lead in educational reform, and our programs are second to none. In addition to the strong, foundational engineering training that we provide, these project-based experiences are producing a generation of highly skilled, socially aware engineers who are poised to find solutions to some of our greatest challenges. We are creating a Grand Challenges Scholars Program at Illinois with which we celebrate our most passionate students through a formal certificate upon successful completion of all five aspects of the program.

We appreciate your leadership and strong support of science and engineering education. We look forward to working with you to provide the minds, skills and hearts that make for a better tomorrow.

Sincerely,

Andreas C. Cangellaris
Dean