

March 23, 2015

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

Dear Mr. President,

The College of Engineering at the University of Notre Dame is pleased to commit to the establishment of a Grand Challenge Scholars Program. Many of our students already fulfill most, if not all, of the key elements of a Grand Challenge Scholars Program through curricular work and extracurricular activities. The establishment of a Grand Challenge Scholars program at Notre Dame entails identifying and organizing the specific activities and elements that currently exist as well as the development of new components that will enhance the experience. In support of this effort, an outline identifying the key elements for the Grand Challenge Scholars Program at Notre Dame was recently submitted for my approval. I have reviewed this outline and made recommendations to provide additional linkage to the existing programs at Notre Dame.

Our next steps involve the implementation of the program. We will continue to identify the activities within Notre Dame and organize these activities around the key elements of a Grand Challenge Scholars Program. We will identify the key personnel and organizational structure for administration of the program. Once completed, we will begin the recruitment of students for participation in the first year of the program. Along these lines, we have already begun raising the awareness of the Grand Challenges among our first-year engineering students. The students were asked to review the fourteen Grand Challenges and select those challenges that were most interesting. They were required to document and reflect on their choice in their electronic portfolio (eportfolio), which is an important element of our program as it provides the means for students to plan, organize, document and share their progress with stakeholders.

In summary, I believe that the educational model presented in the Grand Challenge Scholars Program will build on existing strengths in our program, and will give us a great framework around which to organize additional activities to enhance our engineering students' development and, ultimately, to prepare them for leadership within the profession and for our nation. Hence, I restate our commitment to the establishment of a Grand Challenge Scholars Program at Notre Dame. I am confident that we will be able to achieve the goal of graduating at least twenty scholars per year.

Sincerely,



Peter Kilpatrick  
McCloskey Dean of Engineering