RE: Letter of Affirmation for KCC’s Innovative Special Projects Class:

To Whom It May Concern,

I would like to affirm that Kankakee Community College’s STEM Guitar Class is innovative, relevant, and dynamic STEM education. Nationwide, there are increasing concerns from businesses about the supply of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics trained workers. Science and math test scores in the U.S. are among the lowest around the world. The goal and objective of the STEM Guitar Building Institutes is to showcase a new way to present learning for students with applied methods.

Professor Tim Wilhelm attended an instructor’s training course developed by Sinclair Community College and funded through a National Science Foundation NSF project. This project is designed to help faculty increase their students' interest and engagement in the study of and learning of STEM principles, practices, and careers through guitar design and building. Professor Wilhelm quickly adopted the curriculum for KCC and is currently teaching the course with a waiting list.

The National STEM Guitar Project, in partnership with NSF Advanced Technological Education (ATE) Centers with funding provided through a grant from The National Science Foundation (#1304405), hosts innovative Guitar Building Institutes around the United States. The 5-day institutes, combined with additional instructional activities comprising 80 hours, provide faculty training on science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) for middle, high school, and post-secondary faculty. The institutes present and teach participants hands-on, applied learning techniques to help engage students and spark excitement for learning STEM subject matter.

The training course provided STEM educators, like Professor Tim Wilhelm at Kankakee Community College access to the project’s STEM curriculum, which are aligned to the Common Core and Next Gen Science standards using guitar building concepts. The curriculum materials are self-contained including instructor resources, training videos, online quizzes/assessments and other valuable references. Participants leave this weeklong experience with their custom-made guitars, curriculum modules with short term assessments that can be immediately integrated into the faculty team school curriculum.

Sincerely,



Bert Jacobson,

Dean for Environmental and Institutional Sustainability

Kankakee Community College