June 12, 2014

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing to affirm Johnson County Community College’s (JCCC) submission for a STARS Innovation Credit for *Galileo’s Pavilion*. This project is unique in that it was entirely designed, funded, and built by students through a partnership between JCCC and the University of Kansas School of Architecture’s Studio 804.

Galileo’s Pavilion is a classroom building that opened on the JCCC campus in 2012. It was designed and built by students in KU’s Studio 804 and earned a LEED platinum certificate in 2013, one of only 10 buildings in Kansas to achieve that rating. Among the building’s design features are photovoltaic panels and a wind turbine providing electricity to the building, floor-to-ceiling living green walls, LED lighting in the lounge and vestibules, a system that captures rain from the roof and collects it in a cistern that irrigates the green walls and supplies flush valves in the restrooms, reclaimed glass windows and repurposed slate chalkboards on the exterior and interior and a rain garden.

Studio 804 is an innovative program itself, educating students through a hands-on design/build approach that unfolds over a single academic year. In the sixteen years since the program was established, Studio 804 has pioneered new technologies and advanced construction techniques and completed four LEED Platinum projects, including *Galileo’s Pavilion* and the very first LEED Platinum built in the state, the *Sustainable Prototype* built for Greensburg, KS in 2008 following the tornado that devastated this Western Kansas community. In addition to LEED and Passivhaus designations, they have received international recognition for their accomplishments.

But beyond the state-of-art construction practices used, the true innovation of this project is in the process that resulted in the building. From concept to classroom, the entire process was student driven. Students at JCCC proposed the idea for the facility through the Student Sustainability Committee to initiate the project. Funding was provided in part by students through the Sustainability Initiatives Fund, which is in itself an innovative funding mechanism. And, and as noted above, the building was designed and constructed by students from the University of Kansas through a unique partnership between the two institutions.

Students continue to benefit from this process and partnership by attending classes and using the lounge space in this high performance building. It is also designed in such a way that visitors can learn from interpretive signage and the structure itself, and classes at JCCC can utilize the building as a learning laboratory to gain a better understanding of green building practices.

Although individual components of this project may lend to JCCC receiving credits outside of the Innovation Credit, the unique approach taken and the level of student involvement throughout the project make it and extraordinary example of campus sustainability. Both the process and the *Pavilion* provide a strong model for others seeking to advance initiatives on their campuses and communities, and I am pleased to provide my support for this Innovation Credit.

Sincerely,

Jeff Severin, Director