

February, 24th, 2023

The Honorable Board of Legislation,

St. Paul, MN, 55155

RE: House Bill #1407, Support of Awarding the Minnesota STEM Partnership

Dear Legislators,

I am Shanetta Spriggs, Marketing Engineer and Digital Designer. I am writing to express my support for the Minnesota STEM Partnership's initiatives to promote robotics education and career development for BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color) students and beyond. As a marketing engineer who is passionate about supporting STEM education and promoting diversity and inclusion in STEM fields, I believe that these initiatives are critical to ensuring that everyone has an equal opportunity to contribute to the future of technology.

I commend the Minnesota STEM Partnership for recognizing the importance of promoting robotics education for BIPOC students. Robotics is a field that is ripe with opportunities for innovation and growth, and it is essential that we work to ensure that underrepresented communities have access to the resources and support they need to succeed. I have seen so many students of all races represented by MSP.

I am confident in Minnesota benefiting vastly from all of the efforts that the Minnesota STEM Partnership's initiatives have impacted in the lives of BIPOC families in Minnesota. By providing them with the tools, resources, and support they need to pursue careers in robotics, we can help to create a more diverse and inclusive future for the technology industry.

As a marketing engineer, my role is to bridge the gap between engineering and marketing. I work with engineers to understand the technical aspects of a product or service and then translate that information into language that is easily understood by the general public. I gained my role through the developmental push of this organization. Through the Minnesota STEM Partnership, I have a bigger responsibility to support STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) education beyond the BIPOC community because MSP welcomes all. I was eagerly welcomed by more than my skillsets, but for me as a person. Everyone needs to experience the power of becoming

and not just being when working with or alongside an organization. That changed my life forever.

At MSP, there is a place for everyone from every background. Minnesota is a melting pot of many cultures, and MSP provides careful support and consideration for all to engage in robotics with vigor and certainty. I believe that STEM subjects are the key to unlocking a prosperous future for individuals and society as a whole. The Minnesota STEM Partnership is the key to furthering the Twin Cities and state Planning Division. This is a state that is proud of its “wide talent, diversity, and strong economic and cultural vitality.” Saint Paul also expresses, “Our character is in our people.” I express that Saint Paul and the entire state of Minnesota will continue to always get it right year after year with their investment in the Minnesota STEM Partnership.

Furthermore, the character of Minnesota is within me. Through the Minnesota STEM Partnership, I participate in outreach programs that promote STEM and STEAM robotics education to young and college-pending students. I have also organized events that showcase the exciting opportunities available in STEM fields. Remotely, I work closely with national and global brands, engineering teams, and organizations to encourage diversity and inclusion in STEM fields. By advocating for diversity, we can ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to contribute to the future of technology. I’ve been able to travel and be an understudy in operations as a marketing engineer and transfer knowledge as just one pillar of many that the public has access to when they register through MSP. I not only market, but will also support Minnesota being a pillar in robotic industries with many more behind me all because of what Dr. Michael Wulf, the Executive Director, has done in only five short years with MSP.

The Minnesota STEM Partnership has also been successful in developing innovative programs and initiatives that have had a significant impact on STEM education in the state. For example, its Robotics programs provide instructors with the opportunity to work in local businesses and industries, gaining valuable experience and knowledge that they can bring back to their classrooms. Speakers, mentors, employees in person and remote, volunteers, and community members all benefit from this organization. MSP is more than a tech hub, it is an evergreen institution of promise and attraction to the state. Because of it, every day I look forward to continuing to work with the Minnesota STEM Partnership to ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed in the field of robotics. I am living proof of a future in STEM because of the Minnesota STEM Partnership.

Thank you for your time to read my letter of support for the Minnesota STEM Partnership for House Bill 1407. I strongly implore your consideration to award MSP because this is what the future of economic growth and strategic advancement in Minnesota deserves. Minnesota will be the mecca of STEM advancement beyond represented and underrepresented communities in Minnesota through The Minnesota STEM Partnership. The proof is in the organization and in the name. Minnesota's future starts here.

Thank you in advance,

Shanetta Spriggs
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