

March 12, 2009

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
United States House of Representatives
2446 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Baldwin:

I am writing in support of the enclosed request for a FY2010 Congressional Appropriation to Beloit College to support scholarships and related support programs for students from underrepresented minority populations, as well as those who may represent the first generation of their family to attend college, in Rock County and Wisconsin's 2nd Congressional District.

This opportunity for support comes at a challenging time for our nation and our local community, and the impact of the global economic crisis has been felt on our campus and in our surrounding communities. Now, more than ever, the advantages offered by increased access to higher education opportunities are critical to ensuring the strength of our nation in the global economy of the 21st century. This Congressional Appropriation would support opportunities for students from underrepresented minority populations in Rock County and Wisconsin's 2nd Congressional District, including those who are in the first generation of their families to attend college. This project will help to ensure their success, and the success of the local communities in which they will live and work.

Over the past several years, Beloit College has made concerted efforts to enhance and coordinate our support for students from first-generation families and underrepresented minority populations. In 2007, the College created the position of Admissions Counselor for Multicultural Initiatives to coordinate recruiting efforts for domestic minority students. Also in 2007, the College created the position of Assistant Dean of Students and Director of Intercultural Affairs and Programs to coordinate our efforts to foster a campus climate of inclusion. Finally, the College recently restructured our full range of academic and support programs for first-generation, economically-disadvantaged, and minority students (Upward Bound, Help Yourself, the McNair Program, and Student Support Services) under a new department headed by an Assistant Dean dedicated to direct these programs. I am pleased to have a college-wide, coordinated approach to address the needs of the College's minority student populations.

Our efforts have been further strengthened in the last four years through our participation in the WiscAMP Alliance, funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation to the University of Wisconsin-Madison. WiscAMP has been a central component in our efforts to recruit, retain, and graduate more domestic minority students in STEM fields. Participation in WiscAMP allows us to offer individualized student support in their academic work, research,

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and inclusion in the campus community. Beloit College also submitted a proposal to the National Science Foundation's 2008 Scholarships in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics competition for funding to expand our efforts to recruit and retain this targeted student demographic.

As a 1965 graduate of Beloit College with a major in mathematics, I have a deep and personal understanding of the benefits of a quality liberal arts education. The additional opportunities that this Congressional Appropriation will make possible will be key to ensuring the future success of students from the local area, and of Beloit College. Beloit College fully supports this proposal and the activities described within, and we look forward to continued collaboration with you and your efforts in behalf of your district and the State of Wisconsin.

On a final note, my service as Interim President of Beloit College will officially end on June 30, 2009 when I return to my home in Minneapolis and resume my role as a Trustee. The permanent role of President will be assumed on July 1, 2009, by Dr. Scott Bierman, currently serving as Vice President for Academic Affairs at Carleton College in Northfield, Minnesota. I am very pleased that President-Elect Bierman will be assuming the leadership of Beloit College and am confident in the prospects of his long-term success and those of Beloit College.

I have enjoyed working with you this past year and I am very appreciative of your leadership in Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Dick Niemiec', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Dick Niemiec'65