

June 29, 2006

Mr. Joe Toole
Office of Professional and Corporate Development
United States Department of Transportation
400 7th Street SW, Suite 4208
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Mr. Toole,

The National Association of Regional Councils is pleased to submit these brief comments on the Garret A. Morgan Technology and Transportation Education Program (GAMTTEP) and the Transportation Education Development Pilot Program (TEDPP). As a membership group representing Councils of Government (COGs) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), we are keenly aware of the need for a developed, sustainable workforce of transportation professionals. Many transportation planning agencies have difficulty attracting and retaining professional staff. NARC believes that fostering interest in transportation as a career is an important step toward ensuring the best and brightest enter the field.

Throughout your Office's programs, it is our hope that you include proper focus on the regional aspects of transportation. Metropolitan Planning Organizations are a crucial part of the transportation planning and construction process. Students at all levels need to be exposed to these unique governmental agencies through your educational programming.

Below, I will address the questions posed in your inquiry letter transmitted to NARC on May 24th, 2006.

- 1) NARC is not in a position to comment on this question.
- 2) NARC staff are familiar with the following programs that could serve as models for the GAMTTEP and TEDPP programs:
 - a) The Eno Foundation's Leadership Development Program is for graduate-level students in transportation policy fields. These programs are already targeted toward students who have chosen transportation-related degree programs, but they could serve as an excellent model for your Office to design field curricula.
 - b) Although it is not directly transportation-related, you may want to investigate the Urban Plan program at the Urban Land Institute. This program produces high school modules and activities on the urban planning and land development

professions. The program has been quite successful, and you may be able to learn more

- 3) The programs should target students who take courses in disciplines that teach technical skills important to transportation planning. For example, students in Geography Departments likely are knowledgeable on Geographic Information Systems (GIS), which is a highly useful skill to the transportation field. Further, high school students involved in drafting and computer programming can be made aware of the opportunities available to them if they continue to develop their skills.
- 4) NARC believes that fostering self-sustaining programs is very important. Given the unreliability of funding, maximum effort should be expended to place these programs in established foundations and institutes.
- 5) Grantees should be organizations that bring together diverse groups of stakeholders. Further, the grantees should not focus on any one policy agenda (i.e.- Passenger Rail or Free Trade Issues)
- 6) The strongest performance measure is, of course, the number of students reached through these programs. Other important performance measures could be: a) Number of instructors who utilize modules, presentations, or materials in their courses; b) The number of students who request further information; and c) Evaluation of degrees awarded at Colleges and Universities where the programs are active.

NARC hopes that the GAMTTEP and TEDPP programs meet their objectives of bringing more young minds into the transportation field. Please do not hesitate to contact us if NARC can be of further assistance!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cameron Moore". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a long, sweeping underline.

Cameron Moore
Executive Director
National Association of Regional Councils