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VIDEO SERVICES DIVISION

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GTCC

February 19, 2001

Chief Roy Stewart
Federal Communications Commission
Mass Media Bureau
Room 2-C334
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

FEB 26 2001

ORIGINAL

GUILFORD TECHNICAL COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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Dear Mr. Stewart:

For the past several years, we have worked diligently here at Guilford Technical Community College and within the North Carolina Community College System to harness the power of technology to the benefit of our students. Two of the most challenging and yet most rewarding endeavors have been the development of online learning and the use of instructional technology within the traditional classroom. We have acquired instructional technology to the extent our resources allow and have trained faculty in the use of that technology.

With nearly 1,200 students enrolled in online courses and nearly a quarter of our full-time faculty excited about using technology and the power of the Internet to teach, we continue to be amazed at the excitement and joy that technology can bring to the learning experience. One of our current initiatives is to make it possible for students to complete full-degree programs via the web by September 2001. We feel that we have been creative and responsible in assisting our faculty in the incorporation of technology. We look forward to enhanced broadband access to the Internet and to the new enhancements this kind of access can bring to teaching and learning.

Let me share two small, but typical examples of how our faculty is using technology. We have one faculty member in the Medical Office Assisting program who is excited about videotaping many of the procedures she teaches so that students can literally see them whenever and wherever they need. She envisions being able to make these routines and procedures available to them over the Internet on demand and needs the broadband capacity to make this possible.

We have another faculty member who is developing an online architectural history class and wants her students to watch certain videos about that history. With the technology and bandwidth now available to her, she will have to continue to have her students come on campus to see these videos. Wouldn't it be a powerful service, if those students could watch it from their workplaces and homes when it was truly convenient to them?

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These are only two brief examples of why we need to retain the spectrum allocated to schools, colleges and universities for ITFS by the FCC. Please do not let the spectrum disappear just at the time when we in education are most prepared to use and have the greatest need for the next generation of learning technology. Though the examples given here are about our one college, there is an incredible and exciting future at head within this North Carolina Community College System. We have a shared vision of providing lifelong learning using wireless technology. Please do not take our vision from us.

We understand that the need of the third generation of users of mobile/handheld devices is an alluring call. Surely there is room, though, for those of us in education to have the space and spectrum we need to take education to its next level – a level where people clamor for their chance to learn new things, enhance their skills, and compete for jobs.

Sincerely,

Donald W. Cameron

Donald W. Cameron
President

cc: Barbara Kreisman, Chief
Video Services Division
Mass Media Bureau Room 2-A666