



# University of Colorado at Boulder

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April 24, 2005

Dr. Michael S. Turner, Assistant Director  
Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences  
National Science Foundation  
4201 Wilson Blvd.  
Arlington, VA 22230

Dear Dr. Turner,

I am very pleased to inform you officially of the formal acceptance by the Mathematical and Physical Sciences Advisory Committee (MPSAC) of the report of the Committee of Visitors (COV) for the Division of Materials Research (DMR). This report was considered by the Mathematical and Physical Sciences Advisory Committee during its April 7-8, 2005 meeting. The report was presented by the Chair of the COV, Dr. Horst Stormer of Columbia University. The report strongly endorsed the programs and work of the Division of Materials Research, especially noting the fashion in which the Division has assembled an outstanding portfolio of world-class, materials-inspired research programs. The COV found that the program directors of the DMR have been especially mindful of the People, Ideas and Tools multiple foci of NSF, and that they have managed their programs very effectively to optimize productivity within the substantial financial constraints that the Division faces. The COV was extremely pleased with the management of the division, the mechanisms by which decisions were made and the thoroughness with which those decisions were documented.

The COV noted the budget challenges faced by DMR in the near future, especially the significant cut in the current fiscal year. The COV supports strongly the intent of the Division Director to maintain funding for each DMR grant at a viable level, and the COV reiterated the cautionary note of previous COVs to pay very careful attention to the balance between center and individual investigator funding. The COV urged the DMR leadership to do everything possible to maintain or increase the fraction of individual investigator grants in DMR's funding spectrum. The COV noted that DMR will face severe challenges in the coming years to maintain its excellent research portfolio in the face of a difficult funding environment. The COV expressed confidence that the DMR staff has the expertise and perspective to optimally manage its program within these severe constraints. In all of these areas, the MPSAC fully endorsed the COV recommendations.

The MPS Advisory Committee members had read the report carefully prior to our meeting, and Dr. Stormer's presentation provided an opportunity for the Advisory Committee to ask further questions about various topics in the report. At the end of this exchange, the MPS Advisory Committee members were firmly convinced that the COV Report provided a fair and balanced perspective on the operation of the Division of Materials Research, and had articulated the

important issues facing DMR in the near future. We are very grateful to the COV and its Chair for this excellent, in-depth review of the Division of Materials Research, and we are grateful to the DMR staff for their thorough preparations for this review and for their commendable performance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "W. Carl Lineberger". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

W. Carl Lineberger, Chair  
MPS Advisory Committee

cc: Dr. Horst Stormer  
Dr. Thomas Weber  
Dr. Morris Aizenman