Department of Energy
Office of Science
Washington, DC 20585

October 18, 2011

Dr. Roscoe Giles, ASCAC Chair
Department of Electrical and Computer
  Engineering
Boston University
8 St. Mary's Street
Boston, MA 02215

Dear Dr. Giles:

Thank you for the excellent Committee of Visitors (COV) review of the Next Generation
Networking for Science program. The Office of Advanced Scientific Computing Research
(ASCR) will respond to the recommendations of the COV to improve the management of this
important program. The full program response and action plan will be posted on the ASCAC
website (http://science.energy.gov/ascr/ascac/reports/).

To help the research communities utilize the capabilities of current and future supercomputers,
ASCR also supports a basic research program in Computer Science which ASCAC reviewed in
2008. To ensure the integrity of this research program and to ensure that it is meeting the
challenges of exascale computing, I am asking the Advanced Scientific Computing Advisory
Committee (ASCAC) to assemble a Committee of Visitors (COV) to review the management
processes for the Computer Science elements of the ASCR program. A report will be expected
at the August 2012 ASCAC meeting.

The COV should provide an assessment of the processes used to solicit, review, recommend, and
document proposal actions and monitor active projects and programs. The Committee should
assess the operations of the Computer Science programs during the fiscal years 2009, 2010, and
2011. The panel may examine any files from this period for both DOE laboratory projects and
university projects. The Committee will be provided with background material on the program
prior to the meeting.

I would like the Committee to consider and provide evaluation of the following two major
program elements:

1. For both the DOE laboratory projects and the university projects, assess the efficacy and
   quality of the processes used to:
       (a) solicit, review, recommend, and document proposal actions, and
       (b) monitor active projects and programs.

2. Within the boundaries defined by DOE missions and available funding, comment on how the award process has affected:

    (a) the breadth and depth of portfolio elements,

    (b) the degree to which the program is addressing the challenges of multi-core hybrid computing and peta-to-exascale scientific data management, and

    (c) the national and international standing of the program with regard to other computer science research programs that are also focused on the demands of high performance scientific computing and analysis of petascale datasets.

If you or the COV Chair have any questions, please contact Christine Chalk, the Designated Federal Official for ASCAC at 301-903-5152 or by e-mail at christine.chalk@science.doe.gov.

I appreciate ASCAC's willingness to undertake this important activity.

Sincerely,

W. F. Brinkman
Director, Office of Science