

November 21, 1996

Name
Address
City, State Zip

Dear Mr. Yokich:

Bill Stevenson on your staff suggested that it might be appropriate for me to write a brief letter describing a new venture being launched in Michigan: the Michigan Virtual Automobile College. This is a collaborative effort among the University of Michigan, Michigan State University, Wayne State University, the state's other colleges and universities, the State of Michigan the automobile industry and hopefully, with your commitment, the UAW. It is being formed as a private, not-for-profit 501 (c) 3 corporation that will broker technology-enhanced course and training programs for the automotive industry employees including the Big Three and Tier 1, 2, and 3 providers. The MVAC will serve as an interface between higher education institutions, training providers, and the automotive industry. It will work to facilitate the transfer of credits between and among institutions to facilitate certificate and degree attainment for those participating in courses and training programs offered under its auspices.

Here the intent is to provide a wide range of educational services for employees of the automotive industry that will complement and perhaps even facilitate important ongoing activities such as the UAW-Ford University project. Because of the importance of the perspective of the UAW during the startup phase of this new educational enterprise, we are hoping that you would agree to appoint a representative to our governing board.

More specifically, the Michigan Virtual Automobile College will be governed by a small executive committee associated with a broader board of directors. This executive committee will consist of the presidents of Michigan State University, the University of Michigan, and Wayne State University; the director of the Michigan Jobs Commission; representatives from each of the Big Three; a representative from the UAW; representatives from the state's other public universities and community colleges; and a representative from among the suppliers.

I have agreed to play the role of "startup president" to get the enterprise off the ground and running, and Tim Quinn, former president of Northwestern Michigan College will be serving as the chief executive officer. Peter McPherson, president of Michigan State University, will serve as the first chair of the executive committee, while Homer Neal, president of the University of Michigan, will be the first chair of the broader board of directors.

We intend for MVAC to be a college without walls. Courses and programs can be offered from literally any site in the state to any other technologically connected site within the state, the United States, or the world. While it will be incorporated in Lansing, Michigan, the headquarters for MVAC are temporarily located in Ann Arbor, with permanent offices likely to be at a site in Detroit.

The schedule for the MVAC is an aggressive one, with formal incorporation in November and delivery of the first array of pilot courses by February, 1997. We hope to have a full curriculum in place by Fall of 1997.

We believe that the perspective and active involvement of the UAW will be extremely valuable in shaping the nature of this new educational enterprise. Since over the longer term your members could be one of the major beneficiaries, we would hope that you would play a sustaining role in governance of the Michigan Virtual Automobile College.

If you or your staff would like a more detailed briefing at this early stage, we would be happy to arrange a meeting to discuss the planning effort to date.

Sincerely,

James J. Duderstadt