June 2, 2015

Dear President Obama:

Last year, Bucknell University was proud to join the Maker Schools Alliance and provide a detailed commitment to the support of making on campus and building a generation of makers. This year, we are pleased to update you on Bucknell’s work and share our making-related goals for the future. Making embodies our institutional mission by enabling our students to integrate technical skills in the support of creation and social engagement. We are eager to expand our work in this area.

Our current work builds upon last year’s commitment letter by following through on the promised creation of the maker spaces, so that students can take advantage of these spaces to learn 21st century skills. In particular, last year’s commitment focused on the making environment, expanding spaces and tools. This year, we are committing to developing more makers by expanding the pool of people involved in making at Bucknell.

We believe that it is critical that the tools and mindset of making be available to the broadest possible population, not a restricted few. With that in mind, for the coming year we plan to:

- Open a central, on-campus Bucknell Maker Space within the 7th Street Studio craft shop (August, 2015), which will bring making technologies to students, faculty and staff in every discipline for use both in and out of class.
- Open the Electronics Maker Space within the Electrical and Computer Engineering department, enabling Bucknell community members from across campus to experiment and fabricate novel electronics.
- Implement our “viral” training protocol to increase participation in making by students from a wide range of backgrounds and prior experience levels.
- Host “maker jams” for students and faculty to increase comfort and familiarity with tools and processes for individuals in STEM, Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences.
- Continue to promote our “Outside the Classroom” initiative to establish making as a part of student culture by providing skill-learning sessions, funding for individual students’ projects, and design competitions.
- Promote the development of entrepreneurial mindsets in our students by providing immersive opportunities in skill building, the design process, and value creation including our successful B-Fab workshop, K-WIDE, and the Biz Pitch competition.
• Form a Makerspace Advisory Board to oversee and promote these efforts.
• Build on the work that Bucknell faculty and administrators have developed with the Maker Schools Alliance throughout the year to help expand making and associated pedagogy, and sustain the work of the Alliance into the future.

Making has the potential to be a transformative idea in higher education. As personal computers expanded the range and depth of problems that could be addressed a generation ago, making will enable ideas, that otherwise would have stayed on paper, to become workable prototypes, useful tools and art. At Bucknell, we see the Maker Movement emancipating engineering and technology in a way that opens these fields to all learners, and we are proud to provide our students with this opportunity.

Sincerely,

John C. Bravman
President