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A Letter From Rear Admiral Thomas Moore, USN, Program Executive Officer, Aircraft Carriers

In an increasingly complex and technical world, it is absolutely critical that we as a nation and we in the Navy do everything we can to enhance and broaden opportunities in science, technology, and math for today's youth to open their minds to the possibilities of a career in the world of science and engineering. Today, we are building our newest generation Aircraft Carrier, the GERALD R. FORD (CVN 78). The FORD is the first of a class of ships that will be the centerpiece of American Naval Combat Power and Projection for most of the 21st Century! These mighty warships are technological marvels that include many new technologies such as the Electromagnetic Aircraft Launching System (EMALS) that will launch aircraft such as the F/A-18E/F Super Hornet, the F-35C Joint Strike Fighter, and a whole generation of new unmanned vehicles. The design and building of these ships is a testament to the continuing need for science and technology expertise in this country. At the same time, we are also building our next generation of science and technology leaders who will undoubtedly one day be the individuals charged with the design, build, and maintenance of these ships for the rest of the 21st century.

The DoD STARBASE program is the exact kind of hands on engineering program that we need today to build that next generation of leaders. The program provides real hands on experience in science and engineering and demonstrates to these students the exciting possibilities that exist in the world of science and engineering today. I've been fortunate enough to visit a STARBASE classroom and see firsthand the wonderful opportunities the program provides.

STARBASE's theory to practice approach to engineering using 3D computer models, bridge building using homemade materials, and model rocket building and testing hits a home run with the students. This type of learning was the cornerstone of how I learned to appreciate science and engineering growing up through high school and into college and led me to where I am today. My personal experiences as an engineer in the Navy's nuclear power program, as a graduate student studying nuclear engineering, and my many years as Naval Officer working on the Navy's Aircraft Carriers were all a product of my early exposure to the marvels of science and engineering that the DoD STARBASE program is providing today.

My special thanks to those who have built the program and especially to the wonderful teachers who are really making a difference in the classrooms with our students today. I look forward to seeing the seeds that are being planted today grow to be our next generation of science and technology leaders.

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