To: Board of Trustees

From: Mitchell E. Daniels, Jr., President

Re: Request for Naming the Lyles School of Civil Engineering

Date: February 13, 2014

I am pleased to endorse the naming of the Lyles School of Civil Engineering and hereby request your approval. Supporting documentation for this request is attached. We believe this is an appropriate recognition of the Lyles family—one whose close and longstanding ties to Purdue have created a legacy as enduring as the one established by their generosity in making this gift.

Thank you for your consideration.
TO: Mitch Daniels  
President

THROUGH: Amy Noah  
Vice President for Development
Leah H. Jamieson  
John A. Edwardson Dean of Engineering

FROM: R. S. Govindaraju  
Bowen Engineering Head of Civil Engineering and  
Christopher B. Burke and Susan S. Burke Professor

SUBJECT: Request for Naming the Lyles School of Civil Engineering

The School of Civil Engineering and the College of Engineering are excited to have the opportunity to name our 125-year-old School with a $15 million gift.

Since 1887, Purdue Civil Engineers have taken their degrees into the world and touched lives. From the water we drink to the roads we traverse, Purdue Civil Engineers plan, design, construct, maintain, and operate the infrastructure that is the underpinning of society. Advances through Civil Engineering research and education at Purdue have significantly impacted the world in the last 125 years. Over 15,000 students have received a civil engineering degree from Purdue.

Major milestones in Purdue Civil Engineering history range from the Road School and the Ross Summer Surveying Camp at Purdue to world landmarks like the Panama Canal, Hoover Dam, the Golden Gate Bridge, the Leaning Tower of Pisa, and the Twin Towers. There are many more.

Purdue Engineering and the Lyles family, of Fresno, California, share a proud legacy of engineering excellence and endurance. There are four generations of Boilermakers in the Lyles family. Brothers William M. Lyles, BSCE ’55, and Gerald V. Lyles, BSCE ’64, have expressed their willingness to name the School of Civil Engineering. William and Gerald’s parents are both Purdue alumni (William M. Lyles Jr., BSCE ’35, and Elizabeth Venemann Lyles, BS ’33, MS ’34); H. Gerald Venemann, Elizabeth Lyles’ father,
was a Purdue student in 1907 and later became professor of Mechanical Engineering. William M. Lyles IV is the fourth generation, receiving a BSCE ’81 and BS Management ’81. Bill and Gerald’s sister, Marybeth Lyles Higuera, BS ’59, has provided funding for the Lyles Porter Hall at Purdue. Marybeth’s first husband, S. Thomas Porter, was a Purdue civil engineer.

A gift of this magnitude demonstrates the prestige of the School of Civil Engineering and the solid foundation for many firsts within engineering. The first engineering graduate at Purdue was in 1878 from the Department of Civil Engineering. The first African-American graduate, David Robert Lewis, was awarded the BSCE in 1894, and the first woman engineer, Martha Dick Stevens, was awarded the BSCE in 1897.

The Lyles family gift would allow the School of Civil Engineering to build on its long history of success. The naming of the School would represent a big move for Purdue and a fitting tribute to a family so closely tied to the school’s history.