Dear Colleagues,

I am writing to you regarding Northwestern's new Research Shop, for which I am the faculty director. This note is meant to provide a brief description of the new resources being set up, and also to tell you about student training options during the transition period.

The Research Shop represents a very significant investment by the Provost and VPR to accommodate growing research and training needs at NU. The Research Shop includes a professional Instrument Shop, a Student DIY Shop, and a Design Shop, all overseen by myself, an advisory board, and our newly hired Operations Director Frank Lantz.

Operations Director
The Operations Director, Frank Lantz (frank.lantz@northwestern.edu), is the point contact for the entire operation. Whether you have a finalized machine drawing needing a quotation, a vague idea of something you might like to build, help finding outsourcing options, or some broken mechanical equipment to get fixed, start by contacting Frank. He only oversees the shop operations in Tech, but he also can help setting you up with resources in Ford. Please start contacting him immediately for any of these needs, including for jobs which before would have been submitted directly to the Instrument Shop.

Instrument Shop
The professional Instrument Shop, still overseen by Jeff Sundwall, will be upgraded with some new machines and with a renovated work space. The construction is being phased so that the shop will operate with approximately zero downtime, so please keep sending us jobs. Also, please let us know about what new capabilities you might like to see in the Instrument Shop. With the new resources being made available, we expect to achieve our goal of raising user satisfaction on a few fronts.

Design Shop
We will also have an entirely new Design Shop staffed by a full time Engineer/Designer. This person will provide engineering and CAD services for research needs, ranging from consultation, to creating CAD drawings of relatively simple components, to leading in the design of complex fabricated equipment. CAD training for students might also be provided.

The current funding model for the Design Shop is 50% provost-funded, 50% recharge. For long-term viability, we need people to take advantage of both the uncharged small-scale consulting and the recharge service for larger jobs. We have not yet hired the Engineer/Designer, so now would be a very good time to tell us what specifically would be useful to your programs.

Student DIY Shop (and interim student training this Winter and Spring quarter)
We are making an important expansion of machining resources available for use by your graduate and undergraduate students and postdocs. The new Student DIY Shop will be well equipped with a range of machines and will be staffed by a full-time director who is a first-rate machinist. He/she will be available to aid students in their machining work and will also offer advanced machine training, all funded by the Provost and free of charge. Access to the shop will be available 24 hours a day. For safety, after-hours access will require a buddy to be present, and trained undergraduates will be employed for this purpose.

The Student DIY Shop will be located adjacent to the Tech Instrument Shop and is scheduled to open at the beginning of the summer. We believe that research education and productivity will be improved by training more of our students and giving them access to high-quality machine tools. We hope your groups will take full advantage of these resources.

Until the new shop opens, the Physics & Astronomy Department will continue to offer access to the Physics Shop machines and its student training course. (Three cheers for Bill Halperin, Jim Hahn, and recently Peter Lee, for making the Physics Shop available to the NU research community over many
Since Jim Hahn has retired, the course will be taught by Jeff Sundwall. Contact Peter Lee <jalee@u.northwestern.edu> for Winter or Spring quarter enrollment information. There are still openings for Winter quarter training.

Thanks, and looking forward to working with you,
Brian

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This message was sent to the Research Shop listserv on 1/9/17
If you would like to be added or removed from the RESEARCH_SHOP listserv, please contact Brian Odom, b-odom@northwestern.edu