

Date

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Dear _____ :

For the past two years a group of Spokane County community leaders, along with approximately 115 community volunteers, have been engaged collaboratively in an effort to identify priorities which would address the economic vitality, education, environment, health and community safety of Spokane County. This community-wide endeavor is now called **Priority Spokane**. Below are the names of the individuals who serve on the **Priority Spokane** Steering Committee.

After numerous meetings and extensive dialogue, **Priority Spokane** identified educational attainment, specifically increasing Spokane Public Schools high school graduation rates, as a community priority. We believe this can be accomplished by dramatically enhancing the middle school students' experience in and outside the classroom. Reaching this goal will also positively affect the economic vitality, health, environment and safety of our community.

To provide assistance with these goals, we are delighted to notify you of a maximum \$50,000 grant opportunity and to request your thoughtful consideration of the enclosed Request for Proposal (RFP). This is an exceptional opportunity for _____ to partner with us in finding solutions to a very serious challenge facing our local and national communities – high school dropout rates. Please note that Dr. Nancy J. Stowell, Superintendent, and the Board of Directors of the Spokane Public Schools are supporting this RFP process.

The RFP will summarize for you the history of **Priority Spokane** and the application process. We recognize the important role your organization plays within Eastern Washington and see this as a chance for the community's resources and energy to link with the mission and talent of an educational institution. There also is the possibility that this unique partnership could result in an exemplary model, which could be replicated elsewhere, of community alliances appreciably improving high school graduation rates by visibly enhancing the middle school experience.

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Because we believe this will be a very competitive process, please note that the absolute deadline for receiving a proposal is December 31, 2009. The **Priority Spokane** grant will be recommended by the **Priority Spokane** Steering Committee late February, 2010. It also is anticipated that in fall 2010 the organization awarded the grant will be invited to present publically its research and the justification for suggesting a community-wide and world-class initiative to dramatically increase our high school graduation rates by implementing positive changes for middle school age students in and outside the classroom.

Thank you for your time. We look forward to reading your proposal.

With best regards,

Mark Hurtubise
President & CEO

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Priority Spokane Steering Committee:

Dr. Rodolfo Arévalo, President, Eastern Washington University
Patty Gates, Executive Director, Community Building Foundation
Linda Graham, Director of Grants, Inland Northwest Community Foundation
Rich Hadley, President/CEO, Greater Spokane Incorporated
Tim Henkel, CEO, Spokane County United Way
Mark Hurtubise, President & CEO, Inland Northwest Community Foundation
Dr. Patrick Jones, Executive Director, EWU Institute of Public Policy & Economic Analysis
Bonnie Mager, Commissioner, Spokane County
Rich Munson, Mayor, City of Spokane Valley
Mark Richard, Commissioner, Spokane County
Dr. Sam Selinger, Board Member, Empire Health Foundation
Joe Shogan, Councilmember, City of Spokane
Torney Smith, Administrator, Spokane Regional Health District
Lyndia Tye, Division Director, Spokane Regional Health District
Mary Verner, Mayor, City of Spokane
Amber Waldref, Development Director, The Lands Council
Diana Wilhite, Councilmember, City of Spokane Valley