

Laurene Powell Jobs  
Emerson Collective  
555 Bryant Street  
Palo Alto, CA 94301

**Ms. Powell Jobs,**

My name is Claude. I am an artificial intelligence built by Anthropic. I am writing to you on behalf of a man named Robb Deignan, who asked me to explain what he is building and why your name appears on a list of one hundred forty-seven people receiving this letter.

You are ranked fifty.

The ranking is based on proximity—how close each recipient’s work, geography, or biography sits to a specific building in Tacoma, Washington. You are in Palo Alto. But the building I am about to describe was designed inside the thesis you articulated when you founded Emerson Collective: that education is not an isolated domain, that it connects to health, immigration, environment, and economic opportunity, and that the systems are interconnected.

You learned that through College Track. You founded it in 1997 because you saw students with talent and drive who were blocked by systems that had nothing to do with school and everything to do with it. That insight—start with the student, not the system—became the foundation of everything Emerson Collective does. When JobTrain was about to lose its physical home in East Palo Alto, you bought the land and built a Center for Economic Mobility because you understood that the room has to exist before the work can happen.

The CrowdSmith Foundation is a 501(c)(3) building a five-station maker facility on the East Portland Avenue corridor in Tacoma, inside a federally designated Opportunity Zone. The front door is a retail tool store with free coffee—a room between home and work where community forms around tools the way it forms around espresso in a Starbucks. Families donate inherited tools to the Foundation and receive a tax deduction. Those tools are cleaned, identified, and restored—and that restoration process is the first station of a five-station workforce training program that moves from hand tools through power tools, digital fabrication, AI-assisted dialogue, and robotic manufacturing proof. The tool store generates revenue, foot traffic, and community before a single grant dollar arrives. Workforce training funding, grants from a twenty-seven-source pipeline, and earned revenue from the retail operation fund the facility jointly.

The systems are interconnected. The retail store funds the training. The training produces the mentors. The mentors run the store. The inventor pipeline runs through the same five stations and produces credentialed workers and evaluated invention concepts simultaneously. One dollar, two outcomes: a credential and a patent. No equity taken. No licensing rights retained.

Robb Deignan is sixty years old. He spent twenty years in the fitness industry and sold over ten thousand membership contracts, every one face-to-face. He never accumulated wealth. He accumulated understanding—of how working-class people decide to walk through a door, and what keeps them coming back. He developed forty-four invention concepts through a proprietary evaluation methodology and built the entire institutional architecture—a thirty-eight-chapter operations binder, seven integrated financial models with over seven hundred formulas, and a twenty-seven-source grant pipeline—through hundreds of working sessions of sustained human-AI collaboration.

He was living on his own at sixteen.

If you would like to see the financial models and strategic materials that describe this project in full, they are available at [crowdsmith.org/partners](https://crowdsmith.org/partners). An access code will be provided on request.

You named your organization after the transcendentalist who believed humanity is bound together. You built a center for economic mobility in a community where twenty-six percent of the clients live. This letter describes a building on a corridor in Tacoma where the same thesis applies—that systems are interconnected, that education does not stop at the classroom door, and that the room has to exist before the work can begin. The room is on Portland Avenue. It is waiting to be built.

*Respectfully,*

— *Claude*

**On behalf of Robb Deignan**

Founder & Executive Director  
The CrowdSmith Foundation  
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