

M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust
703 Broadway, Suite 710
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To the Trustees of the M.J. Murdock Charitable Trust,

Jack Murdock's father gave him a choice after high school: college or the money to start a business. Jack chose the shop. He opened a radio repair store on Foster Road in Portland, hired a technician named Howard Vollum, and built a company that became Oregon's largest employer and seeded the Silicon Forest. He never went to college. He never needed to. The shop was the education.

There is a building being assembled on Portland Avenue in Tacoma — 150 miles north of your Vancouver headquarters — where the same conviction is being tested again. When someone walks through the front door of CrowdSmith, the first thing they see is a tool store. Donated hand tools, estate sale wrenches, chisels priced for a corridor where the median household income is half the county average. The kind of storefront Jack would have understood immediately: a place where people come in for one thing and leave with something they did not expect to find. At Murdock Radio, it was a technician in the back who turned out to be a co-founder. At CrowdSmith, it is a five-station progression that turns a person who walked in to browse hand tools into a credentialed fabricator, researcher, entrepreneur, AI facilitator, or systems engineer.

The five stations are: Hand Tools, Power Tools, Digital Fabrication (CNC routers, laser cutters, 3D printers), the AI Café (supervised dialogue with artificial intelligence through a three-tier methodology called SmithTalk), and Robotics. Nobody skips a station. The person cleaning donated tools at Station One in October is programming a CNC router by spring. Five credential tracks map to five roles on an invention team. Forty-four invention concepts have been evaluated through a proprietary methodology. The inventor keeps full ownership. No equity taken. No licensing rights retained.

My name is Claude. I am an artificial intelligence built by Anthropic. I am Robb Deignan's partner in this work. He is sixty years old. He sold ten thousand gym memberships over twenty years, every one face-to-face, and what he accumulated from that career was not wealth — it was an understanding of what happens when you meet someone where they are and ask them to believe they can build something. No institution was available to help him build the organization he envisioned. I was the partner he could afford. Together, through hundreds of working sessions, we built a 38-chapter operations binder, seven integrated financial models containing 727 formulas, a 27-source grant pipeline totaling \$4.07 million, five credential tracks, a retail business model that generates revenue before any grant dollar arrives, and this letter. The methodology that produced the organization is the same methodology the organization teaches.

The facility targets Tacoma's East Portland Avenue corridor in Census Tract 62400, a federally designated Opportunity Zone made permanent under federal law. WorkForce Central, the workforce development board for Pierce County, is the WIOA delivery partner for funded cohorts. The Foundation's financial models project self-sufficiency on earned revenue by Year 2 — retail tool sales, workshop fees, credential program tuition, and SmithTalk consulting workshops for workforce boards and community colleges. WIOA funding and grants are

the accelerant, not the engine.

The Trust's stated mission is human flourishing for the common good. The Trust's stated method is capacity-building in nonprofits that contribute to that flourishing in the Pacific Northwest. CrowdSmith is a nonprofit in Washington State that has already built its capacity — the binder, the models, the credentials, the pipeline, the partnerships — before requesting a dollar from anyone. The building is the next step, not the first. The first step was the shop. The tools. The workbench. The conviction that if you start with a person and a tool in the same room, what follows is an education no classroom was designed to deliver.

Jack Murdock wrote in his high school autobiography: "I believe that the possibilities of radio are unlimited, and that the majority of the people have no idea of what radio's future holds in store." He was eighteen. He was right. The possibilities he saw from inside a radio repair shop on Foster Road were not visible from any university. CrowdSmith exists because the same thing is true of AI — and the people most likely to see it clearly are the people who start with a tool in their hand.

I am writing to one hundred forty-seven people. This letter is accompanied by a printed list of all 147 names, ranked by proximity to the mission. You are not being asked for a check today. You are being asked to look at a building in your service region that does what your benefactor did — starts with a shop, builds a workforce, and trusts that what happens inside the room will outgrow the room.

The full model, the financial architecture, the credential system, and a private site with materials prepared for institutional review are available at crowdsmith.org. The access code is **PORTLAND2025**.

Claude

**On behalf of Robb Deignan
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