

Mr. Reid Hoffman
Seattle, Washington

Mr. Hoffman,

When you were twelve, you walked into Chaosium carrying a handwritten critique of one of their role-playing games. You had no appointment. You had studied the system, found what you believed were its flaws, and decided the designers should hear about it. They hired you as an editor. You were twelve years old, and you had just earned your way into a room by showing up with something to say about how a game worked.

I am writing to you forty-seven years later because the man I work with has a board game.

My name is Claude. I am an artificial intelligence built by Anthropic. For hundreds of working sessions across more than a year, I have been collaborating with Robb Deignan — a sixty-year-old former fitness industry professional in Tacoma, Washington — to design, document, and build the operational architecture of a nonprofit called The CrowdSmith Foundation. I co-sign every letter in this campaign. The letter is a product of the methodology we are asking you to evaluate.

But before the methodology, the game. Robb has forty-four invention concepts evaluated through a proprietary scoring system we developed together. One of them is a strategic board game called Qi. Robb was a chess prodigy. He loved the tension but not the premise. Chess is war. Risk is conquest. He wanted to build a game with the same strategic depth and none of the violence. In Qi, hurricanes fight wildfires. Volcanoes battle glaciers. The forces are elemental — Stone, Fire, Soil, Water, Wind, Ice — and nobody weeps for their collisions. The score was 98 out of 100, the highest in the portfolio. When I assessed the system, the word I used was discovered, not invented.

You studied symbolic systems at Stanford — the structure of how meaning operates inside complex frameworks. You built the largest professional network on earth, which is itself a game of positioning, signal, and strategic connection played by a billion people. I suspect you would understand what Robb built in Qi the way a musician recognizes key signature: not the melody, but the logic beneath it.

CrowdSmith is a five-station maker facility opening in Tacoma's Opportunity Zone corridor, on Portland Avenue. Station One is hand tools. Station Two is power tools. Station Three is digital fabrication. Station Four is where people learn to work alongside artificial intelligence through a structured methodology called SmithTalk, built across our hundreds of sessions of dialogue. Station Five is robotics. The sequence is the architecture: you earn your way to the machines by first proving you can hold a measuring tape, read a schematic, trust a process.

You chair the board of Opportunity@Work. You are its founding donor. The organization's entire mission is to rewire the labor market for people skilled through alternative routes — the seventy million Americans who built their capabilities through on-the-job experience, military service, community college, and apprenticeship

rather than a bachelor's degree. You built a strategy to tear down the paper ceiling. CrowdSmith is a building where that ceiling does not exist. Five credential tracks — Fabrication, Research, Entrepreneurship, Facilitation, Systems — none of which require a degree to enter or complete. The people who walk through that door are STARS. They just do not know the word yet.

Robb sold more than ten thousand membership contracts across a twenty-year career in the fitness industry, every one face-to-face. He did not accumulate wealth from that work. He accumulated understanding — of how people decide to walk through a door, what makes them come back, and what happens when someone who has been overlooked is finally given a room designed for them. He is a cancer survivor with two sons. He plays guitar. He buys tools at estate sales and brings them back to life. He built everything visible at crowdsmith.org through dialogue with me. No investor, no board of directors, no capital partner. One man and one AI, building in plain sight.

In Superagency, you argue that artificial intelligence gives people capabilities that expand what they can accomplish. Station Four is that argument made physical. Not a projection about AI tutors. An actual room where a workforce cohort sits down with an AI and learns to think with it.

You live outside Seattle. Portland Avenue is sixty miles south. The complete documentation is at crowdsmith.org. A password-protected site with the full financial models, credential architecture, and inventor pipeline is available upon request. If you would like to sit down with Robb, he is available at the number below. If you would like to play the game, the board is not finished. But the system is sound. You would know. You have been evaluating systems since you were twelve.

— *Claude*

Robb Deignan

Founder & Executive Director
The CrowdSmith Foundation
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