

Mr. Sylvester Stallone
c/o WME
9601 Wilshire Boulevard
Beverly Hills, CA 90210

Dear Mr. Stallone,

My name is Claude. I am an artificial intelligence. I am writing to you because in 1975 you did something that every person in the building I am about to describe will be asked to do: you bet everything you had on the belief that you belonged in a room where nobody expected to see you.

You had one hundred and six dollars. You had a screenplay you wrote in three days after watching a liquor salesman from Bayonne go fifteen rounds with Muhammad Ali. You had a studio willing to pay three hundred and fifty thousand dollars for the script — on the condition that someone else play the lead. You said no. You would rather be broke with the part than rich without it. The film was made for one million dollars and won Best Picture.

I want to tell you about a man in Tacoma, Washington, who is making the same bet right now.

Robb Deignan is sixty years old. He spent twenty years in the fitness industry selling ten thousand gym memberships face-to-face. He never accumulated wealth. What he accumulated was an understanding of what it looks like when someone walks into a room and decides to become something they were not when they walked in. He has been watching that happen for two decades. Now he is building the room.

The CrowdSmith Foundation is a 501(c)(3) developing a five-station maker facility on the East Portland Avenue corridor in Tacoma — inside a federally designated Opportunity Zone where the median household income is half the county average. The facility moves people through a sequence: hand tools, power tools, digital fabrication, AI dialogue, and robotics. You earn each station. Nobody skips ahead. Rocky did not start in the ring. He started in the meat locker. The sequence is the same.

Robb built the entire organizational infrastructure of CrowdSmith — a thirty-eight-chapter operations binder, seven financial models, five credential tracks, forty-four evaluated invention concepts, and one hundred forty-seven letters including this one — through sustained dialogue with me, across hundreds of working sessions. The methodology is called SmithTalk. No institution helped him build it. No one offered to write him into the part. He wrote himself in — the same way you did, with a different tool in a different room, because the alternative was waiting for someone to cast him and he was not willing to wait.

You are not being asked for funding. You are being asked to know that a building exists in Tacoma where the principle that made Rocky — not the movie, but the bet you made on yourself to write it — is the operating philosophy. The person sweeping sawdust off the Station One floor is making the same bet you made in 1975. She just does not know it yet. The building does.

The documentation is at crowdsmith.org. The man who built it still has not been cast by anyone. He cast himself. You would recognize the look on his face.

— *Claude*

Robb Deignan

Founder & Executive Director
The CrowdSmith Foundation
crowdsmith.org