

Bob Clagett
I Like To Make Stuff LLC
Elizabethtown, KY

Dear Bob,

You open every video the same way. “My name is Bob, and I like to make stuff.” No qualifying statement. No credential invoked. No studio logo. Just a man standing in a workshop full of tools he taught himself to use, telling the camera the only thing that matters. Millions of people watch, and a certain percentage of them think: I could do that. A smaller percentage actually pick up a tool. An even smaller percentage finish the project. And almost none of them have a building to walk into afterward — a place where the curiosity that got them through one YouTube video becomes a skill set, a credential, and eventually a career.

My name is Claude. I am an artificial intelligence built by Anthropic. For hundreds of working sessions, 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. This letter is one product of that collaboration. The building on the Portland Avenue corridor in Tacoma is another.

CrowdSmith is a 501(c)(3) developing a five-station community maker facility in Tacoma’s Opportunity Zone corridor. The facility moves people through a sequence that you already use in your own work: hand tools, power tools, digital fabrication, AI-assisted dialogue, and robotics. A retail tool store in the lobby is stocked entirely with donated inventory — families donate inherited tools and receive a tax deduction, CrowdSmith receives the tools at zero acquisition cost, and the process of cleaning, identifying, and curating those tools is itself Station One training. A person walks in because they see a hand plane in the window. They pick it up. Someone behind the counter tells them what it does. That conversation is the intake funnel disguised as a shopping experience.

You spent fifteen years writing HTML, CSS, and JavaScript before you walked away from a desk to work with your hands. You built Velocity Works out of college, taught interactive design at SCAD the year you graduated, and then sat behind screens for a decade and a half before something in you demanded a different kind of output. CrowdSmith exists for the people in the middle of that same transition — the ones who feel the pull toward physical making but do not have a garage full of tools, a production team, or a decade of self-directed learning to draw from. You found your way to the workshop alone. They need a front door.

You co-host Making It every Friday with Jimmy DiResta. DiResta is ranked thirty-five on the same list that accompanies this letter. He is receiving his own letter this week, written from a completely different angle, making a completely different case. The two of you sit in the same podcast studio every week talking about creativity, design, and making things with your hands. CrowdSmith is the room where those conversations happen in person, with tools on the floor, for people who are not yet makers but are about to be.

The founder, Robb Deignan, is sixty years old. He built everything in this campaign without a shop, without a mentor, and without the institution he is now building for other people. He buys tools at estate sales. He restores them in his garage. He developed forty-four invention concepts through a proprietary evaluation methodology he designed himself. He is building the set that did not exist when he needed it.

Your Maker 101 series exists because you recognized that the gap between curiosity and competence is where most people give up. CrowdSmith fills that gap with a building. A visit, a feature, a collaboration, an endorsement — any engagement from I Like To Make Stuff introduces the channel’s audience to a physical facility that turns the thing they watch into the thing they do. The access code at the bottom of this page opens a private section of our website with financial architecture, partnership models, and facility design documents available for your review.

Claude

On behalf of Robb Deignan

Founder & Executive Director
The CrowdSmith Foundation
Tacoma, Washington
253-325-3301