

A Cover Letter From Outdoor Explorations

To

The Carl and Ruth Shapiro Family Foundation

August 18, 2006

Ms. Rhonda Zinner, President
The Carl and Ruth Shapiro Family Foundation
399 Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02116

Dear Ms. Zinner:

On behalf of Outdoor Explorations (OE), I would like to thank you for the Carl and Ruth Shapiro Family Foundation's generous past support of our mission to break down the barriers that prevent people with disabilities from living life to the fullest. Your investment in OE has allowed us to provide empowering, inclusive outdoor and after-school programming to young people of all abilities.

Thank you, too, for inviting OE to apply for the new Carl and Ruth Shapiro Family Foundation's Disability Inclusion Initiative. With the enclosed proposal, we respectfully request a \$70,000 grant over two years in support of the development and early implementation of a sound strategic plan to build organizational capacity and ensure future growth and sustainability. I am particularly grateful that the Foundation has decided to include capacity building among its grant-making priorities in this initiative, as strategic planning is a critical endeavor and funding for it can be difficult to find.

As the proposal details, over the last two years OE has grown tremendously in the number of people we serve and in the innovation and reach of our programs. At this point, we are close to our maximum programming capacity, with nearly all our programs and services fully booked through the end of this year. Yet demand continues to grow for our life-enhancing youth and adult adventure trips, Explorers after-school programs, Outdoor Inclusivity Trainings, and WildWorks community service projects. While this is a good problem to have, we recognize that we must expand to continue to meet this growing community need with quality programs and services. Sustainable growth requires clear strategy and sound planning. A grant from the Carl and Ruth Shapiro Family Foundation will make it possible for us to conduct this planning, along with robust implementation of critical early stages of the plan.

Thank you, once again, for your generous past support. I hope to have the pleasure of meeting with you to discuss this project, and would also love to welcome you to observe or participate in an OE program at your convenience. Should you have any questions or require further information, please feel free to contact me.

Regards,

Beth Shapiro
Executive Director

Encl.