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WS 272

Spoke to KRISTIN About Grant  
She indicated funds would be  
directed to UW System. for CLA.  
-gr 4/13/15

# Elmer G. Biddick

## Charitable Foundation

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## Grant Application

**Date:** April 10, 2015

**Name of Organization:** Community Leadership Alliance of Southwest Wisconsin (CLA)

**Address:** 542 S. Tyler Street

**City, State, Zip:** Lancaster, WI 53813

**Phone:** (608)778-1807

**Person Responsible for the Grant:** Kristin Holman-Steffel

**Position in the Organization:** Coordinator

**Organization's Purpose:** Our mission is to develop a base of informed and motivated community-minded leaders. Our goal is to build alliances to unify communities throughout southwest Wisconsin by providing a series of leadership classes focusing on the unique needs of our region.

**Grant Request:** \$2000.00

**Describe the reason for this grant request in the space below:**

We're asking for a grant of \$2000.00 to provide scholarships for participants for our 2016 and 2017 classes. CLA is funded through a combination of tuition fees, contributions and grants. We have been successful at raising in-kind and volunteer resources, however, many hard costs remain to be met. Every year we need to raise the 40% of our budget that is not based on tuition and also provide tuition scholarships to CLA participants who cannot afford the full amount.

**Enclosed:**

*Letter of determination*

*Narrative, outlining*

Specific use of grant

Time schedule

Other sources of funding

Effects of postponing the grant

Effects the grant will have on our communities and future leaders of Southwest Wisconsin

*Community Leadership Alliance of SWWI 15 Year Report* with success stories and testimonials and history.

## Community Leadership Alliance of Southwest Wisconsin Strengthening Communities

*Before you are a leader, success is all about growing yourself. When you become a leader, success is all about growing others. —Jack Welch*

Southwest Wisconsin is an area in transition. Many residents leave their communities daily to work in urban employment centers of Dubuque and Madison. As the workforce migrates, a void is created – an unnatural silence each day when the workers are gone. The critical fabric of a rural community is the volunteers who fight fires and respond to car accidents and heart attacks, and their numbers dwindle.

As with other rural areas youth struggle with their futures – should I stay or should I go? For many the decision is too easy. Some villages surrender, their once bustling little downtown shops converted to apartments. Buildings lost are not replaced.

Even Agriculture, the bedrock of the regional economy, is changing. But perhaps a bellwether, farming reminds us that change is inevitable but may not be bad. There's promise here. The people are still productive, strong and tenacious.

To say the least, the challenges facing southwest Wisconsin's rural communities and rural leaders are increasingly complex and greatly influenced by political, social, cultural and even global forces, as well as local events. These challenges have compelled current rural leaders to expand their understanding of the underlying causes of the problems facing their communities, the range of possible outcomes and solutions, and the multiplicity of strategies for getting there. In other words, a new, more robust set of skills and knowledge is needed.

*The task of leadership is not to put greatness into humanity, but to elicit it, for the greatness is already there." John Buchan*

Strong, effective leadership is absolutely necessary to strengthening a community and advancing its future. Jack Schultz, author of Boomtown, describes it well: "You've probably all experienced it. Someone has a great idea for a community project, but no one takes the lead to completion. All you get out of the great idea is a few meetings and the frustration that "nothing gets done."

One of the qualities of a good leader is goal achievement, the ability to attain achievable goals regardless of obstacles. Good leaders also have the ability to interact positively with others, helping the group manage a project, and the ability to provide a positive, can-do influence on others.

Good leaders are precious to a community, and offering those you already have your continuing support is important. But it's also essential for the community to identify and develop new and emerging leaders."

*Leadership is lifting a person's vision to higher sights, the raising of a person's performance to a higher standard, the building of a personality beyond its normal limitations." Peter F. Drucker*

The Southwest Wisconsin Community Leadership Alliance is about strengthening communities. The CLA was designed to help emerging leaders develop skills, so they can focus those skills on issues directly related to this region.

Community leaders need three competencies. These are the capacities to:

- **Frame ideas**—the capacity to define opportunities and issues in ways that lead to effective action. Through framing, a group understands and decides *what* needs to be done, *how* it is to be done, and *why* it is important to do.
- **Build social capital**—the capacity to develop and maintain relationships that allow people to work together and share resources.
- **Mobilize resources**—the capacity to organize and engage enough people, financial resources, votes, and organizations to make the project a reality.

Since the CLA was launched 15 years ago, over 450 southwest Wisconsin citizens representing 42 communities have graduated from the program and become a critical force in area revitalization. These leaders come in all shapes and sizes and from all walks of life. They come from all sectors – government, business, education, health care, religious and service – and have not only the opportunity but the responsibility to play a leadership role in their area of expertise. And they have done so.

Over the years skill building for CLA participants has translated into capacity building for their communities and the greater region. As CLA participants develop new skills and expertise, the level of community service is raised. Moreover, community leaders that bring new people into decision-making are building community capacity quantitatively, adding new energy and muscle to community development for the entire region.

The chance to gain skills and to practice and learn about leadership are also important parts of the base. Program sessions hit at the heart of building collaborative vision, communications, action and reflection. Monthly training sessions are led by experts and packed with hands-on practice. Over the years the courses have included:

Communicating with elected officials	Garnering resources
Dealing with diverse audiences	Running effective meetings
Understanding what makes a leader	Conflict resolution
Globalization	Planning for action
How to bring about change	Team management skills
Strategic planning	Community organizing
Civility	

In 2015 the CLA will continue to provide high quality programs, adding a new emphasis on diversity issues, emotional intelligence and strength finding.

*A community is like a ship; everyone ought to be prepared to take the helm."*  
— Henrik Johan Ibsen

In addition to building leadership skills, an important goal of the CLA is to build alliances and create networks so that the entire region can share the resources and knowledge needed to work together on common issues. The three-county area has over one hundred units of local government requiring local leadership, not to mention scores of community-based organizations. Having a program that serves three counties and has hundreds of graduates provides exciting opportunities to create regional initiatives unique to southwest Wisconsin.

The core management of CLA is a coalition comprised of the University of Wisconsin – Platteville, the Platteville Area Chamber of Commerce, UW Extension of Grant, Iowa and Lafayette Counties and many citizens and business people. The CLA board represents many partnerships; alliances that feed program content and help us evaluate the impact of the classes.

No other educational program focuses on the unique issues and leadership development needs of southwest Wisconsin. The CLA is a critical foundation for efforts to revive our economy and address health, civic, environmental and educational issues. Program participation is sought after; classes are growing and we maintain a waiting list for those unable to enter the current program.

To serve a broad base of future leaders from all walks of life and geographical area we strive to keep the program affordable. The CLA is funded through a combination of tuition fees, contributions and grants. We have been successful at raising in-kind and volunteer resources but many hard costs remain to be met.....so we need your help.

Every year we need to raise the 40% of our budget that is not based on tuition, and also provide tuition scholarships for CLA participants who cannot afford the full rate.

We're asking for support from the Elmer G Biddick charitable foundation in the form of \$2000.00 to support the 2016 & 2017 CLA program in providing scholarships to participants who without them, would not be able to attend this program. It would help in raising funds for future scholarships to know that this amount was taken care of sooner, but if this request is postponed, we could apply it to scholarships of future participants.

Southwest Wisconsin is a wonderful place to live, grow, raise a family, retire. Our region glows with an unparalleled quality of life and natural beauty. As we build on those assets we know that improved leadership is core to the ability of southwest Wisconsin communities to manage its economic challenges, for sustainable growth must come from within.

Thank you for considering our request. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Kristin Holman-Steffel, CLA coordinator at (608)778-1807.