

**Agency: Commerce, Community and Economic Development****Grants to Named Recipients (AS 37.05.316)****Grant Recipient: Denali Education Center****Federal Tax ID: 92-0131177****Project Title:****Project Type: Remodel, Reconstruction and Upgrades**

## Denali Education Center - Community Building Improvements - Running Water, Restrooms and More

**State Funding Requested: \$109,000****House District: 38 / S**

One-Time Need

**Brief Project Description:**

Appropriation to build public restroom facilities for a busy community building servicing elderly clientele and residents of Denali Borough. Funds will also be used to finish the floor, fix the roof, and retrofit the space to better serve the public.

**Funding Plan:**

Total Project Cost:	\$264,200
Funding Already Secured:	(\$115,700)
FY2014 State Funding Request:	<u>(\$109,000)</u>
Project Deficit:	\$39,500

*Funding Details:**Funding Already Secured:**\$44,200 Community Donations via annual fundraiser**\$45,000 Program Revenue/Earned Income**\$11,000 Charitable Giving**\$5,000 Strategic Planning**\$10,500 In-kind service -- Landscape Architects**Total: \$115,700**Other Funding Requested:**2013: \$25,000 Rasmuson Foundation, Tier 1 grant**Total Secured and Requested: \$140,700***Detailed Project Description and Justification:**

Denali Education Center, a nonprofit organization, is seeking \$109,000 in state funds to build restrooms and upgrade facilities for its community building, which primarily serves elderly clientele. The building hosts events and functions during the summer months, educating tourists to Denali National Park and is a favorite gathering place for Denali Borough residents and visitors. The building is currently serviced by two portable toilets. All patrons, especially elderly guests, are reticent to use these and are often forced to walk 300 yards to the neighboring lodge for relief. Having running water with sanitary bathroom facilities will allow them to pursue new business with tour operators that wouldn't consider their educational programs due to the lack of facilities. Funding will be used to build restrooms (with corresponding septic) and to

make other necessary remodel repairs to the building including finishing the floor and fixing the leaky roof.

**Project Timeline:**

Strategic Plan - Completed in Summer 2011  
Facility Assessment and Mapping with Alaska Chapter of Landscape Architects - Fall 2012  
Complete Campus Facility Plan - February 2013  
Site engineering - Spring 2013  
Site Prep and Septic Installation - Spring/Summer 2013  
Landscaping and re-vegetation - Begin 2013, complete 2014  
Roof Repair - Summer/Fall 2013  
Remodel existing structures/bathroom construction - Begin Summer 2013, complete 2014  
Floor leveling and installation - Fall 2013/Spring 2014

**Entity Responsible for the Ongoing Operation and Maintenance of this Project:**

Denali Education Center

**Grant Recipient Contact Information:**

Name: Jodi Rodwell  
Title: Executive Director  
Address: P.O. Box 212, Milepost 231 Parks Highway  
Denali National Park, Alaska 99755  
Phone Number: (907)683-2597  
Email: jodi@denali.org

Has this project been through a public review process at the local level and is it a community priority?  Yes  No

## Denali Education Center: Community Facility Improvements

Total Project Cost:	\$264,200
Funds Already Secured:	\$115,700
FY14 State Fund Request:	\$109,000
Other Funding Request:	\$25,000
Additional Funding Required:	\$14,500



Detail About Funds Already Secured: DEC has \$100,200 allocated in a savings account for this project consisting of \$45,000 of program revenue over the past two years; \$44,200 in private donations from an annual community fundraising auction; and \$11,000 from charitable gifts to the organization over the past two years. We have invested in a strategic plan for the organization (\$5000) and have received pro-bono services from the Alaska Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (ASLA) for a Campus Master Plan (\$10,500). Our project deficit will be paid for through fundraising efforts in 2013.

### **Funding Already Secured:**

\$44,200 Community Donations via annual fundraiser  
\$45,000 Program Revenue/Earned Income  
\$11,000 Charitable Giving  
\$5,000 Strategic Planning  
\$10,500 Campus Master Plan  
Total: \$115,700

Other Funding Requested:  
2013: \$25,000 Rasmuson Foundation, Tier 1 grant

Total Secured and Requested: \$140,700

### **Brief Description**

Denali Education Center is seeking state funds to build public restrooms (with septic and water systems to service them) for its community building, the Charles Sheldon Center. Funds will also be used to finish the floor, fix the roof, and retrofit the building to separate staff offices and facilities from public space.

### **Detailed Project Description**

Denali Education Center (DEC) completed a strategic plan with the facilitation of Agnew::Beck Consulting in 2011. Business priorities and sustainable solutions for our future were mapped at that time.

We applied for Rasmuson Foundation's Pre-Development program in February of 2012, but due to overwhelming demand, have yet to be accepted into the program. In lieu of this support, we forged forward with the assistance of our board of directors and the Alaska Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects in the late summer of 2012. These sessions produced a comprehensive, phased plan to upgrade our facilities. From this, we have begun the challenge of bringing our public spaces in line with general visitor expectations.



One of our strategic plan priorities is to diversify our revenue stream and attract new business. We have identified the need to upgrade our public spaces as a first step in this plan. Our desire is to build bathrooms for the place where our visitors make their "first impression" at the heart of DEC's campus, the Charles Sheldon Center.

**The Charles Sheldon Center was built by the community with over 4,000 hours of volunteer labor.** It is a visually pleasing structure with post-and-beam construction, stained glass windows, and many other artistic attributes. Since its construction in 1998, it has served our organization and the community well, hosting over 3,000 people every year. Our clientele are primarily elders and the lack of sanitary facilities hampers our ability to attract new business and threatens the relationship we have with long term clients as their customers demand better services during their visit.



Visitors must use portable toilets as sanitary facilities. This not only limits the scope of offerings the organization can successfully attract, the annual portable toilet rental fees are not cost effective.

The floor covering is simply painted subfloor plywood and though still in reasonably good condition, should be finished for aesthetic reasons as well as safety and long-term preservation of the facility.

In the last several years, the roof has developed a persistent leak. We have attempted to repair the leak by replacing the roof screws and applying heavy amounts of silicone, but after seeking advice of a local contractor; have determined that there is insufficient overlap of the tin and that we very likely have sustained water damage that should be properly repaired.

Additionally, as the organization has grown, it has become clear that retrofits are necessary to restructure and differentiate staff offices and facilities from public space. Remodeling our existing buildings and upgrading utilities will increase the organization's capacity for programming, keeping the Charles Sheldon Center the beloved community center that it has been since constructed.

### **Project Timeline**

1. Strategic Plan - Completed in Summer 2011
2. Facility Assessment and Mapping with Alaska Chapter of ASLA - Fall 2012
3. Complete Campus Facility Plan - February 2013
4. Site engineering - Spring 2013
5. Site Prep and Septic Installation - Spring/Summer 2013
6. Landscaping and re-vegetation - Begin 2013, complete 2014
7. Roof Repair - Summer/Fall 2013
8. Remodel existing structures/bathroom construction - Begin Summer 2013, complete 2014
9. Floor leveling and installation - Fall 2013/Spring 2014

### **Project Description Detail**

Denali Education Center is making a capital project request of \$109,000 for necessary upgrades including public restrooms to its vital community building, the Charles Sheldon Center, in Denali Park, Alaska.

How funds will be/have been used:

- Strategic Plan (done): \$5,000
- Facility Assessment (done): \$10,500
- Site engineering: \$19,000
- Site prep and landscaping: \$13,500
- Septic system: \$58,200
- Replace and repair roof: \$15,800
- Level floor and install flooring: \$18,700
- Construction of bathrooms: \$54,500
- Remodel of existing facilities: \$69,000

Local engineers and contractors will be hired to design and construct the new restroom facilities, and make all necessary improvements and repairs. Weather conditions and previously scheduled events in the Sheldon Center will dictate the schedule.

### **About the Denali Education Center's Charles Sheldon Center**

At its heart, the Denali Education Center features the Charles Sheldon Center - a facility that was built over a period of three years, beginning in 1995 and finishing with a grand opening celebration in 1998. The community building was primarily constructed with donated materials, from the logs that form its post-and-beam framework, to the electrical wire and switches, and even the tin roofing. Over 4,000 volunteer hours were logged during its construction; community members helped with all aspects of building from peeling logs to digging holes to raising the roof (an event that drew almost 100 volunteers in 1996). **The building is the heart of the organization because of the investment made by the local community.**

Since its completion, the building has seen incredible success – thousands of people utilize the Charles Sheldon Center each season. From lectures to concerts and weddings to memorial services, a wide variety of events are hosted here. Local citizens are encouraged to organize and host their own events which range from yoga to board meetings for other nonprofits. Denali Education Center is non-advocacy, providing a venue for all to present and consider both preservation and use of Alaska's resources.

DEC has recently received grant support for capital improvements to this facility. In 2011 DEC received a \$25,000 Tier 1 grant from the Rasmuson Foundation to build new stairs and porch for our administrative office and to remodel the two offices within in the Charles Sheldon Center.

### **About Denali Education Center**

Founded in 1989, Denali Education Center is a partner of Denali National Park and Preserve. We are located in the Denali Borough on 10 acres along the park's eastern boundary. *Denali Education Center's mission is to foster appreciation and understanding of Denali through informative and inspiring programs.* Our primary clientele are senior citizens who come to us through the Road Scholar program and several Alaskan tour operators who bring their clients to us for our expert educational presentations.

The Denali Education Center also serves the community with a variety of programs. Favorites include *Denali Discovery Camp* for children entering 1<sup>st</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade; *Denali Backcountry Adventures* for teens of high school age; the *Scott Menke Summit Scholarship* that benefits graduating Denali Borough students; *Community Series* programs that feature lecturers, artists, musicians, crafts and social gatherings such as yoga classes, square dancing, a golf tournament, and our annual Auction. We also serve the greater good of Alaska's children through the *WILD About Denali* program for disadvantaged youth and *Denali Bug Camp* for budding entomologists across the state of Alaska.

Denali Education Center also helps Denali National Park and Preserve fulfill its mission. In addition to teaching about the park and its environs, DEC supports research in the park with the *Discover Denali Research Fellowship*, contributing over \$20,000 annually.

The Denali Education Center is a local business, important to the local economy. We have longevity and are fiscally stable, responsible with our funds, and thrifty when it comes to spending. State funding for this project has wide support and will have a lasting impact on the residents of Denali Borough, and the state of Alaska.

## **Community Support**

This particular project has received wide community support as evidenced by the breadth of letters received by Representative Guttenberg and Senator Hoffman's offices. Although Denali Education Center is primarily funded through revenue earned from residential programs, we also enjoy strong financial and in-kind support from our community.

Denali's "community" extends far beyond the borders of our borough. Though a hub for tourism in the state, Denali's local businesses must take their dollars to our major cities for supplies and services. We view this as an advantage, allowing us to network with a broader community. These relationships become particularly important for our annual fundraising auction. This event draws as many as 600 participants and raises roughly \$50,000 annually. Thousands of donations for goods and services have been given by individuals and businesses from around the state and across the country in support of this event. It is Denali's largest community event, bringing people together who plan for and look forward to this gathering each year.

Our youth programs benefit greatly from an annual golf tournament, the Healy Tundra Challenge. All proceeds go to the Scott Menke Memorial Fund; created to honor the life and spirit of a vibrant young community member whose life was cut short. This fundraiser packs the Black Diamond Golf course each year, with Black Diamond donating the use of the entire course. The event raises over \$10,000 each year and funds scholarships for Denali Borough students, and helps offset expenses for our youth camps.

Community support is also demonstrated by the strong volunteer effort that citizens continue to contribute to the organization's grounds and buildings. Each year we host an official "Volunteer Day." Rotaract groups (young Rotarians associated with the University of Alaska) from both Fairbanks and Anchorage participate in our Volunteer Day each year. Volunteer Day draws an average 30 local area participants each year. Our community also contributes their time to provide human interest programs and hike with program participants, enhancing our guests' experience to Denali. Each year we log hundreds of volunteer hours.

DEC has received grant support for capital improvements and equipment upgrades from the Rasmuson Foundation over the last several years. We have also successfully obtained grants from the Usibelli Foundation, Fred Meyer Foundation, the Alaska Mental Health Trust Authority and many others in support of our organization.

To learn more, please visit [www.denali.org](http://www.denali.org).

*DEC fosters appreciation and understanding of Denali through informative and inspiring programs*



July 5, 2012

## Grant 6686 - Facility improvements to Denali Education Center

We're pleased to report that our project was successful on every level. It was a community and group effort that re-affirmed the joys of living and working in such a caring place.



The biggest improvement was replacing the old porch on our combined dining and classroom facility, Riverside Hall. A dedicated local board member donated his time to remove the existing rotting porch and a few trees that were in the way of the new construction site.



A local excavating contractor working at a nearby site brought loads of fill to smooth out the building site.

When he heard that we were planning to rake and try to compact it by hand, he offered his heavy equipment to prepare us a proper building site free of charge.



The deck was completed before our first group of the season arrived, but the doors and windows were not yet replaced. I sat on our new porch watching guests go in for dinner one sunny evening. Each in turn would try slamming the old door a few times, but it was so warped, it would not latch. They were all very pleased when the doors and windows



were replaced mid-week. They not only worked properly, but brightened the room immensely as well.

We also had a serious rain storm that first week the campus was open. The contractor had not yet replaced the roof screws, so (much to our horror) these guests also witnessed the leaks in the roof firsthand. After the deluge, all of the screws were replaced in an afternoon. The contractor gave us a large surplus of screws for future use and to fix leaks on our other buildings as well. Subsequent downpours let us know that the new screws work perfectly. On the last night of that first program, there was a round of applause from our guests for the new doors, windows and roof repairs.

We replaced all the old, heavy, torn and over-sized curtains in our guest rooms. The new window coverings arrived in plenty of time and were a snap to install. They look fabulous, are easily cleaned, and should last for many years. The supplier extended us a discount of \$1200.



We replaced all the bedding in each of our guest cabins. Some of the old bedding went to the Fairview Inn in Talkeetna, but the majority was received with tears of joy at the Fairbanks Rescue Mission. The new bedding has been a wonderful change and is much easier for our housekeepers to work with. Fred Meyer gave us a \$500 gift card to use towards its purchase.



At the close of the project, we've made improvements totaling nearly \$30,000; enjoyed nearly \$4000 in savings, discounts and donations; worked with some wonderful supporters and given back where we could. Thank you once again for your support.

2011 Denali Education Center Small Grant Report Narrative  
for Rasmuson Grant 6000, *Furniture Facelift*

We had a very busy opening this year as we pushed to get all of the changes made for our desired improvements. Things couldn't have gone smoother and everything looks amazing!

As soon as we knew we were awarded the grant, we placed orders for the chairs and tables. We got chairs for our dining and lecture halls and opted to get additional chairs for all of our guest rooms to replace the twenty-year-old wooden chairs that were looking tired. One exciting turn of events is that we were able to re-purpose all of the chairs that we replaced! Our local community center took about 30 of our lecture hall chairs and some were given away to community members. We put up flyers in the post office and got a call from the Nenana public school. They wanted ALL of the remaining chairs for their assemblies and class rooms as they had a shortage when they had events. They are going to refinish the wooden chairs, and re-upholster and paint the lecture hall chairs as a school project and are thrilled with the donation!

Our first Road Scholar group on the residential campus had some returning participants from prior years. They immediately noticed the new chairs and tables and thanked us profusely for buying such comfortable chairs. They confided that they had discussed their concerns before coming back for a program because they dreaded the uncomfortable seating in our dining hall. We are so pleased to be improving our guests' experience.

We completely gutted our office to prepare for the modular furniture installation in early May. We patched and painted the walls, pulled up the old carpet and replaced it with carpet square tiles that were deeply discounted by a generous business in Fairbanks (a great connection made at Leadership Fairbanks classes through the chamber of commerce) and were ready to roll when Robin Smith and Eric McCallum arrived for the installation. Things went so well that we went forward and remodeled our seasonal office on the ground floor as well. It's been SO nice to have professional looking offices that have much better usable work space. We could never have done all of this without the effort of many volunteers who worked long hours to help make this happen.

The day after the furniture was installed, the materials were delivered for the stairs and the work began for removal and replacing them. In addition to the stairs, we had exterior siding installed over what was bare plywood. Volunteers stained the siding before it was installed and it looks beautiful. The old supports for the stairs were seriously rotted and it was a matter of time before they would have been too dangerous to use. The new stairs look incredible and really improve our image as a professional organization. Some of what was removed has been repurposed into other structures around our campus. To view a photo album of our office remodel, visit Denali Education Center's Facebook page.

The Rasmuson Foundation grant allowed us to make some long overdue changes and we are very grateful. We are inspired to continue with our improvements and thank the Rasmuson Foundation deeply for your generosity.



IN REPLY REFER TO:

# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Denali National Park and Preserve  
Post Office Box 9  
Denali Park, Alaska 99755

A3815 (DENA)

December 17, 2012

Representative David Guttenberg  
1292 Sadler Way, Suite 304  
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Dear Representative Guttenberg:

Please accept this letter of support for the Denali Education Center's request for funding from the state for capital improvements to their community building, the Charles Sheldon Center. Denali National Park and Preserve is proud of our long-standing partnership with Denali Education Center (DEC). Our cooperative agreement with DEC includes youth camps that serve Denali Borough students, "WILD About Denali" for our most vulnerable members of society, and "Discover Denali," an introductory program for park visitors.

In addition to teaching about the park and its environs, DEC supports research in the park with the Discover Denali Research Fellowship, contributing approximately \$20K annually to projects that help our resource managers make critical decisions about the park's resources.

Denali National Park and Preserve often utilizes the Charles Sheldon Center for programs, seminars and other gatherings. For example, the park's artists-in-residence present their work in the Charles Sheldon Center for the public at the conclusion of their residency in the park. While aesthetically pleasing, the lack of restroom facilities is a drawback. Improvements to the Charles Sheldon Center are necessary and would be greatly appreciated by the National Park Service.

The DEC has proved itself to be a respectable, professional business in our local area. The organization is self-sufficient and has strong support from the community. The National Park Service (NPS) appreciates this stability in a park partner.

The DEC helps the NPS to fulfill its mission to preserve and protect Denali's resources for future generations. We support their efforts to secure a one-time appropriation from the Alaska State Legislature to make necessary upgrades to their community facility.

Sincerely,

Jeff Mow  
Acting Superintendent

DENALI BOROUGH, ALASKA  
RESOLUTION NO. 12-27

A RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE DENALI EDUCATION CENTER'S (DEC) REQUEST FOR  
STATE OF ALASKA FUNDING

WHEREAS, the Denali Education Center (DEC) is located within the Denali Borough; and

WHEREAS, the DEC provides ongoing educational opportunities for the citizens of the Denali Borough; and

WHEREAS, the DEC hosts a variety of cultural events which enrich the lives of the citizens of the Denali Borough; and

WHEREAS, the DEC offers the youth of the Denali Borough, and all of the citizens of the state of Alaska, exceptional learning opportunities through its summer camps; and

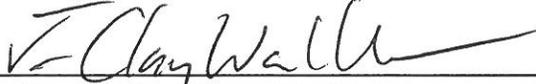
WHEREAS, the DEC is a valued partner of Denali National Park & Preserve and the Denali Borough School District; and

WHEREAS, the DEC is a non-profit, qualified 501(c)3 organization; and

WHEREAS, the DEC requests a one-time appropriation from the Alaska State Legislature which fulfills its final land payment and provides needed facilities upgrades, both of which support the above public offerings.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED: that the Denali Borough Assembly supports the Denali Education Center in its request for a one-time direct appropriation from the state of Alaska.

PASSED AND APPROVED by the Denali Borough Assembly this 12<sup>th</sup> day of December, 2012.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clay Walker, Mayor Pro Tempore

ATTEST:   
\_\_\_\_\_  
Gail Pieknik, Borough Clerk



PASSED UNANIMOUSLY  
ABSENT: WEIBEL and CARLSON

The  
**Usibelli**  
Foundation

*Making a  
Difference in our  
Communities*

100 Cushman St., Ste. 210  
Fairbanks, AK 99701-4674  
(907)452-2625  
Fax (907) 451-6543  
www.usibelli.com  
info@usibelli.com

Senator Lyman Hoffman  
Representative David Guttenberg  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Senator Hoffman and Representative Guttenberg,

28 January 2013

The Usibelli Foundation has been a long-time sponsor of the Denali Education Center, a non-profit educational partner of Denali National Park and Preserve. I am writing today, in support of their request for funds from the Alaska State Legislature to upgrade facilities at the Charles Sheldon Center.

The Denali Education Center building is host to more than 3,000 guests each year. The Center serves the community with a variety of programs, most importantly for K-12 youth of the local area. Programs at the Center feature lecturers, artists, musicians, crafts, and social gatherings. The Center is an important part of business, tourism, research and education.

Your favorable consideration is greatly appreciated.

With best regards,

*Bill*

Bill Brophy  
Executive Director  
The Usibelli Foundation

# ROAD SCHOLAR

**Elderhostel, Inc.**  
11 Avenue de Lafayette  
Boston, MA 02111-1746  
(877) 426-8056 tel  
www.roadscholar.org

*TTY equipment for the hearing impaired (877) 426-2167*

January 16, 2013

Dear Senator Hoffman,

Please accept this letter of support for the Denali Education Center's request for funding for capital improvements to their community building, the Charles Sheldon Center. Denali Education Center (DEC) has been a provider of quality learning experiences to Elderhostel, the not-for-profit educational organization for older adults now operating under the Road Scholar program name, for more than 20 years.

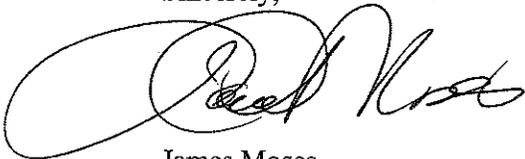
Although the Elderhostel offices are located out-of-state, Elderhostel is responsible for sending more than 850 older adult students each year from all over the country to the state of Alaska, spending almost 7,400 nights in local establishments in the state. With Denali specifically, Elderhostel offers more than 17 Road Scholar educational adventures from March and through the Denali summer enrolling more than 400 people who spend more than 3,600 nights in Alaska each year.

What distinguishes Road Scholar programs is the educational content that is at the heart of our not-for-profit mission. DEC utilizes the Charles Sheldon Center for classes and evening presentations for each Road Scholar experience. The building is beautiful, and our participants love its ambiance. Unfortunately, the building is serviced by portable toilets. This is a major setback for our older adult constituents. Many are uncomfortable using the portable toilets, so they walk 100 yards to the dining hall for restroom breaks, often missing out on portions of the educational content. Bathrooms in the Charles Sheldon Center are necessary and would be greatly appreciated by Elderhostel, Inc.'s hundreds of annual adult participants.

The educational content and local experiences that DEC provide are unlike the tours and vacation packages offered elsewhere in the state. DEC programming creates lifelong ambassadors for Alaska of people who truly learn about and want to care for Alaska's protected lands far beyond their stay. I hope you are proud to have such a strong educational partner at Denali National Park – I know we are – and we look forward to working with DEC for the *next* 20 years.

The Denali Education Center helps Elderhostel deliver its mission to promote lifelong learning among older adults across the country. I am pleased to offer Elderhostel's support of their effort to secure funding from the Alaska State Legislature to build restrooms and to make necessary upgrades to their community facility.

Sincerely,



James Moses  
President and Chief Executive Officer, Elderhostel, Inc.

# ROAD SCHOLAR

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11 Avenue de Lafayette  
Boston, MA 02111-1746  
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January 16, 2013

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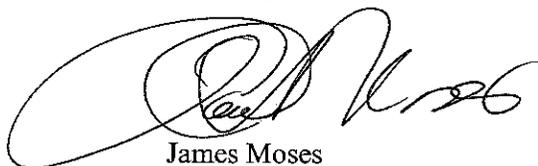
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The Denali Education Center helps Elderhostel deliver its mission to promote lifelong learning among older adults across the country. I am pleased to offer Elderhostel's support of their effort to secure funding from the Alaska State Legislature to build restrooms and to make necessary upgrades to their community facility.

Sincerely,



James Moses  
President and Chief Executive Officer, Elderhostel, Inc.



Alaska Geographic

David Tomeo, Program Director

P.O. Box 136, Denali Park, AK 99755

[david-tomeo@murieslc.org](mailto:david-tomeo@murieslc.org), 907.683.6438

January 24, 2013

Representative David Guttenberg  
State Capitol Room 418, Juneau AK, 99801  
[Representative.David.Guttenberg@akleg.gov](mailto:Representative.David.Guttenberg@akleg.gov)

Dear Representative Guttenberg,

This letter is intended to express Alaska Geographic's support for our partner organization, the Denali Education Center, and their request for financial assistance from the State of Alaska.

Being another Denali-based education organization, Alaska Geographic works closely with the Denali Education Center (DEC). The two organizations support one another in many ways, such as sharing staff resources and by jointly offering educational services. In many instances, the DEC's Charles Sheldon Center is used to host jointly offered events, including a Nenana River Users Group Forum that included all types of river users and the governing authorities. Alaska Geographic and DEC also jointly host many visiting youth groups such as Earth Explore Foundation that make use of the Charles Sheldon Center.

The Charles Sheldon Center has become an important and recognized feature of our Denali Borough community. Because of the community volunteer hours involved in the building and upkeep of the center, it also serves as an emblem of pride for the community. I am proud to say that my family, and the families of many Alaska Geographic employees, have invested volunteer hours at the DEC campus.

As a partner organization to the National Park Service, Alaska Geographic helps manage another facility in the local area, the Murie Science and Learning Center. During the busy summer months and the Spring and Fall shoulder seasons, our facility can be booked to capacity, making the Charles Sheldon Center a much needed facility for all of the demands of activities in Denali. There are also some events that we cannot host in our facility, due to being a federal building of the National Park Service. In some of these instances, the DEC facility has been used to host those events.

Upgrading the Charles Shelton Center with restroom facilities and other necessities would be a very worthwhile investment in the Denali Borough. These upgrades would increase the organization's capacity for programming and help keep the Charles Sheldon Center as a beloved community center.

We hope that you find additional support among your colleagues for this request from the Denali Education Center.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if I can provide additional information.

Sincerely,

David Tomeo

January 30, 2013

To whom it may concern;

As a small business travel partner of Denali Education Center (DEC), Alaska Wildland Adventures encourages and supports appropriation of state funds to assist in the building of public restrooms adjoining the Charles Sheldon Center on DEC's campus, along with the corresponding septic and water systems needed to service them. Denali Education Center is an integral part of the Denali Borough and broader Alaska tourism communities - both to the year-round population, as well as to the visitors and tourists that are so vital to our borough and to the state of Alaska as a whole.

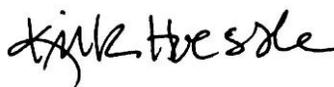
DEC serves visitors to Denali National Park in a multitude of ways. They offer a variety of programs, including educational camp sessions for young children and high school students as well as offering a free lecture series and programs with local artists, musicians, and storytellers. Many of these programs are offered to the general public free-of-charge, and help our visitors to better understand and connect with Alaska. DEC directly services Alaska Wildland Adventures small tour groups – many including youth travelers visiting Alaska for the first time – and improved facilities will allow our company to send more travelers to support DEC's long-term sustainability.

Additionally, Denali Education Center serves local year-round residents in a variety of ways - from organizing events such as free yoga classes, to major functions such as golf tournaments and an annual fundraising auction. These are highly anticipated and valued events in the community, as business owners and park-area employees are able to pause from busy schedules to gather as a community.

By supporting the Denali Education Center, we are in turn supporting Denali National Park, to whom the DEC is partnered with and annually contributes over \$20,000 toward research programs in the park.

Providing DEC with critical funds to build basic amenities like public restrooms and to make added repairs to their buildings would improve an important part of the Denali community and heighten the experiences of all visitors sending important revenue to the state of Alaska. Please give your support to the appropriation of the requested funds.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kirk Hoessle". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Kirk Hoessle  
President/CEO, Alaska Wildland Adventures  
P.O. Box 389  
Girdwood, AK 99587

1/19/2013

Dear Representative David Guttenberg, and Senator Lyman Hoffman.

I would like to write to you with my support for the Denali Education Center and its request for funding for their local campus. This non profit has been a great asset to our community. The Education center offers great educational programs to Kids, Youth, Adults and Seniors. Helping all to understand our natural world and the beautiful National Park and surroundings that we call home!

I have been an ardent supporter for years and have volunteered many hours for the cause. The Education Center is profitable but needs some financial assistance in some upgrades that are needed to help make it more profitable and self sufficient for the future.

The Denali Education Center employs many locals of the community and gives back to the community with many of its great programs and activities throughout the year. Many visitors and guests leave with a lasting impression of greatness of our State and the wild places that we all enjoy! The tourists bring the much needed revenues to keep our community alive! I realize the funding may be limited yet causes like this should be at the top of the list for the good they create and benefit to the community they bring.

Thank you for your consideration and wishing you much success with this session!

Warm Regards,

Gregory LaHaie – Owner Kantishna Air Taxi inc.

And Skyline Lodge LLC.

Denali Mountain Morning Hostel & Cabins

Mile 224.1 George Parks Highway  
PO Box 208  
Denali National Park, AK 99755

January 27, 2013

To whom it may concern;

This email is being sent to encourage and support appropriation of state funds to assist in the building of public restrooms adjoining the Charles Sheldon Center at the Denali Education Center (or the DEC), along with the corresponding septic and water systems needed to service them. The Denali Education Center is an integral part of the Denali Borough community- both to the year-round population, as well as to the visitors and tourists that are so vital to our borough and to the state of Alaska as a whole.

The DEC serves visitors to Denali National Park in a multitude of ways. They offer a variety of programs, including educational camp sessions for young children and high school students as well as offering a free lecture series and programs with local artists, musicians, and storytellers. Many of these programs are offered to the general public free-of-charge, and help our visitors to better understand and connect with Alaska.

The Denali Education Center serves our local residents in a variety of ways as well- from organizing events such as free yoga classes, to major functions such as golf tournaments and an annual fundraising auction. These are highly anticipated and valued events in our community. They are some of the few times we as business owners and park-area employees are able to pause from our busy tourist seasons and gather as a community to give back to the area that we all know and love so well.

By supporting the Denali Education Center, we are in turn supporting Denali National Park, to whom the DEC is partnered with and annually contributes over \$20,000 toward research programs in the park. It is a one-of-a-kind business, focusing on education through exploration, and creates lasting and unique relationships between visitors, locals, and Denali National Park and the surrounding area. The DEC has already done our community a great service just by being who

they are. Providing them with the funds to build basic amenities like public restrooms and to make added repairs to their buildings would improve an important part of our community, and heighten the experiences of all persons who are fortunate enough to be a part of any of the many services the DEC has to offer. Please give your support to the appropriation of the requested funds.

Sincerely,

Alison Fugle

General Manager, Denali Mountain Morning Hostel & Cabins- and on behalf of Denali Mountain Morning Hostel & Cabins and Bill Madsen, Sole Proprietor

# **Denali Outdoor Center, Inc.**

Mile 238.9 Parks Highway or P.O. Box 170, Denali Park, AK 99755

Mile 1/2 Otto Lake Road, Healy, AK 99743

E-mail: [info@denalioutdoorcenter.com](mailto:info@denalioutdoorcenter.com)

Website: [denalioutdoorcenter.com](http://denalioutdoorcenter.com)

In Denali (907)683-1925 / Toll free (888)303-1925

To Whom It May Concern:

January 30, 2013

I am writing this letter in support of The Denali Education Center's request for state funding to help facilitate improvements to The Charles Sheldon Center on their campus at McKinley Village. The D.E.C. embodies the open arms of our community and The Sheldon Center is the heart of that embodiment.

The enhancement of The Sheldon Center to the Denali community is invaluable. There exists no other venue in the community where gatherings of locals, tourists, artists, scientists, educators, children, parents and so many others meet to exchange ideas and share their hopes, interests, concerns and desires for Denali National Park and the planet we call home. Indeed, the concept of "act locally, think globally" is alive and well in the hearts and minds of the D.E.C. staff, and the Sheldon Center is critical to their outreach.

A variety of programs are hosted in The Sheldon Center on a year-round basis. Without some basis improvements to insure the future integrity of this building, which was built with several thousand hours of volunteer labor, the success of these programs could be compromised. And, as the co-owner of an outdoor adventure business in the Denali area since 1995, I am all too aware of the limitations, expenses and inconveniences presented by the long-term use of "porta-johns," which by their nature discourage a welcoming atmosphere. They are certainly a satisfactory solution to a difficult circumstance, but they are by no means a desirable economic or environmentally friendly way to conduct business.

Finally, I believe it is important that we recognize the contributions of community organizations such as the Denali Education Center with reciprocal support. If the National Park Service, local government and businesses, and community members alike can find common ground and agreement on any issue, then the State of Alaska should join the collective voice. I urge you to support the D.E.C. and provide funding for much needed improvements to their campus facilities at McKinley Village.

Thank you for your consideration in this important community matter.

Very kind regards,  
Bill Overington – President/Co-owner  
Denali Outdoor Center, Inc.



**CAMP DENALI**  
**NORTH FACE**  
**LODGE**

DENALI NATIONAL PARK  
WILDERNESS CENTERS, LTD.

Post Office Box 67  
Denali National Park, AK 99755  
Tel: 907-683-2290 • Fax: 907-683-1568  
E-mail: info@campdenali.com

January 31, 2013

Dear Representative Guttenberg,

This is a letter of support for the Denali Education Center (DEC) at Denali National Park. They are planning to submit a request to the Alaska State Legislature requesting a one-time grant for infrastructural improvements to their residential facility outside the park. I believe that DEC is deserving of this funding because of the valuable education and other programs that this organization provides to park visitors and the greater Denali community.

The education center's request for state funds merits attention. In a small community like ours, events and places and venues that bring members of the community together are very valuable. DEC's facility functions in many ways as a community center during the summer months. The broad reach of their programs spans local residents to people from across the state to visitors from far away. Providing some state money to help fund DEC's improvements ought to be in the best interest of Alaskans.

Sincerely,

Jenna Hamm  
Executive Vice President  
Denali National Park Wilderness Centers, Ltd.



# McKinley Village

## LODGE

Representative David Guttenberg,

We are writing to support the Denali Education Center (DEC) in their attempt to acquire state funds for upgrades to their property, including public bathrooms and a septic system.

The Denali Education Center is a non-profit organization that serves our local community in many ways, and also attracts tourists from out of state, which boosts the local economy. The tourists that stay at the DEC Elderhostel come for 1-week programs, and thus spend much time and money in Denali and grow to appreciate it more than the average tourist. As a result, we believe they become ambassadors for the state and entice others to visit.

The Denali Education Center serves the community with a variety of programs. Some favorites are Denali Discovery Camp for children entering 1st through 8th grade; Denali Backcountry Adventures for teens of high school age; the Scott Menke Summit Scholarship that benefits graduating Denali Borough students; Community Series programs that feature lecturers, artists, musicians, crafts and social gatherings like yoga classes, square dancing, a golf tournament, and the annual Auction.

Many guests and staff at the McKinley Village lodge take advantage of the unique programs offered at the DEC, such as the yoga and guest speakers. This adds value to our hotel and to the park in general.

Thank you for serving our state and for considering this proposal.

Sincerely,

Kathy Fischer and Jeff Bell

General Manager and Operations Manger

McKinley Village Lodge

# McKinley Village

## LODGE

Senator Lyman Hoffman,

We are writing to support the Denali Education Center (DEC) in their attempt to acquire state funds for upgrades to their property, including public bathrooms and a septic system.

The Denali Education Center is a non-profit organization that serves our local community in many ways, and also attracts tourists from out of state, which boosts the local economy. The tourists that stay at the DEC Elderhostel come for 1-week programs, and thus spend much time and money in Denali and grow to appreciate it more than the average tourist. As a result, we believe they become ambassadors for the state and entice others to visit.

The Denali Education Center serves the community with a variety of programs. Some favorites are Denali Discovery Camp for children entering 1st through 8th grade; Denali Backcountry Adventures for teens of high school age; the Scott Menke Summit Scholarship that benefits graduating Denali Borough students; Community Series programs that feature lecturers, artists, musicians, crafts and social gatherings like yoga classes, square dancing, a golf tournament, and the annual Auction.

Many guests and staff at the McKinley Village lodge take advantage of the unique programs offered at the DEC, such as the yoga and guest speakers. This adds value to our hotel and to the park in general.

Thank you for serving our state and for considering this proposal.

Sincerely,  
Kathy Fischer and Jeff Bell  
General Manager and Operations Manger  
McKinley Village Lodge

Dear Representative Guttenburg:

I am writing to encourage your support to the Denali Education Center's request of funds from the Alaska State Legislature to make necessary upgrades to the Charles Sheldon Center just outside of Denali National Park.

Civilizations need to mature sustainably. The programs, fellowships and scholarships which the Denali Education Center offer are very unique to the Denali Borough and the local community. The Denali Borough is in need of quality operators such as the Denali Education Center to assure continued economic and social growth successes of the borough and of the local community. The Denali Education Center is in fact partially responsible for the continued maturation of the Denali Borough.

As a Denali business owner, operating manager and land owner, I am only one of many (from throughout Alaska, the "lower 48" and from around the world) who continue to support and enjoy the Denali Education Center and the programs the center offers. The Denali Education Center contributes to the local and the Alaska economy through Elderhostel and children's programs, scholarships and fellowships. Add to this the Denali Education Center's local community programs and involvement and we have a recipe for the continued budding, growth and sustainability of the relatively young Denali Borough and the small towns within the borough.

I am asking for your full financial support to help the Denali Education Center realize the ability to perform these much needed repairs so that they can continue to focus their funds toward their mission.

If you would like to follow up with any questions, please feel free to contact me via email or phone.

Allen Cornelison  
[Acorn777@gmail.com](mailto:Acorn777@gmail.com)  
[907-952-9666](tel:907-952-9666)  
PO Box 43  
Denali, AK 99755

Dear Senators Guttenberg and Hoffman,

I am writing in support of Denali Education Center's (DEC) request for legislative funding. DEC plans to use the funding to build indoor restrooms for their main facility, the Charles Sheldon Center, as well as make other upgrades to the building.

I have lived in the Denali area since 2004, first as a seasonal and now as a homeowner and permanent resident. Over the years, I have been involved with DEC in many capacities. I've attended many public programs, volunteered on grounds projects, taught writing workshops to Elderhostel guests, given a literary reading, provided estimates and consulting as a trail contractor, donated items to their annual auction, and done volunteer tree and grounds-clearing. I also know personally many members of the board and staff, who are active local residents. In all of these dealings, I have never been less than fully impressed with DEC's level of dedication to its programs, commitment to both local and visitor education, and support of other efforts in our community to advocate for the Denali region. DEC is truly a non-profit star and a major contributor to the quality of life in our remote area.

One of DEC's most impressive qualities is one that many Alaskans admire and strive for: the ability to do a lot with a little. DEC has provided top of the line programs--artistic, educational, environmental--with staff and facilities that many non-profits would consider bare bones. The restroom situation is certainly an obvious example of this. DEC has had outhouses outside the Sheldon Center (which is a beautiful, rustic building) for as long as I've been coming to the campus. Although everyone makes the best of it, this level of facility is not ideal. It is difficult for disabled users, is awkward for large groups, feels primitive compared to the beauty of the building (especially so for those visiting from Outside), is onerous for staff's winter time use, and is not cost effective for DEC. A full-service indoor restroom would significantly improve the Sheldon Center, which is a key gathering place in the area.

This is one of those situations where both the requester (DEC) and the project (restroom upgrades) are unequivocally deserving of State funding. Denali Education Center is Alaska at its best and I hope the legislature recognizes this by providing the requested support.

Thanks very much for your time and your work on behalf of the Denali Borough.  
My best,  
Christine Byl  
Healy, AK

February 1, 2013

Representative David Guttenberg,

My name is Sarah Crowley. I am writing to support the request for funds from the Alaska State Legislature to make improvements to the Charles Sheldon Center at the Denali Education Center, in McKinley Village, Alaska. I currently work at the Arctic Research Consortium of the United States (ARCUS) based in Fairbanks, AK. I consider myself a part-time resident of McKinley Village. I worked there for 4 seasons while my husband has worked in Denali for over 15 years.

My career at ARCUS has its roots in the Denali Education Center (DEC) and attending events at the Charles Sheldon Center. Both science and community events at the center have instilled in me the immense value of Alaska's worth state-, nation-, and world-wide. This letter of support is the least I can do to repay the DEC for their hard work.

To speak to the broader accomplishments and needs for improvement funds:

- The Denali Education Center serves the community with a variety of programs. Denali Discovery Camp, Denali Backcountry Adventures and the Scott Menke Summit Scholarship serves primary and secondary students. These social improvements in our community need quality infrastructure to be as successful as possible.
- The Denali Education Center is a local business, important to the local economy. Participants book thousands of dollars in excursions with local purveyors. They require the same services as other businesses and are customers of businesses from Anchorage to Fairbanks.

In closing, the Denali Education Center is integral to the vibrancy of our remote community and the success of our area, economically. Thank you so much for your time and consideration to support this funding.

Please feel free to contact me at anytime: [scrowley39@gmail.com](mailto:scrowley39@gmail.com)

Best Regards,



Sarah Crowley  
Arctic Research Consortium of the United States – Education Project Manager  
M.Ed. Curriculum and Instruction for Science Education

Dear Senators Guttenberg and Hoffman,

I strongly support the request by Denali Education Center (DEC) for legislative funding to make important improvements to their essential facility, the Charles Sheldon Center.

Since becoming a resident of the Denali Borough in 2004, I have been involved with the DEC in many ways. I have attended countless lectures, slideshows, readings, yoga classes, concerts, and of course the anchoring event of the summer season in Denali, DEC's Annual Auction. I have volunteered as a technical trail consultant and forester on the DEC campus, and labored on a variety of outdoor projects over the years. Additionally, I've given evening presentations for the Road Scholar program and worked as an instructor for 5th-6th graders at DEC's wildly popular Denali Discovery Camp. In all of my dealings with the DEC, I have been overwhelmed by the professionalism of the staff and the quality of the programs-- this is a standout organization.

They are interwoven into this community such that I truly cannot imagine living in the Denali Borough without the enriching presence of the DEC. They bring an amazing bounty of programs to this remote part of Alaska and provide a vital lens through which visitors to the area can view the cultural, artistic and biological diversity of Interior Alaska.

At the core of all of their many offerings, stands the Charles Sheldon Center. And while the events and programs offered there are absolutely first rate, the building itself needs improvements to keep pace with and reflect the excellence it contains.

I cannot think of a prouder use for State funding in Alaska than to assist the Denali Education Center in this way. Please provide the support they are requesting. And come visit as soon as possible to see the DEC in action!

Thank you for all you do for the Denali Borough and its residents.

Sincerely,  
Gabriel Travis  
Healy, Alaska

Greetings, Messrs. Guttenberg and Hoffman.

First off, thank you both for your efforts this week at bringing more humane temperatures to the Denali area; today 'tis a full 70 degrees warmer than the minus-60 of only two days ago.

I also write to you in support of the Denali Education Center's pursuit of state funding to upgrade its wonderful Charles Sheldon Center. Through the past six years I have tried to never miss a program at the Sheldon Center, and some summers have achieved that goal! I can't count the number of times I have benefited from programs and events there, and I can't overstate the value of all I have learned. Executive Director Jodi Rodwell and her staff do a fantastic job for our entire community.

So I am very familiar with all that the Sheldon Center has to offer, and with how its facilities could be improved and enhanced. The value of the proposed addition of public restrooms, and the accompanying septic and water systems, for the hundreds of visitors and locals who attend programs at the Sheldon Center can't be over-estimated. Speaking personally, since I habitually hike or bike the miles from work or my home to these programs, it would be wonderful to be greeted by a proper restroom in which to freshen up. Similarly, it would be wonderful for the floor to finally be finished, along with other much-needed improvements and upgrades.

Thank you both for all that you do for all of us, thank you for your years of service, and thank you for your support of this funding for these most-deserving projects.

Sincerely,

(Mr.) Cass Ray  
P. O. Box 11  
Denali Park, AK 99755

1-2-2013

Representative David Guttenburg  
State Capitol Room 418  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear David,

I am writing about the requested upgrades for the Denali Education Center near Denali National Park. I live in Cantwell, 20 miles south of DEC. I enjoy many of their programs that include music, arts, photography, dance instruction, and presentations of travels with slide shows. I attend the annual Denali Quilters auction which benefits our local quilters and the community. I enjoy the annual DEC summer auction which is a highlight of activity, excellent food and fabulously donated auction items. I also enjoy their summer knitting gatherings. I have participated on the nature hikes for guests.

The requested upgrades will improve the buildings longevity of service to our community. The restrooms will improve the comfort and sanitary expectations of the guests. As well as decrease necessary yearly expenses.

For these reasons, I ask that you support the requested funding for the Denali Education Center. I wish it to remain the viable contribution that it is to our community and to become even more so as it continues to progress in development.

In appreciation,

Cynthia Brian  
Po Box 184  
Cantwell, AK 99729  
[cynthiabrian@hotmail.com](mailto:cynthiabrian@hotmail.com)

Dear Senator Hoffman and Representative Guttenberg,

As local residents, we urge you to please support the Denali Education Center. State funds have been requested that will be used to build much needed public restrooms adjoining the Charles Sheldon Center, to finish the floor, and fix a leaking roof. Much of the work will be accomplished by volunteer labor but money is needed for materials and equipment costs.

The Denali Education Center and especially the Charles Sheldon Center are a great resource for residents and visitors to the Denali Park area. My wife and I especially enjoy the Community Series programs that feature lecturers, artists, musicians, crafts and social gatherings like yoga classes, square dancing, a golf tournament, and the annual Auction. The auction and many other events draw hundreds of people to the facility and public toilets are badly needed for public safety and convenience.

The Center is ideally located near many local residents and serviced by local transportation systems so it is in daily use for Elderhostel and public activities.

Thank you for your support of the Denali Education Center and we hope you have a productive legislative session.

---

David Cohen and Diane Schneider

January 24, 2013

Dear Representative Guttenberg:

I am a Denali Park community member, and for almost 15 years have participated in and thoroughly enjoyed activities and programs offered by the Denali Education Center. They partner with the National Park Service on activities and research support, and offer programming not provided by the park. These include camps for local students, musical events, and informative evening presentations on a variety of topics, suitable for a diverse range of interests and ages.

They are a local business, offering unique and high quality programs. They are a consistent, year-round presence in the community. The Sheldon Center is a source of pride to locals, as we helped build it, and annually assist with spring cleanup and planting the garden.

State funding would greatly enhance the Denali Education Center's ability to continue providing a high level of programming to a diverse public. Improving and upgrading the Sheldon Center would make it more efficient for staff, and more attractive to potential participants deterred by the rustic facilities.

I urge you to support their funding request. Thank you for work to enhance opportunities for interior Alaska communities.

Sincerely,

Kris Fister

January 24, 2013

Dear Senator Hoffman:

---

I am a Denali Park community member, and for almost 15 years have participated in and thoroughly enjoyed activities and programs offered by the Denali Education Center. They partner with the National Park Service on activities and research support, and offer programming not provided by the park. These include camps for local students, musical events, and informative evening presentations on a variety of topics, suitable for a diverse range of interests and ages.

They are a local business, offering unique and high quality programs. They are a consistent, year-round presence in the community. The Sheldon Center is a source of pride to locals, as we helped build it, and annually assist with spring cleanup and planting the garden.

State funding would greatly enhance the Denali Education Center's ability to continue providing a high level of programming to a diverse public. Improving and upgrading the Sheldon Center would make it more efficient for staff, and more attractive to potential participants deterred by the rustic facilities.

I urge you to support their funding request. Thank you for work to enhance opportunities for interior Alaska communities.

Sincerely,

Kris Fister

Hello Representative Guttenberg and Senator Hoffman,

I live and work within a couple miles of the Denali Education Center for much of the year. I'm writing to support the use of state funds to provide infrastructure upgrades so that DEC can continue to provide the wonderful services it currently provides to locals and tourists alike. Please use your influence to get money for them to build restroom facilities with running water and flush toilets, fix the leaky roof, add a real floor and create the office cubicles they now need.

**Martha McPheeters**

Personnel Coordinator  
Camp Denali, North Face Lodge, & Parkside Guesthouse  
PO Box 67, Denali National Park, AK 99755

- [907.683.2290](tel:907.683.2290)  
[www.campdenali.com](http://www.campdenali.com)

**Mike Speaks**

Jan 17 (3 days ago)

to Hoffman, Guttenberg

Dear honored member of the legislature

I am writing you on behalf of the Denali Education Center, a non-profit educational partner of Denali National Park and Preserve since 1989 in support of a request for state funding. DEC serves Alaska residents and visitors of all ages on their McKinley Village campus through day programs, youth programming, multi-day field trips, research grants, and special events. They are currently requesting state funding in support of much needed improvements to existing facilities.

In its 23-year history, the organization has developed into an important community entity for the Denali Park Borough from Anderson to Cantwell. In addition, the organization serves the tourism industry – a business sector of vital importance to the local economy.

The Denali Education Center serves the community with a variety of programs, such as the Denali Discovery Camp for children entering 1st through 8th grade; Denali Backcountry Adventures for teens of high school age; the Scott Menke Summit Scholarship that benefits graduating Denali Borough students; Community Series programs that feature lecturers, artists, musicians, crafts and social gatherings.

The Denali Education Center serves the greater good of Alaska's children through its WILD About Denali program for disadvantaged youth and Denali Bug Camp for budding entomologists across the state of Alaska.

Denali Education Center is a local business, important to the local economy. Their participants book thousands of dollars in excursions with local purveyors. They require the same services as other businesses and are customers of businesses from Anchorage to Fairbanks.

Denali Education Center is a partner with the National Park Service and helps them to fulfill their mission. In addition to teaching about the park and its environs, they support research in the park with the Discover Denali Research Fellowship, contributing over \$20M annually.

Requested funds will be used to upgrade the heart of DEC's campus, the Charles Sheldon Center. The Charles Sheldon Center was built by the community with over 4,000 hours of volunteer labor. Since its completion in 1998, it has served the organization and the community well, hosting over 3,000 people every year. Due to the organization's success, upgrades are necessary.

Though visually pleasing with its post-and-beam construction, stained glass windows, and other artistic attributes, the building lacks several basic necessities such as a finished floor and plumbing. Visitors must use two portable toilets as sanitary facilities. This limits the scope of offerings the organization can successfully attract and is not cost effective as rental and maintenance of the portable toilets averages \$2,500 annually. The floor covering is simply painted subfloor plywood and though still in reasonably good condition, should be finished for aesthetic reasons as well as safety and long-term preservation of the facility. Additionally, as the organization has grown, it has become clear that retrofits are necessary to restructure and differentiate staff offices and facilities from public space. Remodeling the building and upgrading utilities will increase the organization's capacity for programming, keeping the Charles Sheldon Center the beloved community center that it has been since constructed.

State funds will be used to build public restrooms adjoining the Charles Sheldon Center with corresponding septic and water systems to service them. Funds will also be used to finish the floor and fix the roof, which has a chronic leak due to insufficient moisture barrier and overlap of the roofing tin. Finally, state funds will be put toward retrofitting the building to differentiate staff offices and facilities from public space.

Please support this wonderful organization and help them obtain this crucial financing.

I am a member of the DEC Board of Trustees and have been a resident in Denali for 30 years and can attest to the wonderful things accomplished and to the need for this assistance.

Thank you for your time and I remain sincerely, Mike Speaks, PO Box 97 Denali National Park Ak 99755.

Dear Representative Guttenberg and Senator Hoffman,

I am writing to express my support for granting funds to the Denali Education Center (DEC) for much-needed upgrades to their facilities, including building restrooms, fixing a roof leak, and retrofitting the building to create designated office space.

As a year-round resident of the Denali community for just over six years, I have always valued DEC programming. Their variety of educational and social opportunities for children and adults alike have served both the local community and tourism for years. They are unique in their commitment to educational programming when many activities in the area are primarily recreational, and I would hate to imagine anyone deterred simply by inadequate infrastructure. All visitors-- over 3,000 annually-- would be better served by conventional standards of comfort and indoor plumbing. Please consider:

- The DEC offers tremendous educational opportunities for youth, including the Denali Discovery Camp for grades 1-8, Denali Backcountry Adventures for high school students, the Scott Menke Summit Scholarship benefiting Denali Borough students, and Community Series social and cultural programs for all ages
- **As a local business, they are an important element of the local economy**
- They have partnered with the National Park Service to help fulfill their mission and support research in the park

We are lucky that the DEC has continued to grow and serve our community and its visitors for 23 years. I request and encourage you to support funding their facility upgrades so that they can continue to provide such wonderful opportunities for all of us who love Denali.

Sincerely,

MJ Aft

January 19, 2013

Representative Guttenberg,

Please support the allocation of state funds for improvements to the Sheldon Center at the Denali Education Center (DEC).

The Denali Education Center is an important cornerstone of the Denali-area community, bringing together locals for music, volunteerism, and educational programs held in the Education Center's main building, the Sheldon Center.

The Denali Education Center also serves summer tourists with its many residential and day programs that provide learning opportunities for people of various ages and backgrounds.

The DEC's scope of positive influence through education and outreach cannot be understated and funding maintenance to its Sheldon Center (especially, a bona fide restroom!) is a wise allocation of Alaska monies.

Thank you for supporting this important project.

Sincerely,

Molly McKinley  
Healy, Alaska  
[mckinlm@yahoo.com](mailto:mckinlm@yahoo.com)

## Letter of Support for Denali Education Center's Funding Request

To: Our State Representatives

My name is Sarah Walker. I live in the McKinley Village community, where, with my husband, we are raising our three children. The Denali Education Center (DEC) has played an important role in the lives of our family, like many other Alaskan families. We were married on the beach at the DEC Campus and the Sheldon Center hosted a most joyous reception. While most Alaskans in attendance didn't mind the porta-potties, I know several aunts were less than comfortable with the rest facilities available.

We enjoy the many different artists, events, activities and lectures offered at the DEC. These programs not only enrich the lives of visitors, but the local community as well. We also appreciate the Youth Programs; especially Denali Discovery Camp -- a five day camp in which kids get to explore Denali National Park led by teachers and Park Rangers. This program, to me, epitomizes the good work the Denali Education Center does. The DEC partners with NPS, the Park Concessionaire, and others to provide this opportunity for local kids to explore and enjoy the world-class Park which is their big backyard.

The DEC has done so much for the greater Denali community and the community has done a lot to support the DEC. Their one time request for state funding is both worthy and needed. They work to educate and inspire, and we, in their time of need, should work to support such a fine organization.

I ask you to join me in supporting the Denali Education Center funding request.

Thanks for your consideration,

Sarah A. Walker

Dear Representative Guttenberg and Senator Hoffman,

We are writing to show our support for the Denali Education Center (DEC) and to express our family's hope that they will successfully receive state funds for needed upgrades to the Charles Sheldon Center on the DEC campus. Our family has resided in Denali Park for 15 years, during which time the Denali Education Center (formerly Denali Foundation) has added spice to the rich community we call home. Our family enjoys the variety of arts events and a public speaker series that the center hosts throughout the summer season, and the Charles Sheldon Center is a focal point for our community year round as a gathering space for cultural activities and "life events" - we have attended celebrations of personal achievements, births, weddings, and passings. We are excited to learn that DEC is seeking funds to improve this facility, as we have seen the Denali Education Center grow in programs and offerings over the years. Improvements to indoor flooring and outdoor plumbing will definitely enhance this facility and are much needed at this time.

Thank you for reading this; we hope that you will support this funding to the Denali Education Center, as it would not only directly benefit this organization, but would also enhance our greater community.

Sincerely,

David & Martha Tomeo  
PO Box 135  
Denali Park, Alaska 99755

Dear Senator Hoffman and Representative Guttenberg,

I am a thirty two year resident of Denali Park. During my wonderful years in this area, I have worked for the National Park Service, the US Postal Service, married, raised three daughters, owned and run two businesses and I am opening my third business in May of this year. I have volunteered extensively throughout the community and the school district. There are a few organizations that stand the test of time here as being community minded through programming, hiring practices and volunteer support. The Denali Education Center is exemplary through continuous community support, commitment to education, the area and the environment in addition to fostering tourism in Alaska. It has become an integral part of the community, the place and the state.

Denali Education Center is requesting funds from the Alaska State Legislature to make necessary upgrades to their signature building, the Charles Sheldon Center. The funds requested will go toward building restroom facilities for the Sheldon Center. For many years, community members, government officials, nonprofit leaders, artists, musicians, brides, program participants and many more have been using portable, outdoor toilets.

Please support this highly respected organization in their commitment to excellence and provide the funds for the necessary improvements for their continued community work and programming.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Donna L. Gates

I am writing this letter in support of the Denali Education Center, and to encourage you to assist their efforts to improve their facility in whatever manner is available to you. For the last 9 years, I have had the good fortune to live in the same neighborhood as the Education Center. They provide a unique service to both visitors and area residents. It is not unusual in the summer months to encounter guests of the center while taking walks in the neighborhood, enjoying the breathtaking views, learning from their contacts with the "locals", and sharing their experiences. In addition to providing travelers with education concerning the Denali Borough, Denali National Park and Preserve, and Alaska, the Denali Education Center provides programs for the local residents as well. One of the highlights of my summer is the Denali Quilters Annual Auction, an event so enjoyed by the local residents that I have managed to attend all but one in the last 9 years!

The Denali Education Center has always strived to provide a quality experience for all those who attend functions on their campus. The Charles Sheldon Center, located on the banks of the Nenana River, occupies a beautiful, inspiring location, and while those who visit enjoy an authentic Alaskan experience, basic maintenance and improvements are needed to retain the quality of programs provided at the Center. While there are many who are willing to forgo basic amenities such as indoor restrooms, in this day and age, they are less of a luxury, and more of a health issue. I have attended many functions in the Charles Sheldon Center and as the heart of the campus, is a building worthy of repair and renovation. Please join me in support of funding to improve a worthwhile endeavor. Supporting the Denali Education Center is supporting education, tourism, and the well-being of the local population.

Thank you.

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Kathleen Patella  
PO Box 148  
Denali Park, AK 99755

January 24, 2013

Representative Guttenberg and Senator Hoffman,

Please support the allocation of state funds for improvements to the Sheldon Center at the Denali Education Center (DEC).

The Denali Education Center is an important cornerstone of the Denali-area community, providing a venue for music, volunteerism, and educational programs held in the Education Center's main building, the Sheldon Center.

The Denali Education Center also serves summer tourists with its many residential and day programs that provide learning opportunities for people of various ages and backgrounds from the world over.

The DEC's scope of positive influence through education and outreach cannot be understated and funding maintenance to its Sheldon Center (especially, a bona fide restroom!) is a wise allocation of Alaska monies.

Thank you for supporting this important project.

Sincerely,

Brian Napier  
Healy, Alaska  
[bnapier\\_ak@hotmail.com](mailto:bnapier_ak@hotmail.com)



**ADAM MICHALSKI**

805 Eleanor Avenue Apt. B  
PO Box 12824  
San Antonio, Texas 78212-0824

T (612) 384-3825  
atmichalski@gmail.com

January 30, 2013

Representative David Guttenberg  
State Capitol Room 418  
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Dear Representative Guttenberg,

I am writing on behalf of the Denali Education Center (DEC) regarding the organization's request for appropriations to upgrade the facilities at the Charles Sheldon Center.

The DEC staff welcomed me graciously during my first Alaska visit in August 2011. During my visit with the DEC, their talented staff awakened my sense of awareness to the natural environment not only in Denali National Park, but also in Texas where I live currently. Experiencing Alaska through the eyes of the DEC was an unforgettable experience, which led me to eventually work with the organization as a program coordinator for the 2012 season.

Living in Denali for the 2012 season, I was privileged to see firsthand the DEC's impact on guests at Denali National Park. Through the DEC's partnerships with Road Scholar and the National Park Service, guests from around the world spend a week at its campus getting a true sense of life in interior Alaska. Our guests learn about the flora and fauna of the subarctic from world-class instructors during the morning and hike with them in Denali National Park during the afternoon. After dinner, our guests enjoyed presentations on various Alaskan topics, such as the Iditarod, lectures about Athabascan traditions, and the migration patterns of sandhill cranes. In many cases, the DEC's events are open to the public, encouraging Road Scholars to interact with various community members. Our guests depart the DEC excited to tell friends back home about their trip of a lifetime.

Many of these interactions between the community and Road Scholars would be unimaginable without the Charles Sheldon Center (CSC). With its post-and-beam construction and stained glass windows of Denali, the CSC has become the crown jewel of the DEC campus and a gathering place for the McKinley Park community. While it is a beautiful structure, the CSC requires renovations. For example, the CSC needs public bathrooms. Currently, guests must use portable toilets when visiting the CSC during events, which is undesirable and costly. Upgraded restroom facilities at the CSC would allow the DEC to offer more programs. The leaking roof must be repaired, as well. Water damage is costly if not fixed immediately. A new roof would extend its lifespan many years. In addition, remodeling the CSC to differentiate between public and staff space would increase the DEC's community programming capabilities. These upgrades would benefit the DEC, the citizens of McKinley Park, and the Denali Borough positively.

The Denali Education Center would make a deserving recipient of funding from the State of Alaska. Through its educational and community programs, many of which occur at the Charles Sheldon Center, the DEC fulfills its mission of developing lifelong ambassadors for Denali National Park. I am proud to consider myself one of those lifelong ambassadors of Denali National Park, thanks to my experiences at the DEC. I urge you to consider appropriating funds for the Charles Sheldon Center upgrades during the upcoming legislative session. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns you may have. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Adam Michalski

CC: Jodi Rodwell

Dear Representative Guttenberg,

It has come to my knowledge that the Denali Education Center is seeking State of Alaska funds for improvements to their community building, the Charles Sheldon Center. It is my honor to take the time to urge the Legislature to **approve the funding** of revitalizing a fundamental piece of Denali community.

The Charles Sheldon Center provides a place for the community to gather and discuss important issues. The first time I went to the Charles Sheldon Center was for a wolf debate. This was in 2010 and I remember there being several different groups of people, all with different philosophies of trapping and animal management, gathered together under the same roof. **The Charles Sheldon Center is a place for all people to come together and learn more about one another, their community and issues that affect the borough.**

**The Charles Sheldon Center also plays a positive, valuable and meaningful part in the lives of many at-risk, Alaska youth.** As the first building you see when visiting the campus, the youth participants use the Charles Sheldon Center as a meeting place. It also holds the classes, lectures and provides relief on rainy, cold days (if you keep away from the leaky roof side).

Not all of the Denali Education Center's programs are centered around Alaska's youth. In fact, it is just the opposite. Retired and elderly tourists visit the Charles Sheldon Center for introductory lectures on Denali and the greater Arctic area. Many of these folks choose to visit us because of the educators and naturalists we have on staff. These events expose visitors to local traditions, stories and culture points that cannot be found anywhere else in the borough.

A major problem with the Charles Sheldon Center is its **lack of plumbing** and a seemingly unrepairable leaky roof. **Please approve this monumental funding so the Denali Education Center can provide a safe and dry place for visitors to use a bathroom facilities.** With all of the germs going around in this world, and with the Denali Education Center's visitors being the most at risk for sickness (the young and elderly) it is vital to have a reliable septic and water system. This will help combat the spread of germs and diseases.

The community is important to me, people of all walks of life are important to me. Therefore, it is important to me to have a place for the community to come together. The Charles Sheldon Center is that place for the Denali community. Its preservation and upkeep are vital to not only the building but the people who live in and visit the interior.

**Thank you for all the public service you do in the beautiful state of Alaska and thank you for your time in considering this matter.**

Best,  
Natalie Brandt  
[buyufang@gmail.com](mailto:buyufang@gmail.com)  
[971-645-9431](tel:971-645-9431)

Dear Senator Hoffman,

It has come to my knowledge that the Denali Education Center is seeking State of Alaska funds for improvements to their community building, the Charles Sheldon Center. It is my honor to take the time to urge the Senate to **approve the funding** of revitalizing a fundamental piece of Denali community.

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**Thank you for all the public service you do in the beautiful state of Alaska and thank you for your time in considering this matter.**

Best,  
Natalie Brandt  
[buyufang@gmail.com](mailto:buyufang@gmail.com)  
[971-645-9431](tel:971-645-9431)

Representative Guttenberg,

Hello my name is Landon Labahn and this will be my 5th season returning to the Denali Borough for employment, recreation, friends, and solace. One thing that brings me back every year is the magical and wonderful Denali Education Center. It's the meeting place for events, auctions, education and good food if your lucky enough to run into the right person.

But like anything else in the world, the Charles Sheldon center, the heart of the DEC campus need help! Please approve the funding to renovate the Sheldon center.

I love community. I love government when it works right. This is the perfect opportunity to show that the government is listening to the people of the community and approve the funding for the DEC so our community has a clean, modern facility to use.

I thank you for your hard work and service.

Regards,

Landon Labahn

Senator Hoffman,

---

Hello my name is Landon Labahn and this will be my 5th season returning to the Denali Borough for employment, recreation, friends, and solace. One thing that brings me back every year is the magical and wonderful Denali Education Center. It's the meeting place for events, auctions, education and good food if your lucky enough to run into the right person.

But like anything else in the world, the Charles Sheldon center, the heart of the DEC campus need help! Please approve the funding to renovate the Sheldon center.

I love community. I love government when it works right. This is the perfect opportunity to show that the government is listening to the people of the community and approve the funding for the DEC so our community has a clean, modern facility to use.

I thank you for your hard work and service.

Regards,

Landon Labahn

Dear Senator Lyman Hoffman and Rep Davis Guttenberg,

We are writing this letter in support of the proposed improvements to the Denali Education Center (DEC)

We have been members of this community since 2006 and our first summer we attended the fundraising auction where we met many community members who welcomed us and became close friends.

The Charles Sheldon Center is not just a building. It is the physical embodiment of the community spirit and welcoming nature of the staff and volunteers who are involved with the organization. It is the "living room" of our community.

In the summers, it is a hub for community events - many of which we have attended. We have learned about birds, wood frogs, Park history, moose and more. We have been entertained by folk and bluegrass musicians, harmonica players and local artists such as Ree Nancarrow presenting her quilt show. Our personal health has been improved by yoga and tai chi classes held there.

Speaking as individuals, I (Kate) am proud to spend many hours each summer as a volunteer for this organization. One of the many things I enjoy is the uniqueness of the educational content and presentation to the Road Scholar guests - much of which helps to make lifelong ambassadors for the Denali Educational Center and Alaska. Some of that great experience is enhanced by the facilities at the DEC campus and I believe would be undermined over time if the Charles Sheldon Center is not maintained and improved.

For me (NJ), I think about the not too distant future and my needs in a facility. Being a senior citizen, I am concerned with things like accessible restrooms. There will come a time when I can no longer comfortably use portable toilets which require a certain amount of coordination and balance in order to use with any dignity. I hate to think that I could no longer attend the Center's myriad events for the lack of a restroom.

Much like its namesake, this Center embodies the heart of Denali. We hope that the State will recognize its importance and secure the funding to help with the necessary renovations for the Sheldon Center.

Respectfully,  
NJ Gates and Kate Batten

February 3, 2013

Representative David Guttenberg  
State Capitol Room 418  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Guttenberg,

My name is Keith Reimink and I am writing in support of state funding for the Denali Education Center to improve their much used and much loved Charles Sheldon Center.

The Charles Sheldon Center was built with over 4,000 hours of volunteer labor. It is the heart of not only the Denali Education Center, but the entire Denali community. From gigantic events like the annual auction that brings in tens of thousands of dollars for the Denali Education Center, to weekly programs and classes such as "Welcome to the Sub-Arctic," and community sponsored yoga, the Charles Sheldon Center is a thoroughly used space that brings joy to many.

I first came to work at the Denali Education Center in 2002. Like everyone else who comes through the property, the Charles Sheldon Center was the first building I saw; it has left a lasting impression on me. In my four years as a Campus Cook, and the subsequent six years as a community member, I have attended and hosted innumerable events at The Charles Sheldon Center. It is a wonderful place that needs to upgrade its services so the Denali Education Center can continue to provide its wonderful programs to active community members.

The Charles Sheldon Center, in addition to being a community facility, is a beacon for the tourism industry in Denali. Currently, there is no facility to wash ones hands and the only restrooms are two portable toilets that the Denali Education Center rents for a cost-prohibitive \$2,500 a year. The lack of basic sanitation facilities prevents the Denali Education Center from offering all it can to the local and tourist community.

Thank you for your time and interest. The Denali Education Center and its Charles Sheldon Center are an important part of my past and the history of the Denali area. These important upgrades to the sanitation facilities, the roof, and the floor, will ensure it remains a fixture of the future. They do not seek funding for selfish reasons, rather to upgrade existing facilities so they can continue to be a shining example of an Alaskan small business. The Denali Education Center is a selfless organization and it is time we do what we can to pay them back for all the good they've done.

Sincerely,

Keith Reimink  
Former Campus Cook/Kitchen Manager

February 1, 2013

Representative David Guttenberg  
State Capitol Room 418  
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Rep. Guttenberg:

Please accept this letter in support of the Denali Education Center ("DEC"), and the requested state funds that will be used to upgrade the heart of DEC's campus, the Charles Sheldon Center.

I am a member of the U.S. Navy serving my country on active duty. As an Officer in one of the biggest service organizations in the world, I am appreciative of an organization that also seeks to improve upon its service mission: To foster appreciation of Denali through informative and inspiring programs. This mission begins with the Charles Sheldon Center, for which the state of Alaska's support is needed. Furthermore, I am a wife and mother. As a spouse, I am supportive of my husband's work on the Denali Education Center board of director; and as a mother, I am appreciative of an organization that can provide educational opportunities for my son and other children like him. The Denali Education Center is supported by members of the community, and I am proud to also be a supporter.

I wholeheartedly and without reservation endorse the efforts of the Denali Education Center as it seek state funds that are vital to improving, and providing educational opportunities for, the community of Denali, the residents of Alaska, and the many visitors to the state.

Sincerely,

LCDR Danielle Kiersztyn

February 1, 2013

Senator Lyman Hoffman  
State Capitol Room 518  
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Senator Hoffman:

Please accept this letter in support of the Denali Education Center ("DEC"), and the requested state funds that will be used to upgrade the heart of DEC's campus, the Charles Sheldon Center.

I am a member of the U.S. Navy serving my country on active duty. As an Officer in one of the biggest service organizations in the world, I am appreciative of an organization that also seeks to improve upon its service mission: To foster appreciation of Denali through informative and inspiring programs. This mission begins with the Charles Sheldon Center, for which the state of Alaska's support is needed. Furthermore, I am a wife and mother. As a spouse, I am supportive of my husband's work on the Denali Education Center board of director; and as a mother, I am appreciative of an organization that can provide educational opportunities for my son and other children like him. The Denali Education Center is supported by members of the community, and I am proud to also be a supporter.

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February 1, 2013

Representative David Guttenberg  
State Capitol Room 418  
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Rep. Guttenberg:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of the Denali Education Center (“DEC”), and the requested state funds that will be used to upgrade the heart of DEC’s campus, the Charles Sheldon Center.

The Denali Education Center is pursuing state funding during this year's legislative session. These state funds will be used to build public restrooms adjoining the Charles Sheldon Center with corresponding septic and water systems to service them. The DEC is a local business and a partner to the National Park which has secured support of the local government (Denali Borough). The requested funds will help the organization strengthen its role as a leading institution within the community.

I am a current member of the Denali Education Center’s board of directors, and a former DEC employee and seasonal resident of Denali Park. I am also a father, a husband, and a concerned citizen. I recognize the importance of such an organization: to inspire and educate. I have an understanding of the Denali Education Center’s mission which is to foster an appreciation of Denali through informative and inspiring programs. This mission begins with the Charles Sheldon center. Denali National Park and Preserve, and the Denali community, are very important to me. My time spent there as an educator, resident, and as a member of the Denali Education Center staff was both joyful and enlightening – friendships and lessons learned continue to enrich my life to this day.

In conclusion, the Charles Sheldon Center was built by the community with over 4,000 hours of volunteer labor. Since its completion in 1998, it has served the organization and the community well, hosting over 3,000 people every year. I fully support the efforts of the Denali Education Center as they seek funds to improve, and to continue to provide educational opportunities for, the community of Denali, the residents of Alaska, and the many visitors to the state.

Sincerely,

Scott Kiersztyn

Board of Directors, Denali Education Center

February 1, 2013

Senator Lyman Hoffman  
State Capitol Room 518  
Juneau AK, 99801

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Sincerely,

Scott Kiersztyn  
Board of Directors, Denali Education Center

Dear Mr. Guttenberg,

I am writing in support for the Denali Education Center in Denali National Park, Alaska. They are requesting funds in order to make much-needed improvements throughout the facilities, especially the main hub of the campus - the Charles Sheldon Center.

The Charles Sheldon Center is a meeting place for community members and visitors. Everyone enjoys the lectures, musicians, artists, yoga, and workshops that take place in the building. In Denali, being a small community, it's always exciting to have the opportunity to check some of these events out as they don't always come around that often. People of all ages attend and I know it would help improve the space if the Denali Education Center were able to spruce up the area with a new roof, flush toilets, and a new floor. The condition of the building is deteriorating and it really would be a loss to the community and the organization if the space could not be used anymore.

I hope you will consider the Denali Education Center for funding in this much-needed project. The organization is an asset to the community, the mission it upholds, Denali National Park, and the state of Alaska. Thank you for your time in reading this.

Sincerely,  
Nicole D'Amato

Dear Senator Hoffman,

I am writing in support for the Denali Education Center in Denali National Park, Alaska. They are requesting funds in order to make much-needed improvements throughout the facilities, especially the main hub of the campus - the Charles Sheldon Center.

The Charles Sheldon Center is a meeting place for community members and visitors. Everyone enjoys the lectures, musicians, artists, yoga, and workshops that take place in the building. In Denali, being a small community, it's always exciting to have the opportunity to check some of these events out as they don't always come around that often. People of all ages attend and I know it would help improve the space if the Denali Education Center were able to spruce up the area with a new roof, flush toilets, and a new floor. The condition of the building is deteriorating and it really would be a loss to the community and the organization if the space could not be used anymore.

I hope you will consider the Denali Education Center for funding in this much-needed project. The organization is an asset to the community, the mission it upholds, Denali National Park, and the state of Alaska. Thank you for your time in reading this.

Sincerely,  
Nicole D'Amato

February 4, 2013

Dear Representative Guttenberg,

I am writing in support of the proposed legislative support for the Denali Foundation. They have asked for funding to support updates to the Sheldon Center, including roof repairs and plumbing upgrades. As a local business owner, I am very familiar with the lack of plumbing and what it costs to provide rudimentary port-a-potty facilities. Not only is this a large annual expense, it is not a good experience for the guests.

The Denali Foundation has been an important part of life in Denali since 1989, filling a much needed niche for educational tourism. My daughter has attended their summer camp at an affordable price and I have enjoyed many of their programs on a year round basis. In addition, the Denali Foundation is a long standing customer of Denali Outdoor Center, and my business directly benefits by providing rafting tours to their guests.

I hope you will strongly consider supporting the resolution of the Denali Borough Assembly to grant the Denali Foundation these funds.

Respectfully,

Joanna Cockman  
co-owner/operator DOC Inc.

February 4, 2013

Representative David Guttenberg  
State Capitol Room 418  
Juneau AK, 99801

Dear Representative Guttenberg,

I am writing to express the support of Denali Citizens Council for the funds requested by Denali Education Center to upgrade the Charles Sheldon Center. The Sheldon Center is an amazing community resource that is used to host countless events. Denali Citizens Council schedules educational forums at the Sheldon Center at least once or twice a year, hosting 50-75 people each time, but we are only one organization of many. The absence of restrooms in the building has been awkward for a space that otherwise is an optimal venue for us. While our forums are attended mostly by local residents and other Alaskans who shrug and adapt to the use of the portable toilets outside, it nonetheless would be much more healthy (given the constant volume of use) to have a real restroom facility. A significant portion of the building's use is for programs serving tourists from out-of-state who are likely put off by the absence of restroom facilities. These are folks who are bringing dollars into the local economy and contributing to local government revenue, so it is worth keeping them happy.

I applaud Denali Education Center for seeking to upgrade the Sheldon Center. It is a beautiful building that appears very professionally finished, except for the notably unfinished floor and absence of restrooms. I hope the legislature is able to find funds to assist with this project. Your interest and support are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,



Charlie Loeb  
President, Denali Citizens Council

---

**DCC Board of Directors**

Nancy Bale  
Barbara Brease

Nan Eagleson  
Charlie Loeb  
JJ Neville

Hannah Ragland  
Erica Watson



Representative David Guttenberg  
State Capitol Room 418  
Juneau AK, 99801

February 4, 2013

Dear Representative Guttenberg,

I am writing this letter to ask for your support of the Denali Education Center. I serve as a member of the Board of Directors and am passionate about this organization. We have submitted a request for funds from the 2013 State budget.

Since 1989, the Denali Education Center (DEC) has been a non-profit educational partner of Denali National Park and Preserve. DEC serves Alaska residents and visitors of all ages on their McKinley Village campus through day programs, youth programming, multi-day field trips, research grants, and special events.

In its 23-year history, the organization has developed into an important community entity for the Denali Park Borough from Anderson to Cantwell. In addition, the organization serves the tourism industry – a business sector of vital importance to the local economy.

Requested funds will be used to upgrade the heart of DEC's campus, the Charles Sheldon Center. **The Charles Sheldon Center was built by the community with over 4,000 hours of volunteer labor.** Since its completion in 1998, it has served the organization and the community well, hosting over 3,000 people every year. Due to the organization's success, upgrades are necessary.

Though visually pleasing with its post-and-beam construction, stained glass windows, and other artistic attributes, the building lacks several basic necessities such as a finished floor and plumbing. Visitors must use two portable toilets as sanitary facilities. This limits the scope of offerings the organization can successfully attract and is not cost effective as rental and maintenance of the portable toilets averages \$2,500 annually. The floor covering is simply painted subfloor plywood and though still in reasonably good condition, should be finished for aesthetic reasons as well as safety and long-term preservation of the facility. Additionally, as the organization has grown, it has become clear that retrofits are necessary to restructure and differentiate staff offices and facilities from public space. Remodeling the building and upgrading utilities will increase the organization's capacity for programming, keeping the Charles Sheldon Center the beloved community center that it has been since constructed.

**State funds will be used to build public restrooms adjoining the Charles Sheldon Center with corresponding septic and water systems to service them.** Funds will also be used to finish the floor and fix the roof, which has a chronic leak due to insufficient moisture barrier and overlap of the roofing tin. Finally, state funds will be put toward retrofitting the building to differentiate staff offices and facilities from public space.

I sincerely appreciate your consideration of our ask and hope that we can count on your support. The DEC is a well-respected organization in the Denali community and has many supporters throughout the State.

Kindest regards,

Thom McAleer  
Vice-President, Alaska Denali Travel

T: 907.376.1900  
F: 907.376.1999

**TOLL FREE: 1.800.808.8068**  
1301 W PARKS HWY, STE #5  
WASILLA, AK 99654

[alaskadenalitravel.com](http://alaskadenalitravel.com)

Dear Senator Hoffman and Representative Guttenberg,

I'm writing in support of the Denali Education Center. In 2012, I made the trip of a lifetime to Alaska to spend the summer living in a rustic cabin on the Denali Education Center campus as the center's residential volunteer and doing my small part to aid the mission of the DEC: fostering appreciation of Denali through informative and inspiring programs. Through the DEC, people of all ages make a true connection to Denali through educational programs and cultural events.

The DEC is a place like none other. Built on the curve of a Nanana River oxbow, it's a scenic spot near the entrance to Denali National Park and surrounded by the gorgeous wilderness of Denali. The Charles Sheldon Center is the heart of the campus, and its tall ceilings and graceful stained glass make it a unique and wonderful place. It serves many purposes: A lecture hall, a gallery for local artists, a performance space for music and dance, a yoga studio, a wedding hall, and on at least one occasion, a warm place for a half dozen of our soaked and sleepy youth program kids in who'd gotten rained out.

But as lovely as the space is, it needs significant improvements. The only toilet facilities at the Center are port-a-potties, which was often an uncomfortable choice for all our guests, particularly young families, the elderly, the mobility impaired, and the gastrointestinally urgent. During events like concerts and instructor-led programs, the two port-a-potties had lines like a theme park ride. Flush toilets would allow the DEC to meet their current needs and expand their range of offerings in the future.

The floor and roof of the Sheldon Center also require improvements. Although the roof has been patched many times, it tends to drip here and there on rainy days. The floor is basic painted plywood, which peels and creaks. I've mopped the floor dozens of times, but I confess it really only looks good when it's dark. It's a temporary solution for this space, but it's time to make this improvement.

As a non-profit, the DEC runs on a modest budget and uses their funding wisely. After working closely with them for the full season and experiencing firsthand their commitment to their mission and the community, I am confident that new funding for these improvements would be well spent and make a big impact.

Please include the DEC in your budgeting plans.

Warmly,  
Lori Williams  
[347 405 4537](tel:3474054537)  
[loriposte@gmail.com](mailto:loriposte@gmail.com)

February 2, 2013

Representative David Guttenberg  
Senator Lyman Hoffman  
State Capitol  
Juneau, AK 99801

Dear Representative Guttenberg and Senator Hoffman,

As an employee of Denali Education Center, I questioned how much weight my letter of support for the Charles Sheldon Center improvement project would carry. After reading the inspiring and touching letters of our many supporters, I simply cannot hold back.

I'd like to thank you both for your consideration and support of this project. Asking for major financial assistance is something that is relatively new to the Denali Education Center. We are a fiercely proud organization that has been self-supporting for decades. We are used to making our own way, or simply making do with what we've got. But we now realize that without reaching out, we will struggle long and hard to attain the goals that this organization is so capable of accomplishing.

These are exciting times within our organization! We were able to weather the economic downturn and not only survive, we have flourished. We have a board of directors who are engaged and energized. We have committed and talented leadership. After years of pursuing a workable strategic plan, we have a superb roadmap for our future. We are focused, driven and confident. And it feels amazing.

We have tasted success and have seen the tremendous improvements that can be made with financial assistance. Primarily through the generosity of the Rasmuson Foundation, we have begun to make improvements to our facilities that make us proud. Our visitors, the community and our business partners appreciate our efforts and encourage us to do more. We are ready and eager for the future.

An investment in our future by the State of Alaska will be a fruitful one. Please join us on this journey as a partner and celebrate in our success.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jill Boelsma".

Jill Boelsma  
Director of Operations for Denali Education Center  
and Cantwell, AK resident

Dear Senator Lyman Hoffman,

I am writing this letter today February 4th 2013 in support of state funds to be granted to the Denali Education Centers for improvements to the Charles Sheldon Center. Since moving here to Denali in 2009 I have attended DEC community events, I've watched movies and documentaries, attended weddings, did yoga, made friends, watched live music, listened to educational speakers and authors. A few contra and square dances, art shows, slideshows. Plus gardening, landscaping, tree trimming and snowshoveling. To name a few things.

Everyone in the community benefits from the sheldon Centers upgrade, it also benefits the large number of seasonal workers who come here from all over the world who can attend events, volunteer and meet people to go on hikes etc.

I hope this letter helps you to make the right decision, and have a wonderful day.

Sincerely, Caleb Johnson

**FAIRBANKS-DENAKKANAAGA ROAD SCHOLAR**  
**101 DUNKEL STREET SUITE 135**  
**Fairbanks, AK 99701**

**PHONE: (907) 451-3906 E-MAIL: denakkeh@gmail.com**

Dear Representative Guttenberg,

I am writing this letter in support of Denali Education Center's request to the Alaska State Legislation for financial aid to improve their educational facilities in the Denali National Park area.

The Denali Education Center has provided hands on classes, lectures and presentations on Denali National Park and the surrounding areas for over 20 years.

In the summer, one big focus for the center is offering a number of youth outdoor camps, some of them focusing on disadvantaged youths; all of them providing an opportunity for children from all over Alaska to study nature in real life and observe and record the ecosystem of the Alaska Range. The youths stay at the cabins at the education center and take their classes in the Charles Sheldon Center.

The Denali Foundation has also been the local host site for the Road Scholar Program (formerly known as Elderhostel) since the late 1980's. In the summer, these participants also stay at the cabins for about a week at a time and have classes in the Sheldon Center.

Even more significant, the Denali Education Center also provides a very important year round service focused on the local community—the Charles Sheldon Center offers a large, indoor space for community use. This center was built with volunteer labor, proving the support of the community for this facility. The Denali Education Center brings in both local instructors and instructors from other areas of Alaska to provide various evening classes on specific topics. The Center is also used for social events and physical activities such as yoga classes, square dancing, band concerts, etc. It is a real plus for the people of any small community in Alaska to have such a facility available to them, especially in the winter when so many other venues are closed.

The Denali Education Center would like to upgrade the Sheldon Center. The center does not have any bathroom facilities. In the summer, they provide portable toilets which are costly to rent and maintain each year. The requested money would be used to provide fully functional public restrooms adjoining the center. Although Elderhostel has changed its name to Road Scholar, the bulk of our participants are still elderly—in most programs we have people eighty or even ninety years old participating. The bathroom situation of having to leave the building and go outside to either the portable toilet or even further away to the bathrooms in the dining hall can be a challenge and disruption of the class for them.

There are also maintenance issues in the Sheldon Center—the roof leaks and the floor is only painted plywood which should be upgraded and sealed for long term use.

We are proud to work in partnership with the Denali Education Center on Road Scholar programs. We hope that our legislature will support them in upgrading their facilities for the comfort and safety of their participants, both Alaskans and the numerous visitors that the Denali Education Center attracts to the Interior in the summer.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Leitgeb  
Program Director  
Fairbanks Denakkanaaga Road Scholar Program

February 4, 2013

Sarah Stehn  
PO Box 342  
Denali National Park, AK 99755  
[sestehn@gmail.com](mailto:sestehn@gmail.com)  
[907-683-2815](tel:907-683-2815)

David Guttenberg  
Alaska State Representative  
State Capital Room 418  
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Support for funding for the Charles Sheldon Center, Denali Education Center, McKinley Village, AK

Dear Representative Guttenberg,

I am writing this letter in complete support of proposed improvements to the Charles Sheldon Center, part of the Denali Education Center campus, in McKinley Village, Denali Borough, Alaska. I have been an avid user of the Charles Sheldon Center ever since I moved to the area four years ago.

The Charles Sheldon Center is a beautiful, much appreciated, and well-utilized space. In the summer months, on any given week, I am likely to be found at the center at least one to three evenings a week. The Sheldon Center is the place to be with visiting lecturers, art openings, concerts, and friendly faces bopping about working tirelessly to fulfill the Denali Education Center's mission to "foster appreciation of Denali through informative and inspiring programs." Inspire they do, as I often leave the Sheldon Center with a refreshed view of the community, surrounding landscape, and the potential they both hold to motivate greatness.

The most unique feature of the Charles Sheldon Center is that it serves as gathering place not just for year-round locals, seasonal workers, in-state visitors, or out-of-state tourists. The Sheldon Center is one of the few places where all groups meet and mingle on the same terms. There it is not one group serving the other, but instead a place where people from different walks of life come together to share an appreciation of all things Denali, and there is simply no other place where this is true.

I strongly believe funding for improvements to the Charles Sheldon Center are a critical investment. I am confident that the proposed improvements are necessary, well-planned, and will be well-executed and utilized fully. The staff at the Denali Education Center are top notch and experts at attracting volunteerism from diverse groups to accomplish any mission they set out to complete.

Please pledge your support to funding improvements for the Charles Sheldon Center. Thank you for your time. Most sincerely,

Sarah Stehn