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*A step ahead in teen leadership*

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December 13, 2006

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Board of County Commissioners  
125 East 8th Avenue  
Eugene, OR 97401

Dear Board of County Commissioners,

LEAD is a youth leadership development program serving low-income youth in Lane County. Our mission is to develop the leadership skills of low-income teens to empower them to address community problems and change the world. We provide participants with weekly group meetings, outdoor adventure activities, mentors, and community service projects. LEAD teens receive assistance to succeed in school, refuse destructive choices and determine healthy directions for their lives. Teens report that LEAD has shown them a pathway towards becoming healthy, high functioning adults. LEAD has a 100% school retention rate and a 1% incarceration rate. LEAD's Weekly Group Meetings are the heart of our program. Teens meet one time per week to eat a good meal, discuss upcoming adventure trips, create personal and educational goals and discuss the week's events. The meetings are where LEADers find relationships that truly support them and change their lives. These meetings also provide information about supportive educational resources such as Lane Community College, scholarship opportunities, diversity panels and peer counseling. This year we have expanded to offer a bilingual, bicultural group for Latino youth, in partnership with the Brattain House in Springfield, OR.

In January 2007, LEAD will open the Nuestro Lugar/Our Place Teen Center, whose mission is to provide a safe, supportive, fun environment that promotes leadership, empowerment, personal growth, and social change by and for low-income, multicultural, and/or at-risk youth, ages 12-17. Nuestro Lugar/Our Place will be open for after school hours each weekday.

We are seeking funding from The Board of Commissioners to support LEAD's growing programs to meet the growing need. LEAD has recently received a challenge donation from an anonymous donor. If LEAD can raise \$20,000 by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2006, the donor will match it, giving LEAD \$40,000 to fund our rapidly expanding services. This is the first time in LEAD's nine year history that we have had an opportunity to double the amount of money we fundraise through a challenge donation. We have already secured \$8,510 towards this challenge.

We are approaching you at this time for a donation of \$1,000. This will be matched, giving us \$2,000 to run our programs. This is not just an investment in



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LEAD; it truly is an investment in each of our futures, and I believe that it is one of the most important investments that any of us can make.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Maj Rafferty  
Executive Director