

THIS IS WHY  
THIS IS  
HOW

THIS IS HOW:

WE IGNITE GENEROSITY

WE BUILD VIBRANT AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

WE ENSURE EVERY PERSON THRIVES



# Dear Innovia Friends,

Reflecting on the unprecedented events of the past year, I am deeply inspired by the many people and organizations that joined together, responding with generosity and compassion to emerge from a year of unimaginable challenges to our region's social, health and economic vitality.

When all is said and done, I am not surprised. I know this is how we, as a community, respond to challenge: we come together, we generously give our time, talent and treasure, and we do whatever is needed to take care of each other.

With this edition of Innovia's newsletter, we introduce you to our theme for this current year: *This is How*.

*This is How* will focus on how Innovia works in collaboration with donors, nonprofits, businesses and community partners to create vibrant and sustainable communities where every person has the opportunity to thrive. It builds on last year's theme where we addressed our "Why" and our mission to ignite generosity that transforms lives and communities throughout our region. All of our work is grounded in our core values to be innovative, inclusive and collaborative.

In this newsletter, you will find stories of transformation showcasing the impact of generosity across Eastern Washington and North Idaho. We hope you will be inspired by the content, and we invite you to experience the stories in greater depth on our website at [Innovia.org](http://Innovia.org).

On behalf of the board, staff and volunteers at Innovia, I wish you a beautiful summer filled with opportunities to gather in person with friends, family and loved ones.

In partnership,



**Shelly O'Quinn, CEO**

## BOARD OFFICERS FISCAL YEAR 2021

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Bob Larson

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# This is How We Ignite Generosity

*Imagine if we all joined together and pledged to give back to our community. Even 5% would have a transformational impact.*

## 5% Campaign

When Innovia Foundation commissioned a transfer of wealth study in 2019, we had little idea the study would reveal so many ways in which our region could benefit. The study showed that people in Eastern Washington and North Idaho are expected to leave \$42 billion over the next ten years in end-of-life gifts to beneficiaries. Imagine the impact if just 5% of that wealth transfer was endowed to benefit local communities and nonprofits. Over \$2 billion would be reinvested in local charitable endowments, generating over \$200 million annually in grants, for generations to come.

Many people in our region do not consider themselves wealthy, but all of us have something to give. Innovia began working with nonprofits, donors and community leaders to launch a 5% transfer of wealth campaign with a simple call to action—inspire everyone in our region to plan now to commit 5% to their community or local nonprofit.

**5%**  
**INVESTED**  
**FULLY**  
**COMMITTED**

Imagine with us, the transformation of lives and communities in our region if each of us made a personal commitment to give back just 5% to our community.

## Professional Advisor Spotlight: Michael Altringer

Financial Advisor, Michael Altringer, doesn't just help connect clients to innovative ways to give back to the community they love; he has also found a way to create impact with his own family fund.

Read more about Michael and how the Donor Designated Advisor program allows donors and their professional advisors to stay involved in their charitable giving at [Innovia.org](https://innovia.org).

## Leaving a Legacy: Robert W. & Nancy J. Benson Fund

No chess player can ever predict the end of a game, no matter how good a player he or she is.

Bob Benson, who won the U.S. Open Seniors Top Class in chess in 1992, may not have known his last move, but the generous \$4 million legacy he and his wife, Nancy, created will have a positive impact for disadvantaged youth for generations to come.

The endowed fund they established at Innovia, the Robert W. & Nancy J. Benson Fund, benefits children and animals in our region, along with the University of Washington where Bob graduated with a chemical engineering degree in 1949.

While Nancy grew up in Spokane, Bob took a more circuitous route via Utah, Montana, the Battle of the Bulge and then the Siegfried Line where his broken legs returned him to the states with a Purple Heart, a Bronze Star and a Combat Infantry Badge.

Sometimes, you don't get to meet a hero until they are gone. Bob and Nancy are the sort of heroes whose gifts will impact our region forever.



*Bob & Nancy Benson*

# This is How We Build Vibrant and Sustainable Communities

*Imagine if leadership in local communities was inclusive of diverse voices, backgrounds, perspectives and participation.*

## Volunteer Spotlight: Barbara-Lee Jordan

Barbara-Lee Jordan has a vision for her small community of Lenore, Idaho and she is knocking on neighbors' doors to make that vision come true by asking community members to contribute to the Upper Clearwater Leadership Council Fund. This fund, benefitting Lewis, Clearwater and Idaho counties, addresses the region's greatest needs and priorities.

Barbara-Lee's passion is evident in the thoughtful ways she thinks about the community she loves. "We all need to believe in abundance rather than scarcity."

As an Innovia Foundation Leadership Council member, Barbara-Lee believes it is important to tell her friends and neighbors about her vision of creating vibrant and sustainable communities in their own part of Idaho. Then she asks them, "Would you consider leaving 5% to your community?"



*Contact us to learn more about how you can respond to Barbara's challenge and help build a community endowment.*

## Building Connections with People and Pets

Nestled in the rural community of Ponderay, Idaho, Better Together Animal Alliance (BTAA) focuses on one thing—keeping people and their pets together. True to their mission, BTAA supports meaningful connections by enhancing the lives of dogs, cats and the people in the community who love animals.

The unique Home To Home program helps pet owners who are no longer able to care for their animals find new loving homes for them.

The financial stress of COVID-19, which resulted in the loss of employment and income sources for so many, has taken a devastating toll on families, particularly in rural communities such as Ponderay. In 2020, BTAA's helpline assisted 2,400 people and

their pets in Boundary, Bonner and Kootenai counties.

Innovia was pleased to provide a \$10,520 grant to support the helpline in providing sound advice, rehoming services, pet food and supplies, and medical support for injured or ill pets. The human-animal bond is undeniably strong, and organizations like BTAA are vitally important to the health and wellbeing of a community.

"We are delighted to receive funds from Innovia Foundation to support our helpline. We expect to serve 3,000 pets through the helpline in 2021, and this wouldn't be possible without the Foundation's support," said Mandy Evans, Executive Director of BTAA.





## Honoring our Veterans: Operation Fly Together Veterans Fund

In 2011, there was not a dry eye among Spokane Indians baseball fans when Sergeant Chris Weichman stepped out of the dugout on game night to surprise his wife and three children by returning from Afghanistan after a five-month tour of duty.

That night, the seed was planted for the newly created Operation Fly Together Veterans Fund, a partnership with Spokane Indians baseball, STCU and Innovia Foundation. The community is invited to contribute to this fund, which will support local nonprofits and community organizations serving veterans and active military families in the region.



## Investing in Support for Veterans

On May 27, the Spokane Tribe of Indians VFW Post 10711 received a \$5,000 check from the Operation Fly Together Veterans Fund to improve handicapped access to the building where veterans gather to receive assistance and attend monthly VFW meetings. Two additional \$5,000 grant recipients included Newby-ginnings of North Idaho, Inc. and the City of Spokane for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Riverfront Park.



## Reaching Diverse Communities

El Mercado serves as a vital hub for Latino cultural activities and a space to address health disparities and economic support for entrepreneurs. During the pandemic, El Mercado helped provide a more equitable and accessible distribution of COVID-19 resources for the Latino and immigrant populations in Spokane County.

A recent \$20,000 grant from the COVID-19 Response & Recovery Fund will help support the

El Mercado program, which serves more than 200 Latino and immigrant families in Spokane each month.

Their market is scheduled for the last Saturday of the month in Cannon Park where they will provide free fresh fruits and vegetables, cultural foods, cleaning and hygiene products, COVID-19 testing, vaccines, and health checks in partnership with Range Clinic and Northwest Prevention.



# This is How We Ensure Every Person Thrives

*Imagine if an entire community  
came together to ensure that every  
child has the opportunity to thrive.*

## Engaging Community Voice in Education

In 2021, Innovia Foundation received a \$150,000 grant from the College Spark Outcomes Acceleration Fund, aimed at strengthening school-community partnerships and increasing post-secondary success for students in five rural Eastern Washington communities: Dayton, St. John-Endicott, Lind-Ritzville, Riverside and Inchelium.

This grant launches a two-year pilot project as part of Innovia Foundation's *Say Yes to Education* initiative. The first phase of the project includes community forums and administration of an Educational Effectiveness survey. This input and feedback will be presented in community 'data walks' in late 2021. The project will culminate with a strategic action plan for each community with solutions that advance college and career readiness for students.

## Say Yes to Education Fund

Providing every high school graduate access to college or other postsecondary scholarships is the bold promise of *Say Yes to Education* for Eastern Washington and North Idaho. *The Say Yes to*

*Education Fund* was created for the community to join us in seeding this initiative, so that every student will have the support, resources and opportunities to achieve their dreams.

***Call our team to learn more about our regional effort for the Say Yes to Education Initiative***

## New Scholarship Fund to Transform Adams County

For so many students, scholarships are the key to accessing education after high school. This is something Willard and Patricia Hennings of Adams County, Washington understood deeply and one of the reasons they created a scholarship fund to benefit students in their region. As farmers for more than three generations, the Hennings always appreciated the value of hard work and are passing

that along to others by saying yes to education in their rural community.

This generous \$1 million endowed scholarship fund, established by the Hennings before Willard passed away, will provide up to \$40,000 per year for students in Adams County.







## Celebrating Human Rights and Diversity

Making sure that every person has the opportunity to grow is at the heart of The Human Rights Education Institute (HREI) in North Idaho. The HREI team works hard to elevate awareness and educate people on the value of all human beings. In support of their mission to celebrate diversity and human rights with courageous conversations, HREI seeded an endowment at Innovia Foundation, the **Human Rights Education Institute Endowment Fund**.

Programs administered by HREI provide cultural competency to the community to reduce racial prejudice and address a wide range of diverse issues including race, ethnicity, gender, socioeconomic class, and so much more. Gifts to the fund enable their critical work in promoting human rights for every person in North Idaho.

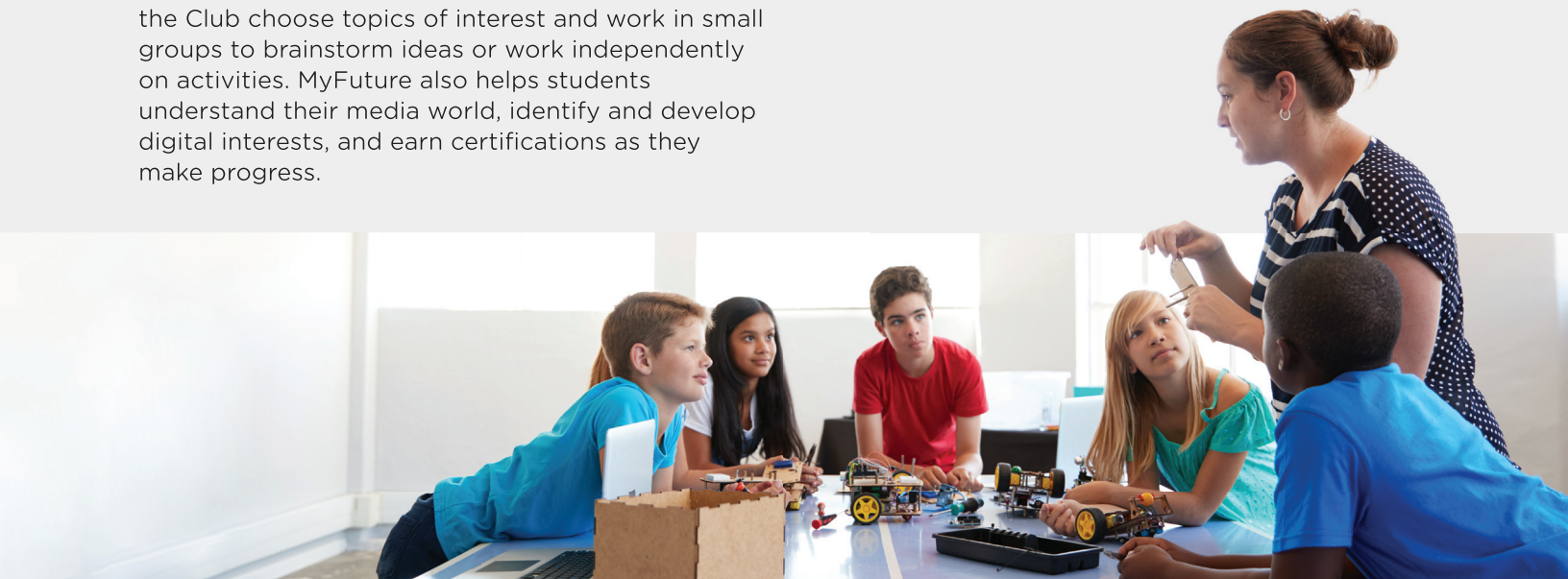
## Fostering Collaboration Through Partnerships

Partnerships across organizations provide a meaningful opportunity to work together in ways that foster collaboration and enhance relationships, while also efficiently leveraging resources.

The Coeur d'Alene Tribe received a \$5,000 grant for a partnership with the Marimn Health Center, which houses the Boys and Girls Club of the Coeur d'Alene Tribe. This grant will allow the Club to purchase MyFuture Essentials, an online curriculum to provide youth with the technology skills they need to succeed in today's digital world. Students from the Club choose topics of interest and work in small groups to brainstorm ideas or work independently on activities. MyFuture also helps students understand their media world, identify and develop digital interests, and earn certifications as they make progress.

## Libraries Building Connections

Libraries are critical to the health, wellbeing and economic vitality of any town or county. The Asotin County Library is just that place for community members to come together to advance their careers, expand their cultural knowledge and engage with children in learning activities through STEM and art projects. A \$4,000 grant from Innovia Foundation will help the library create and distribute take-home career kits to more than 100 underemployed customers and also provide STEM and cultural learning bags to more than 200 children and teenagers.



5%  
INVESTED  
FULLY  
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## JOIN US IN OUR 5% CAMPAIGN

### Transform your community with:

A regional fund to support the greatest needs and opportunities

A scholarship fund to ensure that every child can pursue their dreams

An endowment for your favorite nonprofit to grow its impact

A gift to our Partnership Fund to make a positive impact on our work  
together across our region

To read these stories and to find more stories of transformation  
across our region, please go to [Innovia.org](https://Innovia.org)

