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April 28, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to express my support for Rivergate Park, a project being led by the Cleveland Rowing Foundation (CRF). CRF intends to secure a site on the Cuyahoga River to provide public access for healthy sports including kayaking, canoeing, rowing and dragon boating.

Of special interest to Cleveland Scholarship Programs (CSP) is CRF's plan to develop a rowing program for urban youth, emulating successful programs in Boston and New York City. Both programs have had excellent results in terms of boosting high school graduation rates and increasing the number of participants attending four- year colleges, many receiving athletic scholarships for rowing.

By introducing Cleveland's urban teens to the sport of crew, we open a substantial source of athletic scholarships that our children can't otherwise access. According to the NCAA, over \$100 million of athletic scholarships are awarded annually to women's varsity crew participants.

Cleveland Scholarship Programs is committed to developing partnerships to strengthen the community's college-going culture and effectively leverage CSP's and others' available resources. The youth rowing program proposed by Cleveland Rowing Foundation is a perfect example of a way to leverage our resources toward this goal.

I understand that the Rowing Foundation faces a time-critical situation to find a new site to replace the current boathouse which sits within the footprint of the recent casino initiative. It is my hope that CRF is successful in securing a new home quickly so that they might launch this exciting new program for our city's children.

Best regards,

Christina R. Milano
Chief Executive Officer

