

Inland Northwest Community Foundation  
618 West Riverside Avenue, Suite 302  
Spokane, WA 99201-5102  
www.inwcf.org  
Contact: PJ Watters 509-624-2606



---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**The Maxine Davidson Arts Foundation Awards First Grant**

SPOKANE, WA, *November 30, 2011*—Inland Northwest Community Foundation is pleased to announce the recipient of the first grant from the Maxine Davidson Arts Foundation. Established in 2010 by retired teacher and artist Maxine Davidson, grants are intended to provide opportunities for the development of innovative ideas in any area of the arts in Spokane Valley, including existing arts programs that help Spokane Valley students to excel. Recent research shows that success in the arts results in higher scholastic records, higher graduation rates and less crime.



Today the fund is awarding \$1,000 to the smART Program. The smART program provides weekly age-appropriate art instruction to elementary school students by integrating art into academic curriculum. Creating clay projects is a learning aid in science, gridding portraits is a mathematical process, weaving baskets teaches Native American cultural appreciation, charcoal drawing teaches ancient ways of communicating through symbolism, and creative writing allows for sharing stories. With recent budget cuts to education, schools are seeking outside help to continue this free arts program for students. “Providing access to various mediums and fine visual art education promotes art appreciation, self-confidence, artistic expression, cultural awareness and higher thinking order,” says Sami Perry, Executive Director of the smART Program. “For several years, we have supported ourselves with fundraisers and the help of hard working parents who recognize the importance of the visual arts in their child’s academics.”

“I want to expand the number of grants to support other nonprofits in the Spokane Valley, including performing arts and music programs,” says Maxine Davidson. “I am especially interested in funding innovative ideas through funding partnerships.” The Maxine Davidson Arts Foundation has received support from her family and friends as well as Spokane Valley Golden K Kiwanis Club.

Founded in 1974, INWCF serves 10 Eastern Washington counties and 10 North Idaho counties to foster vibrant and sustainable communities in the Inland Northwest. The community foundation currently manages 305 funds valued at more than \$67 million and has awarded \$39 million in grants and scholarships since its inception, positively impacting thousands of lives in this region.

For more information about the Maxine Davidson Arts Foundation, contact PJ Watters, Director of Gift Planning at 509-624-2606.

###