

**From:** Michael H  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 09, 2010 1:45 PM  
**To:** Bill Henkel  
**Subject:** Lou Hillman and Team

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Dear Mr. Henkel,

We met briefly in Lou's office during your visit late last month. I wanted to send you an email that echoes what I expressed to you about my thoughts and observations concerning Lou and her team [up in East County].

I came to the Concrete area about 17 years ago and found a small community which had little vibrancy and little access to community services. Compared with the past, this community is alive with community action on many fronts and Lou's team is the prime pivot of this important change. Living up river has always been challenging and in these times even more so. I spend time using the internet at the office and see a broad spectrum of people come in seeking help. Lou's team can not solve the client's core problems/issues but they do try to do everything possible in finding what resources are available to them. ***The one thing that has impressed me the most is the sheer compassion and empathy they bring to their work. No one is judged! Everyone is treated with complete equality!***

After this office opened, it quickly became a community center in the truest sense of the words. Recently, a father traveled across country to try to find his missing son (5 tours in Iraq) and Concrete was his last sighting back in September. In short, Lou's office was quickly voted (by the few locals that knew the story) as the central information clearance site. Fortunately, the son was found and all was well. However, I viewed this episode as indicative of just how important and how effective Lou and her team are. If someone needs help, they know that Lou's team will do 110 percent to help. Lou and her team are completely dedicated to this community.

The above episode is clearly beyond the scope of Skagit County Community Action Agency and is not what your up river office is chartered to do. It is, however, the mature fruit of a well run small town community action center. I was not proud to call my self a Concretion when I first moved here those many years ago. Today, largely do to the simple humanity I see worked daily by Lou, Kay, Gaylyn and the volunteers, I am proud to be a member of this community and look forward to the future community growth that is budding around this team.

The importance of formally recognizing the daily good that people do is often overlooked. In this case, I ask that Lou and her team be given the highest At-A-Girl your agency can provide. Our community already has.

Respectfully (one of your clients), Michael H.

