

Thomas Jefferson High School

4248 South 288th Street
Auburn, Washington 98001
253-945-5652

November 14, 2002

To Whom It May Concern:

It is my distinct pleasure to write this unconditional letter of support for One World Taiko that is applying to the Washington State Arts Commission Artists in Residence program for 2002-2005. I cannot imagine a musical group that is more worthy of this honor than One World Taiko.

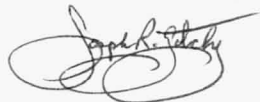
Thanks to a King County Heritage Grant and the Wing Luke Museum, our high school was the beneficiary of a fabulous Remembrance Day program about Japanese American internment last February, 2002. In addition to a dramatic performance, speakers, panel presentations and classroom activities, the highlight of the multi-day forum was a key note address by a member of the U.S. Army's 442nd Regimental, the most decorated regiment of World War II, and a performance by One World Taiko, a Japanese drum ensemble. Approximately 700 students, who represented the multi-cultural nature of our school, were entertained, educated and amazed by a powerful display of Japanese music and culture. In my opinion, One World Taiko deserves to be considered as a statewide treasure. Our students loved the group's dynamic performance style, musicality, and stylish appearance. The students were so moved by the music that they gave One World Taiko several standing ovations that were both spontaneous and enthusiastic.

One World Taiko is a polished, professional and authentic ensemble that demonstrates the impact that performers can have on citizens. I believe that One World Taiko would be an outstanding addition to the list of artists who are associated with the Washington State Arts Commission. Having grown up in Fife, Washington, I was raised in a community that had deep ties to the Japanese American community. During my adult life, I've been able to travel to Japan on two occasions with groups of teachers and university professors. I believe that young people need to be exposed to the world and its variety of cultures. Those of us living on the Pacific Rim have a special responsibility to learn about our neighbors and partners. School students, in turn, need to see the art and listen to the music of artists and musicians who can help them appreciate our diverse heritage as a nation.

As a former member of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards and 29-year veteran teacher, I believe that One World Taiko would be an outstanding choice as an Artist in Residence for the state of Washington.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if I can be of further assistance. I can be contacted at jgotchy@fwsd.wednet.edu; josephgotchy@msn.com; 253-945-5652 school; 253-850-3722 home.

Sincerely,



Joseph R. Gotchy
Teacher