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Dear Friend of America On Wheels:

What a great time it is for our beloved museum.

We are fast approaching our sixth anniversary in April, which will bring a lot of exciting events and a brand new event to commemorate the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Mustang – the brainchild of Allentown native Lee Iacocca.

We will once again be holding the very popular “Bull Dog Beauty Contest,” with celebrity judges that include WFMZ’s Jaccii Farris and The Morning Call columnist Bill White.

We’ll have lots of tasty treats on hand at the unique “Hub Cap Café,” an authentic reproduction of a 1950’s era soda fountain, which is included in all of our educational tours.

And, best of all, we have the opportunity to receive a \$500,000 Matching Gift that will allow us to reach our growing needs in the cultural and educational realms. And that, my friends, is where you come in.

We need your help.

The guidelines for this contribution require that it be matched dollar for dollar, with a \$350,000 minimum. I am proud to report that thanks to the Leadership Campaign and Community Gifts program conducted over the past several months, we have already received more than \$172,000 in commitments.

Since our opening in April 2008 on the site of the former Arbogast and Bastian plant at Front and Hamilton streets in Allentown, America On Wheels has been the keystone to the City of Allentown’s Riverfront redevelopment efforts. Our visitors have enjoyed exhibits such as the historic Mack Trucks in the South Gallery; the “*History of Transportation*” in the North Gallery and “*Brilliant Brass Beauties*” now on display through March. Exceptional past exhibits have included “*The Bulgari Collection – Automobiles of Elegance*,” “*Muscle Cars*” and “*Dragsters of the Northeast*.” We offer educational and public events in the Auto Art Gallery and you can end your visit with delicious ice cream sodas and sundaes in the *Hub Cap Cafe*.

In conjunction with the Matching Gift opportunity, we have also launched a Capacity Campaign with the goal of raising a total of \$2 million to help sustain America On Wheels until the anticipated redevelopment along our Riverfront is completed. This Campaign will be ongoing through 2015 and our success – and your financial support – will allow us to reach a number of growth targets.

These growth targets are:

- Achieving the necessary expansion of management and operations in recognition that good management, thorough planning, a professional staff and clearly defined procedures remain critical to the continued success of America On Wheels
- Expanding the northeast side of the museum to provide additional space for exhibits, education and year-round events

- Raising funds for the ongoing growth of the museum's operations and implementation of a Planned Giving Program
- Achieving the American Association of Museums accreditation
- Enhancing the existing exhibition space in the museum and growing Safety Square for all ages
- Providing an educational component as part of the Museum's new Auto Art Gallery
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- Improving the rotating exhibits collection care capacity and storage facilities
- Growing educational programs through the EITC program
- Establishing and market *The History of Bridges*, an accredited education exhibit from ancient to modern times (coming mid-2014)

Over the past six years America On Wheels has attracted nearly 175,000 visitors to the city, which has a positive impact on the city's economy. As the Lehigh River waterfront undergoes the development that will transform it to an exciting destination, the museum has already established itself as a desirable cultural attraction. It will anchor the southern end of this project and provide a uniquely entertaining and educational start to a day's activities for the many individuals who will live, work and visit the waterfront.

America On Wheels is more than a place where people can gather to learn, have fun and celebrate – first hand – America's love affair with the automobile and other means of transportation. It is, like all museums, a community treasure that provides a welcoming environment for entertainment and a resource for life-long learners. The cars and trucks we display for your enjoyment have touched all our lives and we are proud to employ them to educate all who visit.

My friends, we have a wonderful opportunity in front of us, and we truly need your help. America On Wheels takes great pride in establishing and promoting best practices and standards for the field of public history. We hope you will consider partnering with us through your generous contribution.

If you have any questions regarding our Matching Gift opportunity, please don't hesitate to contact me directly at 610-432-4200 x11 or [director@americaonwheels.com](mailto:director@americaonwheels.com).

**We truly believe America On Wheels is a community treasure that enhances the attractiveness of our city.** We invite you to visit and see for yourselves the outstanding vehicles and artifacts on display; and the history showcased throughout our galleries. We look forward to hearing from you.

Treasure the day,

Linda Merkel  
Executive Director

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