



ALEXIS I BROWN

Writing Sample

Solicitation letter for an addition to a live auction package

I work at the Santa Fe Farmers' Market Institute, the sister non-profit to the Santa Fe Farmers' Market. We support farmers and the community they nourish. Farmers do not choose this work because it pays well - 50% of small-scale farms lose money every year. They do it because of pride and heritage, and the love of land and feeding communities. And our community is in desperate need of care and support: 25% of New Mexicans live at or below the poverty line and we have one of the highest rates of people living with limited access to healthy food. We are committed to helping build a stronger and more diverse local food system, which combats these issues. Our programs help improve the health of our economy, our bodies, our land, and our community.

Fall Fiesta on October 4 is our annual fundraiser. We recently secured a generous gift from the Tsotsvalki Conference Center – a stay at the Moenkopi Legacy Inn & Suites and an Experience Hopi tour. The Institute's purpose aligns with core beliefs of the Hopi. They are stewards of the Earth, here because Maasaw entrusted the Center of the Universe to their care. They are connected to the land, water, and agricultural cycles. Their values are rooted in respect and mutual care – *sumi'angwa*, *nami'angwa*, and *hita'angwa*. The Institute is here to support those who care for the land and water and we foster a community of care and support.

I am deeply honored to have been given this gift, and so I am building a Live Auction package around it to educate our community about the beauty of the Hopi people. The package now also includes a beaded kachina, and we are speaking with an archaeologist at Canyon de Chelly about how they might participate.

When thinking of where else I might look to add to this package, I thought of Sedona. There is a Hopi legend of Palatkwapi. This is the "Red House" – a city of wisdom built by the Kachinas where they taught important rituals and secrets of the universe. No one knows for sure where this was located. Was it a city of the Aztec in Teotihuacan, or the Suma of Paquimé in Chihuahua, or of the Q'ero in Peru, or was it of the Sinagua of the Verde Valley, from whence the Hopi originated? It's easy to believe this ancient city was seated at the red earth spires of Sedona, because there is no denying the magic there – a cathedral without walls, a meeting place for travelers for thousands of years, brimming with life while surrounded by desert. And, regardless of one's personal spiritual beliefs, Sedona's natural beauty induces an awe and reverence for the earth and sky.

My friend, Valerie Gonzalez, reminded me of your BnB. While your spiritual practice is rooted in the East, your commitment to Earth-mother and to fostering peace shows a beautiful connection to the ancestors in Sedona and the Hopi, the "Peaceful People."

So, I ask you to donate a two-night stay to be included in the Hopi live auction package.

Your donation is tax-deductible. The event is just around the corner and I would like to promote the package in advance of the event. I sincerely hope you will consider my request.