Judo Manitoba (Manitoba Black Belt Association) is applying for a Community Incentive Grant Program application in the amount of $4500 for the **Inner City Judo Club** (ICJC) so we can replace existing safety mats and purchase better quality safety mats for their judo program.

The Inner City Judo Club has been offering judo instruction to inner city youth since 1982 (29 years). The program is open to all people with in Winnipeg. The primary participants are inner city Winnipeg youth. The students generally range from at risk youth with known gang affiliations to individuals with dysfunctional family problems to members of Winnipeg Aboriginal and Asian communities to students whose families are economically challenged. No student is ever turned away because of not being able to afford to sport fees. When students cannot afford the judo program then a waiver in a letter format is completed by the school principal and is signed by the parent. We have approximately 10 Victoria Albert students who have waivers completed for the Judo program. To date we have been able to provide instruction to over 1000 students.

The ICJC provides sport instruction with nationally certified instructors. Our goals are to provide leadership and positive role models to the students so they can learn they have alternatives to the violence and other such weekly activities these students will encounter. Our instructors are always willing to listen to youth about their life issues which are impacting their lives. Over several years we have counseled many youth to stay away from crime and make healthy positive choices.

The Inner City Judo Club has six regular instructors. The head instructor Gary Sova is a 6th degree black belt with both a NCCP (National Coaching Certification Program) level 3 coaching and national level A refereeing certification. May Baldo-Oduca, a female black belt, is a NCCP level 3 coach. Another instructor, Kevin McIver, is a NCCP Dojo Instructor. The other coaches range in rank from 3rd to 1st degree blacks with both national coaching and referee certifications.

In addition to judo instruction the ICJC hosts an annual judo tournament at Tec Voc High School. Over 125 athletes participate in our annual **Inner City Judo Open Tournament**. The tournament regularly has 3 other provinces attending. They also provide the students with the opportunity to travel to tournaments with in Manitoba and throughout Canada. We note that the ICJC has provided over 1000 students with the opportunity to participate in such tournaments. Many of the students have also won medals at the national, Canada Winter Games, and provincial levels in this Olympic sport. One of the ICJC's students, Kevin McIver has competed in a high level event such as the 1999 Pan American Games and he has participated in Olympic try outs.

Many youth from our Inner City Judo Club have participated in National Judo Championships, Canada Winter Games, Provincial Championships, Pacific International judo tournament in Vancouver, Edmonton International judo tournament, various Manitoba tournaments, and the Royal Canadian Legion Athletic Summer Camps. Our program is designed to support a student at any level they want to participate in. We encourage the student to participate at any level, they may choose a recreational level where they can come and get off the street and make new friends or they can choose a competitive level.

We have supported our students through attending weddings, funerals, engagement parties, graduation, and special events.

We believe in putting the student first and providing a safe environment for them to learn in.

Victoria Albert School
110 Ellen Street
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3A 1A1
943-3459

Aida Rodrigues, Principal
Kathleen Weir, Vice-Principal

To: Monika Kowal
Community Services Dept.
Community Development & Recreation Services
Community Incentive Grant Program

April 28, 2011

Dear Ms. Kowal,

In its twenty-nine years of existence, the Inner City Judo Club has operated out of Victoria Albert School for the past twenty-six of those years. We are an inner city school whose student body has very limited access to recreational opportunities in the immediate area. The Inner City Judo Club has, over the years, been the notable exception in terms of geographical accessibility. The Judo Club does not turn any child away, providing the very best coaching to students from a varied ethnic mix, including at-risk youth whose lives are very positively impacted by their involvement in the "team" atmosphere of the Inner City Judo Club. Innate athleticism, while a welcome quality in new members, has never been a requirement to join. Self-esteem builds as students develop their skills and progress to higher levels. It is not unusual to see students who are initially shy and reluctant participants, become much more outgoing and confident as they begin to realize their own potential within a supportive environment.

For Victoria Albert School students, going to the Inner City Judo Club is literally like returning to school in the evening. It is however, more than just a geographical convenience. The coaching philosophy is entirely in line with the teaching philosophy our students experience during their school day. Children and adults from the local area and farther afield are all well served by the excellent coaching and teaching philosophy which has always been the Judo Club's strongest feature.

The Inner City Judo Club has become a part of the fabric of the local community and is very deserving of whatever support it might require in continuing to serve the local community and the community at large.

Sincerely,

Aida Rodrigues
Principal
Victoria Albert School

Rodger Lourenzo
Phys. Ed. Dept.
Victoria Albert School