



Sample Answers to 2010 Pre-application Questions

What is the target population? Please describe the target population with respect to its size, geographic reach and any distinct characteristics.

Arts Council of Greater New Haven:

The Arts Council of Greater New Haven serves 15 towns in South Central Connecticut including the towns of Milford, Orange, Woodbridge, Branford, Bethany, East Haven, Guilford, Hamden, Madison, Meriden, New Haven, North Haven, North Branford, Wallingford and West Haven. The total target population of the South Central Connecticut region that the Arts Council of Greater New Haven serves is 571, 135. The regional median age is 38.7. The regional median income is \$58,854. The regional education profile (Regional Growth Partnership data) is 30% high school graduates; 16% BA degree; 14% advanced degree.

The core population of 30,000 that the Arts Council serves directly is: 55% urban; 40% suburban; 4% rural; 1% unknown (out of state), 41% White; 30% Black; 20% Latino/Hispanic; 4% Multicultural/Ethnic; 4% Asian/Pacific; 1% Native American; 20% Children / Teens; 55% Adults under 50; 25% Adults over 50

The Arts Council indirectly serves an additional 130,000, the ripple effect of its audience development/promotional efforts and its services to 110 organizations and more than 500 individual artists.

LEAP:

LEAP serves low-income children ages 7-12 and low-income youth ages 13-23 through its two programs. LEAP also strives to develop relationships with parents to greater impact the children's and youth's lives. Ninety-seven percent of the children and youth with whom LEAP works are African-American or Latino, and half are female. Additionally, 2000 Census figures indicate that in the neighborhoods LEAP serves (Dixwell, Hill, Fair Haven, Dwight, and Newhallville), nearly 80 percent have family incomes below the poverty line. These neighborhoods have high rates of child poverty, few economic and housing options, and crime and high school drop-out rates that are above the city-wide average.

GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT

What problem or need does your organization aim to address?

LEAP:

Multiple studies have found that unsupervised youth are at the greatest risk of being victims of crime or participating in risky behaviors during the hours of 3-6 p.m. after school gets out. This is particularly true for young people in low-income communities. In 2005, the American Business Journal named New Haven the twelfth most socio-economically stressed large city in the country. Simultaneously, according to Department of Education figures, the cumulative high school drop-out rate for the Class of 2006 was nearly 17% in the five LEAP neighborhoods, more than twice the statewide average. A 2008 analysis of job opportunities for youth ages 16-24 in south central Connecticut found that teens are experiencing the least success finding work (Workforce Alliance, 2003). Simultaneously, New Haven youth are 2.2 times more likely to become drop outs and unemployed than their peers across Connecticut (Workforce Alliance, 2008). As the economy further declines, this trend is likely to worsen.

In contrast, children and youth who attend after school programs have higher grades and school attendance and lower levels of teen pregnancy and drug use (National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center, 2006; U.S. Dept. of Education, 2000). Additionally, research has shown that programs that create opportunities for children to learn help young adults make positive changes in their lives and for the entire community (Harvard Family Research Project, 2008; Public / Private Ventures, 2008). After-school programs with strong mentoring and training aspects have shown to have social and academic benefit to low-income children (Massachusetts After-School Research Study, 2006).

LEAP is a neighborhood-based youth development organization in five high-poverty New Haven neighborhoods that strives to help its participants improve their social and academic outcomes. As a youth-driven organization, LEAP emphasizes leadership and opportunity. Its young staff members support, guide and supervise the college- and high-school-aged counselors. In turn, the

counselors mentor and inspire the children, and the children encourage and motivate each other. All LEAP programs strive to empower children and youth with the necessary tools and confidence to shape their own futures.

Connecticut Juvenile Justice Alliance:

A recent essay by the Annie E. Casey foundation found that, “Far too many youth end up in the juvenile justice system inappropriately or unnecessarily, either because their needs are not addressed by public systems better positioned to serve them, or because they are prosecuted for relatively minor, common adolescent misbehaviors” (2008 Kids Count: Essay and Data Brief, 2008).

Connecticut processes about 24,000 children and youth each year for committed crimes (many of them minor) and “status offenses” (i.e., skipping school, running away from home, and other out of control behaviors). Youth are often inappropriately introduced into the juvenile courts after the mental health or education systems lacked the resources or ability to appropriately serve the underlying cause of the child’s behavioral issues. New Haven County saw 6,100 arrests of children and youth under 18 in 2005, just over one-quarter of the statewide total (23,787). During the 07-08 fiscal year, New Haven Court processed over 450 “status offense” cases.

Connecticut is currently one of only three states which treats all arrested 16- and 17- year-olds as adults, no matter what their offense – affecting approximately 10,000 youth every year. Research consistently shows that treating juveniles in the adult system makes them more likely to recidivate and commit more serious crimes, and it locks them out of future employment, educational and other opportunities. Adolescent brain research shows that the teenage brain is not developed enough to support sophisticated cause and effect decision-making, especially when they are under stress or surrounded by their peers. While this does not absolve youth of culpability, it is a mitigating factor that calls into question the efficacy of trying and incarcerating them as adults in every case.

The Alliance provides the impetus for confronting and changing these systematic problems that have a potentially negative affect on youth from every Connecticut community.

PROJECT SUPPORT

Brief description of project, project goals and target population.

Ansonia Public Schools/ Human Relations Club:

The Ansonia High School Human Relations Club is a group of 60 students whose major focus is leading their peers, teachers, members of the community, and students throughout Connecticut to participate in activities that reduce prejudice and discrimination and increase cultural, religious, racial, and ethnic awareness. The primary goal of the Ansonia High School HRC is to implement activities to reduce prejudice and discrimination and increase cultural, religious, racial, and ethnic awareness. The Club, which is led by two adult advisors and 16 student officers, was established in the Fall of 2007 and four major goals were set: (1) Create an atmosphere of understanding and mutual respect among students and adults at Ansonia High School. (2) Provide students with opportunities to learn skills necessary to become responsible citizens. (3) Educate the community about the issues of diversity and how students can lead the way to make Ansonia a better place in which to live and work. (4) Become a model program in the State of Connecticut as a way to empower other students in their desire to build a better understanding among all people. The initial target population for the project was Ansonia High School students and staff. Ansonia High is a Grade 9-12 school with 761 students, according to the Strategic School Profile for the 2007-08 school year. The student population is quite diverse with more than 43% minority (23% black, 18.4% Hispanic, and nearly 2% American Indian and Asian American), although only 4% of the professional staff are minorities. More than 43% of the students are eligible for free or reduced priced meals, reflecting economic need. The target population of the Club has grown to include all of Ansonia, a diverse community of 18,556 people. According to the 2000 U.S. Census , 85% are White; 8% Black; and 7% Hispanic. Of the 7,507 households, 31% include children under 18 years old. There are 313 families below the poverty level, and 257 have children under 18 years old.

Connecticut Children’s Museum/ The Parents and Communities for Kids (PACK) Initiative:

The Parents and Communities for Kids (PACK) initiative promotes family learning for underserved parents and their children, providing relevant, high-quality, literacy-based learning opportunities at 15 Community Classrooms: public libraries, museums, arts and cultural organizations, and community-based organizations. PACK rests on two primary philosophical pillars: (1) Parents are their children’s first and best teachers and (2) Community-based organizations are classrooms that can create a culture of learning and provide resources for family engagement. The project goals include embedding multiple intelligences, literacy and family learning in Community Classroom programming and encouraging Community Classrooms to develop innovative partnerships to engage more families.

We will use the multiple intelligences, a holistic approach to child development and learning, as the unifying template for the work of the Community Classrooms. This will become the explicit organizing framework for Community Classrooms and families. The Connecticut Children's Museum, for which the multiple intelligences is a core programming element, will lead the effort. The Museum will help Community Classrooms create a common language for speaking with parents about child development and learning through workshops at Consortium meetings and individual visits with staff at organizations. The project will work with each Classroom to ensure that high-quality family learning programming locates activities within the multiple intelligences framework. Project funding will enable Community Classrooms to expand literacy activities throughout their programming. Classrooms will receive English and bilingual children's books for display at family activities and to distribute to families so that all participating families can build their home libraries. Community Classrooms will base programs around children's literature and weave books and read-aloud opportunities into their activities. In addition, families will be encouraged to use public libraries as portals to the Community Classrooms, where displays that coordinate with other PACK activities will abound. Book displays will provide vital links to the literacy base created through the Classrooms and demonstrate the centrality of the library. Community Classrooms will also receive technical assistance focused on incorporating effective family engagement and using family learning practices throughout the entire organization as a core aspect of its programming. Community Classrooms have experimented with new partnerships to transform community settings, where families gather, into family learning sites. Through an interesting partnership between the Keefe Community Center and the Eli Whitney Museum, families were invited to a movie night featuring the Pixar blockbuster, *Ratatouille*, complete with popcorn and a post-movie activity making tiny "ratatouilles" from wooden kits provided by the Eli Whitney Museum. Another partnership worked with a local Laundromat to transform the experience for families doing their laundry together into a morning at a community classroom. Families were invited to an event where the children's picture book, *A Pocket for Corduroy*, a story set in a Laundromat, was read in both English and Spanish. A local Laundromat was then supplied with dozens of bilingual picture books for families to read together while their clothes wash and dry, and with a supply of bilingual word magnets to affix to the washers and dryers to develop literacy skills, the dual PACK messages -- that parents are their children's first and best teachers and that classrooms exist throughout the community -- were brought into clear focus. PACK's primary audience is families in three New Haven and Hamden neighborhoods (the Hill, Newhallville, Highwood) and the town of Ansonia that have not traditionally participated in arts and cultural activities and whose children are at risk for low performance in elementary school. Between 70% and 80% of households in these neighborhoods have incomes under \$50,000, and the New Haven neighborhoods are 86% African-American or Hispanic. Over time, PACK has attracted families from additional neighborhoods in New Haven -- mainly working-class and low-income areas. We believe that low-income families across the country are similarly underserved in terms of out-of-school family learning opportunities.

What problem or need does your project aim to address?

Ansonia Public Schools/ Human Relations Club:

Our project addresses three areas of need in the lower Naugatuck Valley: First, building an understanding among people of different cultures. The Valley has become more racially diverse over the past 10 years, with Hispanics as the fastest growing minority population, according to the 2000 Census. The Human Relations Club (HRC) hosts an annual Prejudice Reduction Community Conference, which is free and open to residents of the Valley region. Second, there is a need to build leadership to address the needs of the Valley community. Leadership does not necessarily need to be from the adult community; our project focuses on building leadership potential and ability in high school students, revolving around the issue of diversity. Student leaders organize conferences, recruit new members, conduct fundraising, and run Steering Committee meetings involving 28 high-level public and community officials throughout the Valley and New Haven region. Third, there has been limited involvement of youth and the education community in a focused community project in Ansonia. More than a year ago, Mayor James DellaVolpe identified diversity as a major need, and he is collaborating closely with the planning and implementation of Human Relations Club activities. He has invited three HRC student officers to serve on his Task Force for Race and Ethnicity, formed in late 2007.

There has been a great deal of research about the importance of multicultural and anti-bullying education. The Penn State College of Agricultural Sciences, which produced a booklet of Diversity Activities for Youth and Adults in 2008, states in its introduction, "The ability to relate well to all types of people in the workplace is a leadership skill that is becoming increasingly important. Understanding, accepting, and valuing diverse backgrounds can help young people and adults thrive in this ever-changing society." The National Youth Violence Prevention Resource Center is a federal resource for professionals, parents and youth to prevent violence committed by and against young people. It focuses on the bullying prevention and provides a great deal of information -- some utilized by the HRC -- for age-appropriate lessons.

Student Parenting and Family Services

The high school dropout rate among pregnant and parenting teens has been found to be close to 50%. Many New Haven youth experience the impact on education of early parenting: each year hundreds of teenage girls in New Haven give birth and become teenage parents. In 2006 there were 275 births to teenage girls in New Haven (New Haven Health Department). Student Parenting and Family Services has identified a number of factors contributing to poor academic achievement among teen parents including missed class time, inappropriate class assignments, special education needs, childhood histories of neglect, poverty, and

frequent moves and low expectations. Poor educational achievement among teenage parents is of concern because of the impact on future earnings and because it negatively impacts the teenage parents' ability to care for their children by reading instructions on medication, reading books to their children, and managing the family's finances. Even if they graduate from high school, teenage parents with low levels of academic skills are unable to make a successful transition to college or employment and have a great deal of difficulty supporting themselves and their children.

Is this a pilot project? If yes, why are you proposing to do this project at this time?

Project Access New Haven:

Yes. The model upon which Project Access New Haven is based was first developed in Asheville NC in 1996. Since that time, it has been successfully implemented in over 50 cities nationwide. The majority of programs have demonstrated improved access to care, a significant increase in donated physician, hospital, and pharmacy services, reduction in ER and hospital costs, and high physician and patient satisfaction. We have conducted extensive interviews with 10 of the more successful programs and have extracted the best aspects of each program and applied them to our model. With a national focus on the growing ranks of the uninsured alongside the current economic downturn, the need for coordinated care for the uninsured is greater than ever. There is a growing realization that patients without insurance simply do not receive the same quality of care as those with insurance due to lack of access to physicians and ancillary services. Local physicians are dedicated to caring for these patients, yet feel that in the current system they are unable to provide high quality medical care. Caring for the uninsured is often incomplete and disjointed, creating a frustrating environment for physicians as they try to provide the best care possible. The evolution of Project Access as a model for high quality, coordinated care will significantly reduce the disparity in quality of care between the uninsured and insured. In addition, the Project Access system of highly standardized comprehensive coordination of healthcare services should serve as a model for universal healthcare in the future.