

## City of Alexandria, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: NOVEMBER 2, 2009

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER *J*

SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION TO APPLY FOR RENEWAL GRANT MONIES TO FUND A MENTORING PROGRAM ADMINISTERED BY THE ALEXANDRIA COURT SERVICE UNIT

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**ISSUE:** City Council authorization to apply for a grant to fund iMovie Mentors, a youth mentoring program administered by the Alexandria Court Service Unit.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council:

- (1) Authorize the Court Service Unit (CSU) to submit a renewal grant application for \$18,100 to the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services to support the CSU iMovie Mentor program (It should be noted that notification of this grant opportunity was received October 28 and the grant application was due on October 30, so the CSU filed the application subject to later Council approval in order to meet the submission deadline.); and
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to execute the necessary grant documents.

**BACKGROUND:** The Byrne Memorial Justice Association Grant, administered in this case by the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services, is offering renewal funds to continue programs that succeed in preventing crime and delinquency in minority or immigrant communities, promote partnerships with law enforcement and other community groups, and improve communities' understanding of their rights and responsibilities within the legal system. This program received similar grant funds in the current fiscal year.

**DISCUSSION:** In 2007, the Court Service Unit used its successful mentor program model for the SOHO (Space Of Her Own) program for at-risk girls, to create the iMovie Mentors program for at-risk minority pre-teen boys from low income neighborhoods in Old Town and Del Ray.

Guidance counselors at George Washington Middle School surveyed students and found a high interest in film production. iMovie Mentors matches adult male mentors with at-risk boys, identified by police officers and school administrators, to work together in film production. Mentor/mentee teams receive technical training in filmmaking from Apple, Inc., and the pre-teens receive social skills and anger management training and legal education. The program utilizes evidence-based curricula, performance measures, and nationally standardized pre and post-tests.

Adults make a one-year commitment to mentoring youth. Youth that complete the program receive referrals to other appropriate City services.

iMovie Mentors has served 33 youth to date. The program operates from 3:30-8:00 p.m. each Tuesday at George Washington Middle School. Participants all attend a wilderness trip and produce short films with their mentors. This year's film festival will be held on December 8, 2009, from 6:00-7:00 p.m. at the Old Town Theater. Staff projects that 85% of program graduates will receive no juvenile criminal charges within two years of program completion. To date, none of the program participants have become court-involved.

Partners in the development and implementation of the iMovie Mentors program include: the Alexandria Court Service Unit; City parents and teens; Alexandria City Public Schools; Apple, Inc.; 40 adult male volunteers; City Gang Coordinator; Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities; and the Police Department.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The program budget is \$18,100, with federal pass-through funds in the amount of \$13,575 and a required 25 percent cash match of \$4,525. The proposed local match will come from the Court Service Unit's private donation account. The program will provide 250 service hours to up to 15 at-risk boys, at a cost of under \$8 per hour. No new positions will be created by this grant.

**STAFF:**

Linda Odell, Director of Alternative Programs

Lillian Brooks, CSU Director

Paul Doku, Management and Budget Analyst