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I. Executive Summary

AWOL Inc. is a non-profit youth development organization located in Savannah, GA. AWOL an acronym for “All Walks of Life”, serves to reinforce AWOL’s commitment to diversity. The mission of the organization is to provide and promote self-awareness through the use of poetry, hip-hop and life. A goal that will be accomplished by providing urban youth a safe and free afternoon and night time drop in center that encourages respect, creativity, education and most of all non-violence. An investment in our organization will allow AWOL, Inc. to foster youth empowerment through the use of Hip-Hop and Poetry. AWOL, Inc. uses these artistic forms as tools to facilitate educational workshops on literacy development, anger management, and conflict resolution giving youth valuable life skills, thus the life component of AWOL’s mission statement. Also, using a medium such as hip-hop to facilitate the learning experience, youth self esteem and autonomy will increase substantially. AWOL’s programming and organizational mission supports the second and fourth objectives described in The Institute for Youth Developments (IYD) Request for Proposals:

- *Fostering youth development, youth empowerment, and character education activities and programs.*
- *Promoting a consistent, comprehensive risk avoidance message to youth for the five leading unhealthy risk behaviors: alcohol, drugs, sex, tobacco, and violence.*

Project Objective & Capacity Building Activities

The overall goal of capacity building for AWOL, Inc. is to increase the organizations ability to compete for federal grants by the implementation of various capacity building activities with defined outcomes: The activities necessary to implement the project are as follows:

- *Management of project through a local grant management consultant or firm with experience in grant management.*
- *Development and implementation of an agency strategic plan along with an agency board development and recruitment plan through consultant services provided by local non-profit resource center.*
- *Establishment of an effective financial and fiscal management system that complies with federal grant requirements through the consultant services of an experienced finance manager.*
- *Acquisition of equipment necessary to implement project which includes: computer equipment, software, laser printer, office furniture/supplies, copy and fax machine.*
- *Staff development training in successful federal grant research and writing skills.*

Project Outcomes

The expected outcomes of each of the project activities have been identified through the use of a logic model (Appendix H). The outcomes of the project will include the efficient management of the AWOL, Inc. capacity building project, institution of an efficient financial management system in accordance with federal grant requirements, the designing of an agency strategic planning model, design and implementation of a board development and recruitment plan, and the training of staff in the skills necessary to research and apply for federal funds.

These activities will increase the organization's ability to compete for federal funds by providing

the agency with the necessary equipment and skills needed to research and apply for federal funding. Implementation of a financial management system which complies with federal grant requirements and the ability to recruit an effective Board of Directors to steer the agency toward goals identified within the strategic planning process.

II. Needs Statement

AWOL Inc. is Savannah's first ever poetry and hip-hop based youth development organization. The mission of the organization is to provide and promote self-awareness through the use of poetry, hip-hop and life. This goal will be accomplished by providing Savannah's urban youth with a safe and free afternoon and night time drop in center that encourages respect, creativity, education and most of all non-violence. AWOL, Inc. has identified a need for programming that allows freedom of expression in a positive and safe environment. Many local youth are involved in delinquency and truancy in part because they may lack access to an environment in which their own culture is appreciated and encouraged in a positive manner. Savannah-Chatham area 2003 Juvenile Justice Surveillance data shows that over 2,800 juvenile offenses were committed by youth ages 8 thru 16. Offenses ranged from simple battery, and terroristic threats, to more threatening crimes such as aggravated assault, signifying a need for programs which counter negative youth behaviors.

Effective delinquency prevention planning begins with an understanding of risk and protective factors. These are, respectively, the conditions, attitudes, and behaviors that can predispose children to later involvement in delinquency and those that can buffer negative influences and help build resilience in youth. A number of these risk factors may be influenced by youth arts programs, for example: low neighborhood attachment, lack of commitment to

school, alienation, rebelliousness and befriending peers who engage in problem behavior.

AWOL's program strategy contains activities that are designed to reduce the influence of risk factors by providing opportunities for youth to learn new skills and by recognizing individual youth efforts. The AWOL, Inc. literacy development program is a 6-week poetry and literacy development program in which youth attain new vocabulary terms and are expected to incorporate the new terms in a performance poetry piece or rap song of their own. Programs such as these allow for increased literacy skills while promoting self-empowerment of youth participants.

Currently AWOL, Inc. is a highly sought after youth program and has collaborated with several local agencies to provide youth development services. One of the services provided in 2004 includes anger management workshops for delinquent youth. The project was implemented through a partnership with the local Department of Juvenile Justice and is ongoing. This program encountered over 200 delinquent youth, who after participating self-reported an increase in anger management and conflict resolution skills. Further, youth participants enjoyed the program because of its fervent use of hip-hop music to facilitate the learning experience. By showing an appreciation for youth culture, the project promoted empowerment while increasing the ability to experience life.

The ongoing development of AWOL's programs and services are being modeled after a successful youth development agency located in Denver, Colorado called "The Spot". The Spot provides youth with a safe free night time drop in center and was developed in response to a high incidence of gang activities and youth delinquency, much like the needs identified in our own community. Since its inception the program has assisted in the successful development of

hundreds of Denver youth. Some of these programs include a free music recording studio, GED preparation classes, and hip-hop dance studio.

President and CEO, Tony A. Jordan, along with a volunteer staff, created an agency work plan (Appendix I) in 2003; to date, the organization has reached all of the objectives listed in the plan during the 2004 fiscal year, thus exemplifying AWOL's commitment to planning and follow through. Despite these advancements certain fundamental capacity building activities must occur in order for AWOL Inc. to grow as an agency and accomplish the vision set forth by agency Founder and CEO, Tony A. Jordan. An internal needs assessment was conducted by agency board members with the following areas of need identified:

- 1. Strategic plan design,*
- 2. Financial management system,*
- 3. Board development & recruitment plan,*
- 4. Staff development training in federal grant research/writing*

By addressing the needs identified the performance of the organization will be increased in numerous ways. The design and execution of a Strategic Plan will foster the growth of the agency by serving as a planning model to steer current and future services of the agency. By having a plan for the future, AWOL, Inc. will increase its infrastructure and viability. The implementation of an efficient financial management system will allow the agency to meet the necessary requirements to receive federal dollars for programming. The implementation of a board development and recruitment plan will allow the agency to increase its sustainability by recruiting a diverse and highly skilled Board of Directors to guide the agency toward goals developed within the strategic planning process. Lastly, by having staff trained in the

fundamentals of federal grant research and writing will allow the agency to have the capability to research and apply for federal funds. The overall impact of addressing each of the capacity building needs is to allow AWOL, Inc. to encourage youth development and self-empowerment while accomplishing the goal set forth in the agency mission which is to provide and promote self-awareness, through the use of poetry, hip-hop and life.

III. Project Narrative

The agency has experienced numerous success within the last year with new community partnerships forged and participation in community initiatives aimed at decreasing the delinquent behavior among youth. Up until recently AWOL, Inc. was without a physical address to implement programs, an obstacle that did not stop dedicated agency board members and volunteer staff from accomplishing the vision of the agency through community outreach events with area schools, parent teacher associations, and family neighborhood resource centers. The St. Pius Family Resource Center (www.youthfutures.com) located at 705 East Anderson St. has been a cornerstone of the eastside community of Savannah since 1992. Often referred to as the hub of the community, the center provides human and social services and activities designed to support families. The location for the resource center was selected in order to strengthen the neighborhood by locating family support services where they were most needed, and to build an on-going collaboration among community leaders, concerned citizens, and community-based organizations. St. Pius Family Resource Center has agreed to provide AWOL, Inc. with an in-kind donation of the necessary space needed to provide services from a base location, as well as

conduct project activities such as meeting with project consultants. This location affords AWOL, Inc. a unique opportunity to encounter many youth that are in need of a positive outlet for self-expression. The eastside of Savannah, located in the 31401 area code, according to the Savannah-Chatham Metropolitan 2004 annual report has one of the cities highest rates of youth crime offenses. It is our hope that by offering an outlet to youth in this area, neighborhood safety will not only increase but youth will be deterred from negative behaviors. The vision of AWOL, Inc. is to become a leader in youth development within the greater Savannah community by offering programs and services that use mediums liked and understood by youth to facilitate youth empowerment, character building, and academic promotion. A Memoranda of Agreement is currently being drafted by the St. Pius Family Resource Center Board of Directors and will be signed and instituted by June 1, 2005.

The demand for services has increased substantially in 2005 through a marketing initiative spear headed by CEO, Tony A. Jordan. The programs and services of the agency are featured on a bi-weekly 30 minute television show featuring local youth and college students. The television segment is shown free of charge through Comcast Cable company's cable access channel. This innovative use of community resources has allowed the agency's programs and services to be marketed to over 20,000 viewers weekly thereby significantly increasing demand for services as well development in order to meet that demand, the Capacity Building for AWOL Inc. Project will meet the following goals and objectives:

Project Goal:

The goal of the AWOL, Inc capacity building project is to increase the organizations capacity to compete for federal funding, thereby increasing the organizations ability to provide valuable youth development services to the greater Savannah area.

Objectives #1-Identify and obtain the service of an experienced local Grant Management agency or consultant by July 31st, 2005.

This objective will be accomplished by the CEO Tony A. Jordan who will be responsible for researching and soliciting the services of a successful grant management consultant or agency. Several qualified candidates in the community have been identified for further research and assessment. Upon hire, a formal contract will be instituted with the necessary deliverables and completion dates. The grant manager will act as a direct liaison between current agency board members and other consultants hired for additional project activities. Also the grant manager will provide a monthly report detailing those activities completed for each month of the contract period. Lastly, the grant manager will ensure that all project activities are completed within specified timelines and within project budget. This activity will increase the agency ability to compete for federal funds by allowing for effective management of the AWOL, Inc. capacity building project.

Objective #2-Establishment of an effective financial management system that complies with current federal grant requirements through consultant services provided from and experienced finance manager by July 31st, 2005.

The establishment of an effective financial management system will allow AWOL Inc. to be in compliance with all fiscal requirements necessary to receive federal funding. AWOL will implement an accounting system that will be responsible for tracking and summarizing monthly

transactions and financial statements into a manageable format by implementing internal controls to reduce the potential risk for misuse of organizations assets or misstatement of account balances; developing policies and procedures, procurement policies and the structure system for production of an independent audit. A qualified consultant has been identified by agency board members. Teinique Gadson is the Grants Finance Manager for a local nonprofit agency, she also provides consultant services to local nonprofits. Mrs. Gadson has successfully managed federal grant monies to include the Housing Opportunities for Person Living with AIDS (HOPWA) and Supportive Housing Projects, along with numerous other federal, state and private foundation grants. Mrs. Gadson will also be responsible for the research and identification of a user friendly Grants Management & Accounting software program that will be purchased and utilized by an agency board member who will assume responsibility for future grant management task upon project completion. The purchase of this software will ensure sustainability of the agency's newly implemented financial management system after project completion. Mrs. Gadson will also be responsible for the distribution of all IYD funds through the financial management system through December 31st, 2005. The project grant manager along with Tony A. Jordan, CEO will negotiate the terms and cost of services for work rendered, which will include technical assistance for sustainability of the system at the end of the project. Upon institution of a formal contract stating specific timelines for project activities, all work to complete task will begin immediately.

Objective #3-Purchase necessary equipment and service contracts needed to implement project by July 31st, 2005 to include:

1 Computer w/ 19inch flat screen monitor and Microsoft Office 2003 software bundle package

Grant management/accounting software

Copy machine

Fax machine

Laser computer printer

Office furniture (computer desk w/ hutch, file cabinets, bookshelf)

Office supplies (Example: paper, pens, pencils, metal binder clips, binders, and calendars)

By purchasing a computer w/ monitor equipped with software such as MS Word, the agency will be able to develop a successful federal grant. The computer will be used to research federal grants by using the World Wide Web, a service already secured by the agency. Grant Management software will be purchased in order to assist in the management of funds received from IYD and future federal funders. This activity will give the organization the ability to administer grant funds using up to date technological software advances. This activity will also increase efficiency and productivity in the handling of agency grant awards and finances. The fax machine will be used to communicate with consultants hired to facilitate project activities via facsimile. Further, the fax machine will be used to fax letters of intent when indicated within a federal Request for Proposal (RFP) such as the process used by the Institute for Development. The copy machine will be used to make copies of materials used during project activities and to make the necessary copies of federal grant applications needed for submission. The laser computer printer will be used to print professional quality grant proposals as well as serve as a printing source for federal grant applications and supporting documents needed to apply for federal funding. The office furniture will be used to house the computer equipment, laser printer, and copy/fax machine. The file cabinets will used to store important documents needed when

applying for grants such as; federal grant applications with supporting documents, recent financial statements/audits, agency 501 (c) 3 status, articles of incorporation, consultant contracts/agreements. The office supplies purchased will be used to facilitate the project and the development and packaging of future federal grant applications. The CEO, Tony A. Jordan will be responsible for purchasing necessary office supplies. The purchasing of the equipment listed above will accomplish the agency's equipment needs associated with competing for federal funding.

Objectives #4-Develop an agency strategic plan through the acquisition of consultant services from a local non-profit resource agency by October 31st, 2005.

A qualified non-profit assistance agency has been researched and identified by agency board members. Coastal Non-Profit Resources, Inc. (CNR) provides high quality affordable assistance to nonprofit organizations. Their focus is to help nonprofits build the capacity necessary to achieve their missions. One of the services offered by CNR is assistance with strategic planning. The contract terms and negotiation process will be executed by the grant manager and agreed upon with board members. A schedule of strategic planning meetings will be held from August 1st, 2005 thru October 30th, 2005 with board members and CNR representatives to discuss goals and objectives for future agency programming. The justification for several meeting is to allow for the discovery of new concepts that may be added to the plan and to ensure plan accuracy with agency vision. A part of the plan will include the completing of a federal grant application as a major goal.

Objective #5-Development of an effective board development and recruiting plan through services provided by local non-profit resource agency by September 1st, 2005.

- Implementation of board development and recruiting plan from September 1st, 2005 thru November 30th, 2005.
- Staff development training in successful federal grant research and writing skills by December 31st, 2005.

A qualified non-profit assistance agency has been researched and identified by agency board members. Coastal Non-Profit Resources, Inc. (CNR) provides high quality affordable assistance to nonprofit organizations. Their focus is to help nonprofits build the capacity necessary to achieve their missions. One of the services offered by CNR is assistance with board development and recruiting. All contract terms and negotiations will be executed by the project grant manager and agreed upon with agency board members. The forecasted plan is to hire CNR through a contractual agreement within 1 month of receiving grant award notification. During the month of August, 2005 the board development & recruitment plan will be designed through consultations with the President of Coastal Nonprofit Resources, Mr. Mark Baggett, MSW, who has more than twenty-five years of experience helping nonprofit organizations serve their communities. Mr. Baggett is also a trainer for the Georgia Center for Nonprofits and specializes in grant writing, strategic planning, along with board and organizational development. By September 1st, 2005 thru November 30th, 2005 an aggressive board recruitment campaign will ensue with any technical assistance needed from CNR. Subsequent activities will include a selection/appointing of new board members. This activity will increase agency infrastructure, viability, and community presence thereby allowing the agency to become a more attractive prospect for federal funding. As a last phase in the project AWOL's current group of volunteer board members and select staff will receive grant writing training through CNR, instructed by Mark Baggett,

MSW. This activity will be the final step that will allow AWOL, Inc. to have trained staff and board members capable of researching and competing for federal funds. Staff to be trained will include Tony A. Jordan who has over 9 years of experience in social service delivery, DaVena N. Jordan who has an undergraduate degree in Health Science, Mr. Corey Hopps who holds a Masters degree of Criminal Justice, and Mr. Corey Phillips who is a Masters candidate for Savannah State University's Public Administration program.

AWOL, Inc. Capacity Building Project Timeline:2005

July	August	September
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Hire all project consultants and agree upon contract terms -Purchase equipment, software, office furniture, and office supplies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Attendance at IYD-new sub-awardee orientation meeting -Implementation of financial management system -Identify and purchase grant management/ accounting software -Board member training on financial management/accounting software -Began development of agency strategic plan -Began development of agency board development and recruitment plan -Monitor project activities for evaluation purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Continue development of agency strategic plan -Continue development of agency board development and recruitment plan -Board member training on financial management/accounting software -Monitor project activities for evaluation purposes

October	November	December
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Completion of board development and recruitment plan -Staff development training in federal grant research skills -Purchase office supplies -Board member training on financial management/ accounting software -Monitor project activities for evaluation purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Launch of board development and recruitment plan -Completion of agency strategic plan -Staff development training in federal grant writing and research -Board member training on financial management/accounting software -Began researching federal grants and compiling a database of those agency is eligible for -Monitor project activities for evaluation purposes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Complete board development and recruitment process -Select new agency board members -Orient new board members to agencies strategic plan and solicit feedback -Continue to research federal grants and compiling database -Complete financial management/accounting software training
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FY 2006 Outcomes:

-Apply for federal funding during the first 3 months of fiscal year

-Containment of financial management system

-Ongoing board development and recruitment

V. Evaluation Process

The evaluation procedures associated with this project will be conducted by Mrs. DaVena N.Jordan with consultation provided by Coastal Non-profit Resources, Inc. With the guidance of CNR, Mrs. Jordan will ensure that the goals and objectives set forth in the proposal are

accomplished and evaluated for overall effectiveness based on outcomes achievement. The objectives were designed based of the S.M.A.R.T framework which encourages the development of objectives which are specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time based. Listed below are the stated project objectives, expected outcomes, and a description of how the objective will increase the agency’s ability to compete for federal funds in table format.

OBJECTIVE	OUTCOME	RELEVANCE
Identify and obtain the services of an experience grant management agency or consultant	Effective management of AWOL, Inc. capacity building project	This objective will increase the agency’s knowledge and skills concerning effective federal grant management
Establishment of effective financial management system	Efficient and effective financial management system in place	This objective will allow the agency to meet the financial management requirements of federal funders
Purchasing of necessary equipment and service contracts needed to implement project	Equipment on hand needed to implement projects training and administrative needs.	This objective will allow the agency to have on hand the necessary equipment and supplies needed to apply for federal funding, such as a computer, office supplies, software and document storage equipment
Development of and agency strategic plan	Strategic plan in place to guide current and future agency programming and service provision	This objective will allow the agency to have a documented planning tool in place thereby increasing agency viability and attractiveness to federal funders

<p>Development and implementation of an effective board development and recruitment plan</p>	<p>Board development and recruitment plan in place</p>	<p>This objective will allow the agency to have a documented plan for recruiting future board members. By having a strong Board of Directors, agency infrastructure is increased, thus making the agency a more attractive prospect for federal funders</p>
<p>Staff development training in successful federal grant research and writing.</p>	<p>Trained staff on hand to assist in agency grant seeking endeavors</p>	<p>Having staff trained in the federal grant research and writing process gives the agency the capability needed to apply and compete for federal funding</p>