I. Mission Statement
The mission of AWOL All Walks of Life, Inc.(AWOL) is to promote and provide self-awareness through the use of Poetry, Hip-Hop and Life. This mission is met by providing safe FREE arts based training programs that encourages respect, creativity, education and most of all non-violence. Most importantly, all AWOL programs are offered during the hours most relevant to youth, after school and evening, the hours when many young people are susceptible to asocial behaviors and/or activities. www.awolinc.org

II. Problem Statement
A. Savannah is no doubt one of Georgia's most beautiful cities, with its beautiful squares and stunning buildings. But beneath its tranquil beauty a social problem exist that has become persistent and an ever present cause for community concern. The City of Savannah is facing a problem with youth crime. The problems associated with youth crime are complex in nature. Issues such as poverty, low educational attainment and lack of supportive youth centered programs are just a few of the issues that all play a role in the delicate cycle that leads our young people to what often turns into a "life of crime". According to reports by the Savannah Morning News in October of 2006, Savannah resident's bared witness to shoot outs in broad day light, and to even our dedicated Officers of the law being openly attacked by young men with no sense of respect for themselves or the community in which they live. These factors alone point to a community-wide call to action. Due to the vastness of these problems, answers only lie within a "full-court press" approach that is inclusive of city and state government, community based organizations, and most of all community members willing and ready to put a stop to what will inevitably destroy our community. In order for Savannah's youth crime situation to improve, we must move our juvenile justice system from a model based on punishment and incarceration to a coordinated, community-based system of cost-effective prevention and early intervention.

Young people are our Savannah's most valuable asset. When we fail to provide young people with support and opportunities to succeed, the results can send shock waves through the social and economic fabric of the entire community. Jail systems are strained along with other valuable community resources. According to the National Youth Clearinghouse, when young people are nurtured by caring adults, are given opportunities to become involved in education or work that builds their skills, are supported and protected during challenging times, and are actively engaged in community activities, they become valuable contributors to the quality of community life. Engaging youth in communities simply makes sense, both fiscally and ethically.

POVERTY
The 2007 Chatham-Savannah Youth Futures Authority Community Profile, 34.9% of children (ages 18 and under) in Savannah live in poverty; a stark contrast to the state's poverty level of only 13%. Child poverty and school performance are among the most widely used indicators of child well-being and is seen as significant risk factors in the development of problem behaviors among young people. In short, many of Savannah's young people are growing up in severely distressed neighborhoods that have levels of risk factors such as unemployment, high-school drop out, and female-headed households.

Poverty	US	GEORGIA	COUNTY	CITY	CENTER CITY
Individuals	12.5%	13.3%	16%	22%	33%

Source: US Census Bureau 2004-2006					

Youth Crime

Chatham County continues to have over 4,000 delinquent offenses committed by youth ages 8-17. What's more alarming is that according to the Chatham County Department of Juvenile Justice, from 2004-2005, Savannah ranked first in the state in total juvenile commitments and also had the highest number of long-term placements in state Youth Development Centers. These young people are not simply skipping school, but are committing what are termed by juvenile justice professionals as crimes that fall under the classification of the "seven deadly sins". This classification includes murder, robbery; aggravated assault and even rape just to name a few. These heinous acts are not the result of one negative life event, but numerous negative life events and growing up without positive adult relationships in environments encumbered with crime and poverty.

The Critical Hours

The Office of Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention website states that, the hours between the end of the school day and when parents return from work is a risky time for young people. In contrast to the statistics for adults, serious violent crime committed by juveniles increases during the hours immediately after school and into the evening. In general, the number of violent crimes committed by adults increases hourly from 6 a.m. through the afternoon and evening hours, peaks at 11 p.m., and then drops to a low point at 6 a.m., according to Snyder and Sickmund (1999). In contrast, violent crimes by juveniles peak in the afternoon between 3 p.m. and 4 p.m., the hour at the end of the school day. This same research reports that "19 percent of all juvenile violent crimes occur in the 4 hours between 3 p.m. and 7 p.m. on school days." Moreover, a comparison of the crime patterns for school and non-school days finds that the 3 p.m. peak occurs only on school days (Snyder and Sickmund, 1999).

Target Population

AWOL's target populations are mainly youth ages of 12-17. The organization also works with young people ages 20-25, who often time serve as positive role models for younger participants. AWOL if FREE, and open to youth from various different backgrounds and socioeconomic circumstances which reinforces our commitment to diversity. Minority youth currently comprise 98% of program participants. The program is heavily marketed in areas identified by Step Up: Savannahs Poverty Reduction Initiative as having a high poverty rate. Further as noted in the grid below, AWOL categorizes the target population into the following sub-sets.

AWOL Target Population Risk Levels		
High Risk	**Moderate Risk**	**Low Risk (General Pop.)**
Those already involved in the juvenile justice system as referenced by Chatham County Juvenile Court and/ or the Department of Juvenile Justice. Within this category, number of previous referral to juvenile court will be documented in order to assess the effectiveness of the program.	Those living at or below the federal poverty level and or residing in one of the city of Savannah' census tracts with high poverty levels as identified by Step Up: Savannah Poverty Reduction Initiative. Risk factors among this group can be numerous. AWOL will continue to focus on the following risk factors in addition to poverty as a possible precursor to juvenile delinquency risk: *-Single Parent or family disorganization* *-Poor school performance and/or suspension/expulsion* *-Low educational attainment (high school drop-outs)*	Those living above the federal poverty level and/or not residing in a high poverty area of the community will be considered at low risk for criminal activity.

B. This project is important in that it has the ability to impact youth outcomes through by providing youth with a creative outlet. AWOL's goal is to reduce recidivism rates among high risk youth. For low-income youth from some of Savannah's toughest neighborhoods, producing a video, website or song OR getting a high-school diploma, a college degree or a high-tech job can seem like something that other kids do. AWOL Youth Media Production programs gives that opportunity to young people who need it, creating a better future for all of us. Since 2005, AWOL has served 500 youth with 90% of them going to the college, technical school, military or to jobs in the local community.

Currently there are no other Youth Media Production programs in the Savannah area. This constitutes an existing gap in service for our young people as the number and type of after school programs available to this particular age group are sparse. Through a community wide assessment of current youth development programs, AWOL was able to ascertain that limitations such as age limits of participants along with cost issues acted as barriers to access in many instances. Also transportation to and from after school activities has consistently proved itself as a barrier to access for high-risk youth. These facts point to a need for programming that is sensitive to the aforementioned issues.

Overall Goals and Objectives
This project is responsive to the RFP by addressing the following goals/objectives:

- Encourage the development of positive, socially acceptable behavior and expose participants to new, worthwhile experiences promoting the development of high self-esteem and strong social values.

- Reduce the number of juvenile offenders or re-offenders upon completion of the program.

III. Program Measures

A. Program Area

Program Area 9
Community Enrichment/Outreach Program

B. Mandatory CYCC Performance Measures

Output Measure

- FG or Title V funds awarded for services
    - Objective: Increase organizational capacity

- Number of program youth served
    - Objective: Improve program activities

MANDATORY OUTCOME MEASURES

Improve pro-social behavior

70% of youth enrolled will exhibit an increase in school attendance as noted by school attendance records and self-reporting.

Increase Accountability

40 of the 50 youth enrolled will complete the program as noted by completion of 1 of AWOL's arts based training programs (film, sound design, or technology) and completion of a conflict resolution workshop.

SUB-GRANTEE OUTPUT MEASURE

Increase Organizational Capacity

A minimum of 3 new program materials (Youth Guideline book, Film Program workbook, Sound Program Workbook) will be developed by the end of the grant period.

SUB-GRANTEE SELECTED OUTCOME MEASURE

Improve pro-social behavior

70% of youth enrolled will exhibit a decrease in antisocial behavior as noted by program staff rating through use of Behavior Skills Assessment tool.

IV. Evaluation Plan

The Program Director will be responsible for ensuring astute collection of program related data for the purposes of evaluation. <u>Specific information to be collected will be on school attendance, decrease in antisocial behavior, decrease in the number of juvenile court referrals, number of program slots available, and the number and percent of youth completing program requirements.</u> This data will be analyzed to illustrate increases or decreases of these variables as compared to pre-program and community wide averages. The Executive Director will analyze the date collected on a quarterly basis.

Currently, AWOL works with several youth already involved in the juvenile court system. Information on the number of juvenile court referrals will also be collected on a quarterly basis to ascertain the programs effectiveness in preventing juvenile crime. For those youth already involved in the juvenile justice system, this information will be vital and closely monitored.

Dat will include demographic information as well as provide a safe place for completed program forms. Monthly reporting data will be compiled using data found in the youth charts and staff reports.

V. Methods and Procedures

AWOL prides itself on utilizing the <u>positive youth development approach</u> in its efforts to encourage young people to make better choices. Positive development of youth is a policy perspective developed by the National Youth Clearinghouse in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services that emphasizes providing services and opportunities to support all young people in developing a sense of competence, usefulness, belonging, and empowerment.

Central to the positive youth development approach is an understanding that all youth need access to developmental opportunities. They, of course, also need reliable information about behaviors that put them at risk, and at some point during adolescence, they may need prevention and intervention services. These services are far more effective when they are part of a community-designed system of supports and developmental opportunities that provide young people with chances to try new ventures or work toward dreams they had not thought attainable. Then, as young people gain confidence and skills, they shift their decision-making outlook from the short term to the long term, making choices that preserve their dreams and goals and help them avoid behaviors that put them at risk (National Youth Clearinghouse, 2006).

Office of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention(OJJDP)-Model Program

After school/Recreation-According to OJJDP, after school programs have the ability to improve student social skills, improve school attendance and reduce dropout rate, and prevent juvenile delinquency. Further, the type of activities found in quality afterschool program includes computer instruction, employment preparation or training and enrichment in culture and the arts just to name a few. AWOL's program methods succeed in many of these areas.

Arts Based Juvenile Delinquency Prevention

According to research, conducted by the Americans for the Arts YouthARTS Development Project (YADP) it was learned that a number of risk factors may be influenced by youth arts programs, for example: low neighborhood attachment, lack of commitment to school, alienation

and rebelliousness, and friends who engage in problem behavior. Specifically, the research conducted by YADP concludes that effective youth arts programs contain activities that provide opportunities for youth to learn new skills and by recognizing individual youth efforts. This approach according to juvenile justice literature promotes bonding, which helps youth cope with negative influence of risk they face.

According to the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, coordinators of juvenile offender programs have learned that youth receive positive benefits from participation in arts programming and that arts programming tends to have a positive impact on self-image and self-esteem. These programs are more than opportunities to be expressive. Contact with the arts offers a positive stimulus that can interrupt the drift into a negative lifestyle. Arts programs have been shown to empower a population that few programs have been able to reach. **http://www.americansforthearts.org/youtharts/**

A) Referral Linkages

AWOL also has an established relationship with the Department of Juvenile Justice and the Chatham County Juvenile Court. Both agencies refer high risk youth to AWOL's programs.

B) Type and Frequency of Activities

2009-2010 Tentative Arts Training Calendar

Program	# Sessions	Max # Youth	Total Served	June	July	Aug	Sept.	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Film Making	2	10	20	x	x	x			x	x	x					
Sound Engineering	2	10	20			x	x	x			x	x	x			
Technology Training	1	10	10										x	x	x	

C) Days/Hours of Operation

Each of the specific arts training components will operate during evening hours between the hours of 5:00-9:00pm. Workshops will be held 3-4 days per week at the AWOL 7 Drayton St. location. Classes will also be held during after school hours 3:00-5:00pm at the Riley-Scott Alternative Learning center. Film and Sound will operate at least once at the alternative school location.

D) Overall format and organization

Project Activities

AWOL will enroll 50 youth during the 2009-2010 project year. Youth will be placed in one of AWOL's Arts based training programs which respond to the RFP in the areas of <u>Competency development</u>. Further, in order to complete AWOL arts training programs, youth must complete a minimum of 3 <u>Conflict Resolution</u> workshops. The Conflict Resolution workshops are

embedded within each specific arts training program and are considered a part of the curricula.

- Digital Media Production
  - Film and Video production
  - Sound Engineering
- Technology Training
  - A++ Computer Hardware training
  - Graphic Design

The Project Director will be responsible for all aspects of enrolling and recruiting youth from the community as well as those youth deemed high-risk as determined by previous involvement in the juvenile justice system. The PD will also be responsible for fostering collaborative linkages with the local juvenile justice system to assure the appropriateness of youth for program entry. Further, he/she will be required to have an extensive amount of experience in working with high-risk youth either by employment or education.

The Project Director will also hire and orient local Artist Facilitators interested in working with youth involved in the program. Artist facilitators upon hire will be employed on a contractual basis and will also be required to attend AWOL Artist in the Community Training program, a 1 day training which covers topics such as the dynamics of working with at-risk youth, company policy/procedures, and emergency plans.

Background Investigation Policy

All individuals employed and or contracted through this contract will be required to undergo a background investigation which will be conducted by the Savannah Police Department using the local Georgia Bureau of Investigations database.

Program Descriptions

Digital Media Production

AWOL's digital media production program will serve as a vehicle in which the targeted youth will have an opportunity to express themselves through the art of Digital Music Recording and Film Production. In addition, these two programs will offer a flexible, alternative educational and employment training pathway that takes a complex approach to success. Targeting low-income youth facing multiple barriers in education and employment, they will work simultaneously to develop industry standard training in new media, and help them to develop the life skills necessary to successfully collaborate on and produce a high-quality creative product.

Digital Music Production -students will be trained in industry standard Pro-Tools and Propellerhead's Reason, and keyboarding with midis (midi-keyboards are USB-linked digital keyboards). After developing original music through a workshop process, participants will be engaged in three strands of programming; digital music composition and recording with engineer support; media literacy, theory and composition; lyrics and performance. Classes will be taught by local experienced music producers as well as interns/volunteers from local colleges that offer digital media programs.

Film Production- students will learn production skills including video camera operation and basic engineering for lighting and sound. As a team, they will be engaged in pre-production planning, scripting, and storyboarding, as well as production and directing. In the post-production stage, students will use industry standard tools: PhotoShop, Avid Express, Adobe After Effects and ProTools. Training will be project-based and skills will be acquired as students produce their own personal or issue-based videos.

SAMPLE SESSIONS & OBJECTIVES: Digital Music Production					
Session	Songwriting 101	Industry Finance/ Contracts	Music Industry 101	Artistic Expression & Personal Value	Interviewing
Objective	Creativity/Artistic Development	Business Skills/Life Skills	Media Literacy	Personal Development	Job Skills

SAMPLE SESSIONS & OBJECTIVES: Film Production					

Session	Production Planning	Camera Basics	Production Budgeting	Directing	Field Trip to Production Company
Objective	Business Training, Job Skills	Media Literacy, Technology Skills	Finance Management, Life Skills	Communication Skills	Job Skills, Business Training

Technology Training Center:
Digital Arts and A++ Computer Hardware Training

"Bridging the Digital Divide"
There is still an ever present "digital divide" between Black youth, youth in urban areas and youth whose parents are less educated. This problem must be addressed in order for youth to excel in the education and job market's of the future. Success in the 21st century is about leveraging technology in school, at work, at home, in communications and in almost every area of our lives. The competency gap in many important areas of life is growing between those with access and the skill to use a personal computer and the Internet and those who don't understand its vital importance and how to take the needed steps to realize the advantages that technology offers.

According to the Georgia Department of Labor, Computer Software Engineers and Support Specialist are among Georgia's hottest and fastest growing career fields. The AWOL Technology training center will focus on increasing computer and technology access and training through curriculum-based classes, increasing the participant's opportunity to earn livable wages and obtain IT employment. Students will also learn to build functional websites, using industry-standard programming skills and design software like HTML, Photoshop, Dreamweaver and Flash. As they work toward a final product, students must develop skills in project management, planning, teamwork and conflict negotiation.

SAMPLE SESSIONS & ACTIVITIES: Technology Training Center					
Session	PC 101	Web Design	Multimedia Applications	Microsoft Essentials	Field Trip
Activities	Basic computer skills training	Learning to build web pages	Working with computer	Learning to work Microsoft software	Visit technology based

VI. Previous Program Accomplishments

AWOL since 2005 has served over 500 enrolled youth in various arts program. On average about 30% of enrolled youth are considered high risk. Of that 30%, AWOL's program model has reduced recidivism rates among high risk youth by 90%. Many of the high risk youth have experienced either a reduction in the number and severity of referrals to Juvenile Court or a complete elimination of referrals.

GOCF funds have enabled the agency to expand and increase the number of youth served. To date, 26 of the projected 50 youth to be served have successfully completed the program. Plans to serve an additional 30 are already underway and projected to complete the program prior to the completion of the 2007-2008 contract.   Further, 98% of youth enrolled have exhibited increases in knowledge and skills as it pertains to sound design and film making with another 100% completing anger management and conflict resolution workshops. Artist Facilitators have also documented a great deal of qualitative data in reference to increases in pro-social behaviors exhibited among youth participants. Consider, TAZ (pseudonym) who at the time of enrollment into AWOL was experiencing significant problems with anger. Taz had been in several fights at school and was experiencing trust issues at home with his father. Taz was even engaged in gang activity that caused him to have negative feelings toward another gang affiliated youth enrolled in AWOL. The two youth after 9 months of working together on an album, were able to quell the beef between the two gangs and now consider themselves like brothers. To see and hear Taz's story, visit AWOL Youtube page at www.youtube.com/helpawol. Click on Taz's Story.

AWOL youth have attended well over 10,000 hours of after school and evening programming, keeping them off the streets and out of trouble during the hours most relevant to youth.

VII. Additional Funding Sources

Currently AWOL has established partnership that allow for use of space as well as providing access to high risk youth. In addition, the agency has a wealth of community support from local business owners, such as The Sentient Bean Coffee shop which allows for public showing of films produced by youth along with hosting a monthly youth open mic event. Lastly, AWOL programs are currently supported by the City of Savannah, which allows service provision for 50 youth. GOCF funds leverage City resources and expand enrollment numbers to include an additional 50 youth.

AWOL IN-KIND SUPPORT

IN-KIND SUPPORT

Discounted/Donated Space Usage	$	15,000.00	C
Field Trips	$	5,000.00	C
Volunteer Sound engineers and local producers	$	25,000	C
Volunteer Hours	$	3,000.00	C
Paid Advertising	$	7,500.00	A
TOTAL IN-KIND SUPPORT	**$**	**35,500.00**	

*Key-A=Anticipated, C=Committed

VIII. Continuation Plan

In an effort to continue providing these valuable services to Savannah youth, AWOL has identified several community partners willing to offer resources such as increased space for programming and mentorship's as we continue to expand and develop AWOL's youth programs. At the end of the program, the Program Director will meet with Artist Facilitators to discuss the current service delivery format to assess the need for changes. Issues such as logistics, equipment and software issues will be discussed. The Program Director will compile a final report detailing the findings of Youth Surveys, and discussions with Artist Facilitators for presentation to the AWOL Board of Directors. At this time the Board will discuss future funding options along with possible fundraising goals necessary to continue the program.

AWOL is currently funded by the City of Savannah. The agency will continue to research other funding opportunities to support the program. As of 2009, the program has a sufficient amount of equipment to continue the program. The cost to continue is comprised largely of funds to support 1 full time salary and 2-3 part time salaries. The agency plans to continue the program with the use of other agency funds and public support in 2010-2011.

Community Advisory Board-AWOL currently has a partnership with our local commission on children and youth the Chatham Savannah Youth Futures Authority. The Chatham-Savannah Youth Futures Authority (YFA) has been legislated to use its collaborative framework to improve the quality of life for the children, youth, and families that reside in Chatham County, GA. This has been achieved through advocacy, policy studying and reporting, which the YFA has diligently provided to our community for twenty (20) years. Collaboration and partner agency commitment have sustained the Authority since its inception in 1988, and continue to serve as critical components in the Authority's structure, thereby laying the foundation for policy and system change that can foster more positive outcomes for our community.

In 2007, AWOL youth and instructors flew to San Francisco, CA to visit with the Bay Area Video Coalition (www.bavc.org). BAVC is considered one of the nations premier youth media production programs. Bay Area Video Coalition, or BAVC (pronounced "bay-vac") is a nonprofit media arts center. BAVC was launched in 1976 as a way to make emerging video technology accessible to independent media makers. Today, with that mission still at its core, BAVC has evolved into a media arts "teaching hospital." Two of BAVC's youth programs are being re-developed in Savannah for use by AWOL, Youthlink and Bay Area Unity Music Project (BUMP).

BUMP-Bay Unity Music Project (www.youthsounds.org) is a music performance and production program for Bay Area youth and young adults. With the help of industry professionals and quality instructors, young people learn to compose music and lyrics, DJ, play electric and acoustic instruments, and produce and record original music using industry-standard technology. In 2007, through effective leveraging of grant resources and community donation, 8 youth were able to collaborate with youth attending the California based program, an experience that contributed significantly to the lives of our young people by exposing them to new places, people, and things.

Youth Link is a media-training program that employs young people to realize their creative voices, explore career options, and contribute to their communities. During after-school hours students develop a portfolio in web design or video, gaining skills in artistry, teamwork, storytelling, critical thinking, technical troubleshooting and community engagement. Through this collaboration, AWOL continues to receive technical assistance in the area of program development, media program fund seeking, and curriculum development.

AWOL Youth Tech Training-" AY-Tech"
Comcast Cares has identified AWOL as its 2008 Comcast Cares Day recipient. As a part of this project, Comcast has agreed to assist AWOL in the development of a state of the art community PC lab that will be located at the St. Pius Family Resource Center. The new lab will assist with expansion current AWOL programs to include young youth through and after school component as well as become a training ground for the developing AWOL Youth Tech Training program. The Tech training component of AWOL's programming has encountered significant barriers such as lack of equipment and space. These problems are being rectified through community collaboration and fundraising efforts employed by AWOL's volunteer Board of Directors. Further, AWOL has initiated dialogue with one of the communities largest nonprofits social service providers, Union Mission, Inc. who have agreed to assist AWOL in the development of the technology training program which will be modeled after UMI's successful, Starfish Café, Culinary Arts Training program in collaboration with the Savannah Technical College. Youth completing the program will receive college credits and/or industry standard certifications.