

FIRE Grant Application

November 16, 2007

OPERATION SAFE CLUB

INTRODUCTION

The Risk Reduction Bureau of the Gainesville Fire Rescue Department is seeking financial assistance for implementation a new adult safety education program in the mid-sized university community of Gainesville, Florida, called *Operation Safe Club*. This program has been specifically designed to meet the prevention goals of the Fire grant program and to meet the specific needs of our community.

The *Operation Safe Club* program will expand the City's existing educational offerings for adults – fire extinguisher training and evacuation plan training for commercial businesses, organizations & institutions – to include training sessions comprised of detailed information regarding the GFR nightclub inspection program, assembly occupant loads, types of assembly hazards, fire prevention strategies for nightclubs, arson prevention, applicable fire codes, exit issues, exit signage, fire extinguishers, fire alarms, sprinklers, building set-up, candles, decorations, pyrotechnics, proper lifting techniques, actions to take in an emergency, parking lot safety and emergency planning. The second tier of the project targets the bar patron and provides an educational program that creates awareness of life safety issues while participating in the bar venue, specifically the University of Florida and Santa Fe Community College students . The program will include an instructional video to be used at the school orientation coupled with Public Service Announcements and a safe club grading system.

BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ORGANIZATION

The Gainesville Fire Rescue Department (GFR) was established in 1882 to serve a population of less than 4,000. Today, it is responsible for the delivery of fire and emergency services for an approximate 54.05 square mile area in North Central Florida, with a resident population of nearly 123,000. GFR provides: fire prevention, fire suppression, public education, code enforcement and inspection, arson investigation, and emergency medical services in the primary response area, along with confined space rescue, high angle rescue, and hazardous materials response to 11 surrounding rural counties.

FINANCIAL NEED

Gainesville is a tax-poor community. It has the lowest proportion of taxable properties of any city in the state of Florida (44%). Within its boundaries are a major university (51,000+ students) and community college (14,000+ students) that maintain extensive

land holdings throughout. Gainesville also hosts the seat of county government, all school board centers, and four major hospitals - including a Veterans' Administration and a teaching hospital. There are also numerous ancillary not-for-profit clinics, also tax exempt, as well as many State and Federal facilities. All of these entities require services but do not contribute to the tax base of our community.

In addition, the 2007 Florida Legislature enacted property tax reforms that will constrict public safety entity funding statewide, and the Gainesville Fire Rescue Department likely will be faced with non-sworn staffing reductions in the upcoming year. Due to this increasingly limited tax base, funding availability for risk reduction and public education programming and tools has suffered. As a result, the City of Gainesville Fire Rescue Department, with its population now in excess of 122,000 (65,500 of whom are college students – the primary recipients of the benefits of this program,), currently employs only three full-time fire safety inspectors whose responsibilities already include conducting safety reviews of 6899 commercial occupancies per year, 250 plan reviews of new development, and approximately 84 back-up fire investigations per year. GFR's two Risk Reduction Specialists conduct over 226 children's safety education programs per year, 62 adult safety education programs per year, share Public Information Officer Duties for the department, and act as staff advisors and educators to Fire Explorer Post #972. There is zero likelihood of increasing safety education staffing within the Gainesville Fire Rescue Department in this budget year or in any foreseeable budget year, and the department will be fortunate not to, in fact, lose staffing in the future.

Grant funding for this new program initiative would greatly enhance GFR's ability to reach one the most under-served and at-risk groups in the community – young adults.

DETAILS OF YOUR PROJECT

The project will include eight employees and two volunteers at a cost of \$11,140.00 in personnel costs; a total of 43 assemblies will be reached with the program that will be protecting 45,000 young and other adults within a specified timeframe (per night/weekend/month/annum).

Educational Goals:

1. Promote adherence to occupant load designations
2. Promote fire prevention strategies for assembly occupancies serving alcohol
3. Promote planning for emergency egress
4. Promote knowledge of and adherence to all applicable fire codes
5. Promote proper physical plant maintenance (including fire sprinklers and fire alarm systems)
6. Promote preplanning for emergency medical and other situations
7. Promote knowledge of patron safety in the night club venue.

Our Objectives for this project are as follows:

1. Provide a safe environment for nightclub assembly venues
2. Trained Crowd managers at each assembly
3. Educated Patrons/Providing self awareness in the nightclub venue

Tactics to be used to meet these objectives:

1. Deliver diversified risk reduction presentations to owners and employees of assembly occupancies.
2. Conduct unannounced evening inspection of assembly occupancies at peak operational hours to insure adherence of all applicable codes and ordinances.
3. Provide quality crowd manager training for all Nightclub assembly employees.
4. Complete night inspections to ensure compliance with fire prevention and crowd manager techniques.
5. Initiate Safe Club grading procedure and publish in local newspapers and media.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

Using equipment funded by this grant, the intent is to execute at least one presentation per month to target audiences on each of the specified safety topics and 43 unannounced evening fire safety inspections of assembly occupancies. The proposed term of the program is one year from the date of acquisition of the necessary equipment. Specifically, the program will deliver at least 12 assembly all-hazard risk reduction programs, and 43 fire safety inspections that will focus on crowd manager techniques, maintaining occupant load, pre opening fire safety inspections, managing open flame and pyrotechnics in the nightclub venue.

PROJECT TIMELINE

Project timeline will be as follows:

- Purchase all equipment & supplies – 30 days from notification of grant award
- Scheduling and initiation of risk reduction programming to targeted audiences – 45days from notification of grant award
- Completion of all program deliverables as specified in this grant application - 359 days from notification of grant award

COST BENEFIT OF THIS PROJECT

The cost benefit of this project can only be measured in the improved life safety in the nightclub venue and the improved awareness of the patrons. A modest cost of \$20,000.00

to protect and educate an estimated 10,480 citizens with direct program contact and over 30,000 with the media campaign creates a win- win scenario for the City of Gainesville and the citizens it serves.

DESCRIPTION OF COMMUNITY OR TARGET AUDIENCE AND HOW THIS AUDIENCE WAS DETERMINED

While the primary educational emphasis of this project will be on a young adult audience, it will, to a great extent, benefit the entire population of the City of Gainesville. This project will impact the City as a whole by focusing prevention education efforts on specifically targeted adults whose improved safety-consciousness will not only contribute to better protected life and wellbeing for themselves, but also for whose lives their safety behaviors may impact.

Nearly 50% of Gainesville's population is between the ages of 18 years and 24 years – which is the target audience of *Operation Safe Club*.

EVALUATION METHODS

This project will be evaluated by tracking each crowd manager course through a database that will include the total number of presentations, type of presentation, number, age and socioeconomic status of people in attendance, and overall awareness change. Surveys to the student participants will also be administered at the end of each orientation educational presentation.

As with all public education tools we utilize, pre and post testing will be employed to measure effectiveness of our programs, including unannounced night inspections to ensure compliance with crowd manager and life safety requirements by the participants. In addition, should a nightclub actually experience an emergency event, GFR/RRB will follow up with the program participants by issuing post event surveys to determine the effectiveness of the training that was delivered and if any lives were saved or injuries prevented due to the program.

BUDGET DETAIL*Operation Safe Club:*

BUDGET ITEM	TOTAL
2 – Infocus LCD Portable Projectors	\$3000.00
2 – Projector Screens	\$1000.00
2 – Lap Top Computers for presentations	\$5000.00
1 - I.D. Card maker	\$1500.00
1 – Lap Top Computer for I.D. Maker	\$2500.00
2 – Wireless Cards, 1 for each presentation lap top computer	\$1000.00
Notebooks and supplies	\$500.00
Equipment to include vests, flashlights, counters, and bags	\$500.00
TOTAL	\$15000.00
MATCH	\$3000.00

\$8640.00 in Instructor personnel cost for Crowd Manager training

\$2500.00 in Instructor personnel cost for Student Awareness training

\$11140.00 In kind services