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Elks National Foundation 2014-15 Impact Grant Application

Your Application

1. Contact Information

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Did your Lodge discuss this project with ENF staff before applying?

Yes

Please list the date of the meeting when this grant was discussed.

Meeting Date: 7/29/2014

Tell us about your community.

Is your Lodge located in an urban, suburban or rural community? Please check the appropriate box.

Urban Suburban Rural (less than 25,000) Rural (less than 5,000)

2. Project Information

Project Title:	"Minneapolis Elks Lodge 44 Helping Hands for Homeless Teens	Application Status:	New application
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Identify the community need your project will address. (This is the case for why your Lodge needs Impact Grant funds. Provide data and evidence that your Lodge is working to address an important community issue. Focus on the local aspects of the project.)

On any night in Minnesota, over 4,000 young people, age 21 and under, are homeless (our community as been identified as having over 400 on any given night) – they are on their own and don't have a safe, stable place to sleep. They are truly "surviving the streets." And Minnesota's population of homeless youth is growing at an alarming rate. Every three years, Wilder Research conducts a detailed, statewide count of homeless persons in Minnesota. These numbers are up 63% from Wilder's 2009 estimate! And, according to Wilder, these are conservative numbers. The actual numbers are likely considerably higher.

About 90% of these youth are literally on the streets, couch-hopping, riding buses all night, or staying in other unsafe, unstable situations, including adult shelters. Unfortunately, Minnesota has limited youth-specific shelter and transitional housing capacity.

The issue of youth homelessness is not exclusive to the inner cities.

The growth in youth homelessness is a serious concern in the northwest suburbs of Minneapolis where our Lodge is located, especially since there also has been an alarming increase in sex trafficking of young people. Homeless youth are especially vulnerable to traffickers and others who prey on them. The community is fighting trafficking in many ways, including by supporting homeless youth so that we "cut off their (traffickers) supply of victims." Our Lodge is rallying to support this effort and help create a safe, stable home environment, meet the basic needs of these youth, and provide intensive supportive services as they transition from surviving the streets into thriving young adulthood. We want these young people to be able to stay in their home communities, finish their education, find jobs and contribute as community members.

How did your Lodge determine the need for this project? What kind of research did the Lodge conduct? Did the Lodge discuss this project with other groups, organizations and individuals in the community? Does the Lodge have any partners in this project?

Our members are well aware of the growing population of homeless youth in our community due to the many events and projects we have underway and those done in the recent past to support these youth.

Currently, we are working with the food shelf designated for homeless youth and have adopted the months of July and December to gather and supply items for the food shelf. We are in the process of planning meals for homeless teens through our Lodge. We provide seasonal youth parties and activities and, in the past, have held open houses for youth offering games, snacks and refreshments as well as fellowship and drug awareness and scholarship pamphlets.

Several months ago, leaders in Brooklyn Park asked the community to consider opening a shelter and transitional housing program with supportive services in the northwest suburbs. "Brooklyn Avenues" will be the first such program for homeless youth in our suburban area. The shelter will be located within a few miles of our lodge in Brooklyn Park.

Our lodge was seeking an effective way to expand our role in the community as it relates to homeless and at risk youth. Teaming up with Brooklyn Avenues to make the safe house a reality seemed the logical next step as it expands our reach and our support. We can touch more at risk youth and provide a positive adult experience to them by participating in activities at Brooklyn Avenues as well as provide additional opportunities for support such as the expansion into facility maintenance (see details below).

This project began by conversation with staff at the Teen Food Shelf. We were ask if we would be interested in becoming a partner and establishing a shelter for homeless teens. Our partner - Brooklyn Avenues - opens in January 2015. It is a 12-bed shelter and transitional housing program with intensive support services for homeless youth, ages 16 through 20. At Brooklyn Avenues, youth will first find safety and stability. Professional staff will provide direct care and guidance 24 hours per day. Upon arrival, youth will first address their immediate, crisis and basic needs such as bedroom and bath facilities, nutritious meals, clothing and laundry facilities, health and mental assessment as well as access to

computers for employment availability and study space.

How will the Elks specifically address this community need? If the Lodge has a partner in this project, we want to know exactly what the Elks will do, and not what the partner organization will do. (This is your project description.) Be specific, and demonstrate that your Lodge has a plan.

To specifically address this need, we will provide these at risk youth with the following:

Monthly dinners with dessert for youth living in the house. These meals would be similar to what we would provide in our own homes in terms of "family style" and not institutional or cafeteria style meals.

Forty (40) seasonal care packages for distribution to homeless youth (see details below)

Fall Sleepy-Time Baskets - pajamas, robe, slippers, a pillow and a set of twin sheets/pillow cases in a laundry basket

Summer "Undercover" Kits- duffle bags with socks and underwear, sports bras, t-shirts, and a-shirts

Spring Bathroom Bundles - empty shower totes/caddies with face wash, body wash, deodorant, foot powder, shower sandals/ flip flops, brushes, wide-tooth combs, and picks, nail clipper, and a package of wash cloths

Winter Bundle Up Bags - New Winter Coats with coordinated hat and mittens

Facility maintenance support. We will match facility maintenance needs with the varied skills and talents of our Lodge members. We will appoint a project coordinator to organize projects and coordinate Elks volunteers to meet Brooklyn Avenues' needs. This could include painting, landscaping, building and grounds maintenance and repair, supply closet organizing, deep cleaning and more. Working side by side with youth. As appropriate, the project coordinator will work with Brooklyn Avenues to identify youth who may be interested in acquiring new skills and invite them to participate. Including the youth in the care and maintenance of their transitional home will help instill a sense of pride and ownership which leads to a greater level of connection to the community.

Has the Lodge had any experience addressing this problem in the past?

Only with supplying food and working at Teen Food Shelf. As noted previously, our Lodge has conducted several events in the past to help at risk youth. We have seen positive results from these activities and wish to expand our role in the community.

Impact Grants offer the chance to make a significant and meaningful difference in the community. What lasting effects do you think the project will have?

Our objective is to provide a meaningful impact upon the at risk youth by providing an ongoing, sustainable and reliable interaction. These youth often experience a periodic, piece meal support from individuals and organizations. We want these youth to come to know and expect us to be there on a monthly and quarterly basis to maintain their connection to the community. Through these regular interactions and by working side by side with these youth we hope to instill a sense of pride and connectedness for these youth which are positive, life-long attributes. We hope to drive new membership and increase participation from existing members by creating an ongoing, public activity for the Elks that motivates people to want to become a part of our organization.

Given your Lodge's description of the project, please break down the project in terms of volunteer activities/duties/committees. How many Elks will be needed to complete each activity? Keep in mind that Elk involvement is integral to an Impact Grant project.

1. Help Brooklyn Avenues create a warm, inviting home environment and begin to meet the immediate basic needs of sheltered youth at the house. A large majority of Minneapolis Lodge #44 members have offered to help in this project on a as needed and availability basis. (10-25 monthly)

a) Provide monthly dinners for youth and staff b) Provide seasonal care packages & supplies for youth appropriate for the time of year c) Hold drives for supplies as needed d) Coordinate Elks member volunteers for house maintenance and repair projects

2. Educate Elks members and other community members about the issue of youth homelessness and available resources in our community. This is an ongoing project will need 6-10 members to coordinate the project. a) Post educational information at Lodges, libraries, schools, churches and businesses b) Include educational information and project updates in monthly newsletter c) Seek media coverage publicizing the issue of youth homelessness in our community 3. Raise the profile of the Elks and specifically our lodge as another means of serving our community. All of our members will promote this project especially Brooklyn Park residents. a) Report project progress at Brooklyn Park City Council Meetings b) Host booths at other Elks and community events providing information about the Elks, Lodge #44 and our Teaming Up For Teens Project c) Solicit media coverage of Elks Lodge #44 Teaming Up For Teens Project and its partnership with Brooklyn Avenues

3. Proposed Goals & Objectives

Our ultimate goal is for every homeless teen to find a comfortable home and purposeful life.

A. Working closely with the Avenues staff.

B. Staying informed by the Brooklyn Park City Council of any additional services we may provide.

C. By informing the media of our involvement in this project and its accomplishments.

Minneapolis Lodge #44 members feel our involvement in this project by supplying the much needed materials as identified in this application. Will increase visibility and a positive reputation for the Elks to the community. Our face to face contact with the youth and staff will give us the opportunity to let the community see first hand our commitment to making Brooklyn Park a better place to live.

A. Members working as the project manager for maintaining the grounds and building.

B. Providing monthly hot meals to the teen residents.

C. Periodically reporting our progress to the Brooklyn Park City Council.

We strongly feel by our involvement in this project Minneapolis Elks Lodge #44 will be recognized as an organization dedicated to the betterment of our youth. Therefore will increase our opportunities for membership growth.

- A. By keeping the community aware of the Elks membership involvement.
- B. The media has assured us complete and full coverage of the successes of this project.
- C. Through the Avenues Newsletters, Elks Newsletters and word of mouth through our membership.

4. Plan for Success

At the end of the year, how will you know the project has helped the problem identified in section 2?

Our lodge's Helping Hands for Teens will be a success if we have helped Brooklyn Avenues create a safe, inviting home for the youth, helped meet the youths' most basic unmet needs in a consistent manner and show the youth we care. In addition, this project will raise the profile of the Elks and our lodge in the local community.

What data will you collect to show the project's success? (For example, we will monitor the graduation rate at the high school we are working at. Or, we will improve the reading scores of the children in our education program.)

To clearly demonstrate the success of this project, we will track the following information:

- Number of dinners provided.
- Number of youth & staff in attendance
- Number of Elks member volunteers involved
- Feedback from youth and Avenues staff

- Seasonal Care Packages
- Number of care packages created
- Number of care packages distributed
- Number of volunteer Elks members involved
- Feedback from youth and Avenues staff
- Maintenance Projects
- Type of Project completed
- Number of Elks member volunteers participating
- Number of volunteer hours and value of those volunteer hours

- Publicity for Elks and our Lodge
- Dates of progress updates provided at Brooklyn Park City Council Meetings
- Date & name of events where Elks members manned booths or using another format shared information about the Elks, our Lodge and this project with the community
- Date, medium and content of media coverage of Elks, our Lodge and this project

This is an opportunity to raise your Lodge's profile and inspire new members to join a Lodge that's making a difference in the community. How do you plan to promote this in the community as an Elks-identified project?

To raise the profile of our Lodge and inspire new members to join, we have been assured by the media this project and its progress will receive necessary coverage in the community. This will include pursuing a follow up story on "Helping Hands for Teens" in the major Twin Cities Paper, The Minneapolis Star Tribune on how the Minneapolis Lodge #44 continues to focus on supporting our homeless teens in the metro area. The Brooklyn Park City Council has asked us to report our progress at the City Council Meetings. We will provide updates on our progress in each Elks Newsletter and post information in the community. Avenues will highlight Elks Lodge #44 and this project in its newsletter, Facebook pages and twitter feed, reaching 3,234 households. In addition, the Lodge will receive recognition in Avenues' Annual Report. The Lodge expects a project of this magnitude supporting youth and one with such a high profile will help to attract new members, including younger professionals.

5. Budget Information

Budget Category	ENF Funds	Matching Share		Total Project Cost
		Cash	In-Kind	
Staff Salaries & Support	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0
Equipment:	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Materials & Supplies:	\$10000	\$10000	\$0	\$20000
Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
TOTAL	\$10000	\$10000	\$0	\$20000

Budget Narrative

Expenses: Background Checks \$ 200 Monthly Meals 3,000 Basket Kits, 40 each 7,200 Winter coats, scarves and mittens 6,000 House projects 3,600

An itemized list can be provided if necessary.

We will receive additional funds through local corporations and fund raisers.

Application submitted by Lynne Thiebault on Aug 27, 2014 11:07 AM. [Click here to go back to the Dashboard.](#)