SOCIAL ENTERPRISE AS AN INTERVENTION FOR AT RISK YOUTH: A GRANT PROPOSAL

By Robert J. VerWys

California State University, Long Beach

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The purpose of this project was to write a grant to fund the development of a social enterprise job/life skills training program addressing the needs of at-risk teens and young adults as they transition into adulthood and assimilate into the work force in Bellflower, California.

California had the highest unemployment rate in the country for teens ages 16-19, registering a 34.6% unemployment rate (U. S. Department of Labor, 2012).

Los Angeles metropolitan area's teen employment rate ranks 98th out of 100 cities in the United States (Lee, 2015).

Within the Bellflower school district, for the 2013-14 academic year, 1,305 suspensions were levied (California Department of Education, 2014).

Students who were suspended or expelled were nearly 3 times more likely to be in contact with the juvenile justice system the following year (Fabello et al., 2011).

INTRODUCTION:
Within the National Association of Social Workers Code of Ethics (NASW; 2008), one of the foremost values of social work practice is to pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people.

The diverse unemployed youth population in Bellflower falls within these very criteria. Unemployment is a major contributor and predictor for depression, gang involvement and drug use. When you pair that with the realities of the school to jail pipeline, and the high incidents of suspension, expulsion and dropouts within the Bellflower district, it is definitively apparent that this is important advocacy work to pursue.

SOCIAL WORK RELEVANCE:
In the 2012 Census data, it was described that within Bellflower, 55% of the population classifies themselves Latino, 17% are White only, 15% are Black and 10% Asian (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013)

According to the U.S. Department of Labor (2012), it was found that the Latino unemployment rate was around 4% higher than that of White folks, with a youth unemployment rate of 31% for folks age 16-19.

In 2011, the unemployment rate of Latinos with only a high school degree was 10.3% (compared to 8.4% of Whites with only a high school degree) and 12.0% for Latinos with less than a high school degree (compared to 12.7% for Whites with less than a high school degree).

CROSS-CULTURAL RELEVANCE
Target population: At-risk teens and young adults ages 15-19 in the Bellflower, California area.

Finding the funding source: The grant writer utilized personal communication with non-profit stakeholders, as well as conducting an internet search.

Funding source: California Wellness Foundation

Sources for the needs assessment: The grant writer collected information regarding the target population of at-risk, minority teens and young adults through an extensive literature review.

METHODS:
TABLE 1. Annual Line Item Budget

Kingdom Causes Bellflower Community Center
Bellflower Skate Co.
2016-2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personnel Costs</th>
<th>Project Effort</th>
<th>Total Cost</th>
<th>In Kind Funding</th>
<th>Requested Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program Director</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>$46,080.00</td>
<td></td>
<td>$46,080.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Benefits @19%</td>
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<td>$8,755.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assistant Program Director</td>
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<tr>
<td>Benefits @19%</td>
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<td>Program Apprentice (x 24)</td>
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**Personnel Subtotal**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Direct Operating Costs</th>
<th></th>
<th>$9,000</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rent (750 sq. ft @ $12 per sq. ft/year)</td>
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<td>$420.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Electricity ($35/month)</td>
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<td>$2,198.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apple iMac ($1099.00 x 2)</td>
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<td>Adobe Creative Cloud</td>
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<td>[Titebond III Wood Glue (20 Gallons)]</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hydraulic Press (x 2)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Skateboard Screen Printing Press (x 2)</td>
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<td>Skateboard Deck Materials</td>
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<td>$2,078.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Direct Operating Subtotal**

**Indirect Costs @ 10%**

| Total Costs | $159,494.37 | $9,900 | $156,614.57 |

**METHODS (CONT.): BUDGET**
Bellflower Skate Co. Program Summary:

- The proposed social enterprise program will be based out of the Kingdom Causes Bellflower Community Center, which is in Bellflower, California. The proposed program would step in with at-risk youth through socialization, education, and on-the-job employment training. This is a unique offering for the Los Angeles area, and is an effective model in meeting the needs of this population as well as developing their capacities. The proposed program would put at-risk teens to work building skateboards and long-boards from the wheels up.

Population Served:

- At-risk teens and young adults ages 15-19 in the Bellflower, California area.

Sustainability:

- This venture would be supported by this grantor for 2 years, but as it expands and develops, it would benefit from profits from sales, with the aims of eventually becoming self-sustainable.

GRANT PROPOSAL
Program Objectives

- Build participant self-esteem and dignity
- Decrease participant at-risk behaviors such as gang involvement, drop outs and drug use
- Reductions in depression and anxiety symptoms
- Increase participant employability

Program Evaluation

- Upon entrance into the social enterprise program the Program Director and Assistant Program Director will administer a survey to each participant, in which they will report self-esteem, current perceived support system, depression, anxiety, risky and/or pro-social behaviors, and academic success. The survey data will then be imputed into database. Upon full participation and graduation from the 12 week program, the survey will be re-administered, and the data will be entered into the database and compared with their original reports, and be evaluated for improvement.
As the grant writer developed his application, he noted the importance of making plain the need that is present within the community through his literature review. It is crucial to highlight for the funder that their grant would go towards intervening with a specific population that is within their particular values and vision for their funds.

It was imperative that the writer draft a concise definition of the need and vision for the intervention/program created with the funding. Foundations desire to be smart with their money and they want to see return on their investment. This requires the grant writer to create clear, attainable and evaluable goals.

It was challenging to compile an accurate operating budget for the proposed organization, as there are inevitably hidden costs, that spring up on the process.

Upon evaluation of existing literature and programs the need for more creative and innovative interventions and alternatives for at-risk teens became increasingly obvious.

LESSONS LEARNED/IMPLICATIONS