

## **Youth Employment Lawn Care Program**

### **I. Program Summary**

METEC and Peoria Opportunities Foundation (POF) are partnering to provide the Youth Employment Lawn Care Initiative in East Bluff and South Side neighborhoods. Using their program and management experience, this collaboration will provide work experiences for 15 young people during the summer. Lawns will be mowed between June 3, 2014 - September 3, 2014.

The Summer Youth Lawn Mowing program is a small business youth employment program. Youth will mow grass, trim weeds and pick up litter on vacant lots in the East Bluff and South Side neighborhoods. While learning the art of cutting grass, youth will also learn the basics of creating and operating a small business. Revenue from this program will be generated at a cost of \$12.50 per lot. A total of 340 lots will be cut on a bi-weekly basis; and, 288 lots are located on the South Side. There is a revenue shortage. This program will receive additional sponsorship from LISC to cover the gap and any unexpected expense with labor and insurance.

The Youth Employment Lawn Care Program targets at-risk youth between the ages of 16-19 that live in the East Bluff and South Side neighborhoods. The program serves a maximum of 14 youth who will be employed in lawn care and neighborhood clean-up activities. On average, a 170 lots will be cut each week. Most of the lots on the Southside are next to each other. Travel time will be reduced and cutting time will increase based on the proximity of the lots.

The Youth Employment Lawn Care Program was created to:

- Introduce a young workforce to real-world labor expectations
- Teach employment skills
- Provide a wage to youth during the summer
- Improve visual curb appeal of East Bluff and South Side neighborhoods
- Provide opportunities for career training, academic improvement and financial literacy.

Expanding on the model that POF used in 2013, this program combines employment training with academic support. This strategy has proven to be the most effective way to keep youth out of the juvenile justice system. Employment training will cover the job application process, job survival, job termination/ references, appropriate dress, attendance, punctuality, teamwork, following instructions, and dealing with the employer when there are problems. The program also provides many additional services including;

- Financial literacy;
- Leadership training;
- Community service opportunities;

Financial literacy will be incorporated to offer skills on money management and provide banking opportunities for participants to cash their paychecks.

METEC's mission is to empower families and individuals to improve their financial well-being through housing counseling, credit counseling, financial education, and employment preparation. METEC has managed summer youth employment programs for two years with over 40 young people participating.

METEC has expertise in workforce development and previous summer youth employment programs. POF implemented a successful summer youth lawn care program in 2013. They mowed more than 40 yards for residents. METEC will be the lead agency to manage the program. They will be responsible for salaries, all required insurance and overall program management. Funds will pay for insurance and repairs on the truck POF used in 2013. POF has the truck titled in their name and the insurance in their names. It will remain as such for 2014. METEC will secure Workmen's compensation insurance. The premium will be paid by the program.

The Youth Employment Lawn Care initiative has the support of City Councilwoman Denise Moore and Councilman Tim Riggerbach, along with the Director of Public Works Mike Rogers. While this is the first year for the collaboration between METEC and POF, both agencies are committed to making this a successful program both for the community and youth.

## **II. Need for the Lawn Care Program**

There are over 600 vacant lots in the city that require yard upkeep and there are 323 lots on the Southside of Peoria. Vacant lots are not just an eyesore, but tend to attract unwanted loitering and crime. Residents in the Harrison Impact Zone stated they wanted to improve the overall appearance of their neighborhood. Their number one objective was to clean up yards. Residents contributing to the 2009 Glen Oak Zone Plan stated that there are too many youth loitering in the neighborhood with nothing constructive to do. They also expressed a desire to make the neighborhood look nicer. The Youth Employment Lawn Care program provides meaningful employment and the opportunity to attain employability skills. This program also offers crime prevention opportunities. Based on a study prepared for Northeastern University, lack of job opportunities reduces teens' exposure to the work world. Being jobless increases their risk of hanging out on the street, and exposure to or participating in urban violence and delinquent behavior.

## **III. Payments and Salaries**

Youth will work on average 4 hours three (3) days a week. The salary will be minimum wage of \$8.25 an hour. One manager will supervise all youth. All program participants are required to attend a program orientation and employment training session. All participants and staff working with the YELC program will undergo a background check.

METEC will be responsible for all wages, fringe benefits and Workers Compensation, in accordance with METEC's policies. Participants will have the option of being paid with a check

or direct deposit. METEC is responsible for meeting applicable Internal Revenue Service requirements regarding Federal withholding, State withholding, FICA and other withholding requirements.

***A) Time Sheets***

Worksite supervisors will be responsible for keeping accurate timesheets and attendance of each client, and will submit timesheets to METEC's office. Worksite managers fully understand that non-worked hours or recreational activities are not to be reported for payment on the timesheet. Youth cannot work holidays. Youth cannot be paid for lunch time.

**IV. TARGET POPLUATION**

The Youth Employment Lawn Care Program targets at-risk young people between 16-19, and living in neighborhoods in the East Bluff and South Side.

**V. OUTREACH AND RECRUITMENT**

Job Fairs, students in the ELITE program, and recruitment at Manual and Peoria High schools will be used to fill positions in the Youth Employment Lawn Care Program.

***A) Application Process and Orientation***

Enrollment in the program will begin May 24<sup>th</sup>. Applications will be accepted through May 30<sup>th</sup>. To apply all youth must attend an orientation session scheduled during the last week of May. At the orientation session each young person must bring a valid driver's license or state ID, passport, alien and social security card. Students will participate in training on how to cut lawns, and safety procedures.

***B) Written policies and procedure***

Once hired, each participant will receive an employee handbook, and training curriculum. The employee handbook explains the summer program, job descriptions, and METEC's hours of operations, how time sheets are to be handled, and protocol for missing work. Any youth that does not have a high school diploma or GED will be encouraged to register in GED classes held at METEC and operated by Illinois Central College.

Budget Narrative:

**A. Salary – Total: \$26,037.00**

Program Manager \$5,850.00

14 Youth working 3 days a week 4/hours a day \$18,018.00

1 Program Manager, 14 youth employees

Manager works 4 hours/day; 6 days/ wk., with 7 youth. Two days in East Bluff, 4 days on South Side  
Each youth employee works 3 days a week; 4 hours/day, at minimum wage, potentially making \$99/wk.

**B. Fringe Benefits for both are \$2,246.00**

**C. Supplies – Total: \$2,469.00**

Gas for truck and lawn mowers

Lawn bags, trash bags, gas cans,

**D. Equipment \$970.00**

Purchase 4 lawn mowers and one weed wacker

**E. Purchase or repair truck \$3,000**

Funds will replace the broken truck POF received from the City.

**F. Program Administration \$3,000**

**G. Insurance- workers compensation \$2,148.00**

**East Bluff - South Side Lawn Care Program**

**PROGRAM EXPENSES**

<b>Equipment</b>	Cost	Qty	Total	
Lawn mowers	\$225	4	\$900	
Weed wackers	\$70	1	\$70	
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$970</b>

**Supplies**

Gas cans	\$15	0	\$0	
gloves	\$2	21	\$42	
Trash Bags - 900 bags	\$10 for 50		\$50	
Yard Waste Bags - 500	\$7 for 15-pak		\$300	
Insurance			\$2,148	
T-shirts	<a href="#">25@ \$10.00</a>		\$250	
Cell phone - supervisor				
Business Cards		1000	\$150	
Misc.			\$300	
<b>TOTAL</b>				<b>\$3,240</b>

**Weekly Expenses**

	<i>Hours</i>	<i>Rate</i>	<i>Qty</i>	<i>Per week</i>	<i># Weeks</i>	
Admin						\$3,000
Program Manager	30	\$15	1	\$450	13	\$5,850
Youth employees	12	\$8.25	14	\$1,386	13	\$18,018
Payroll service	3	\$12.00	1	\$36	12	\$432
Benefits & taxes		8%		\$150	12	\$1,797
Admin Benefits		8%				\$240
Gas - lawn mowers & Trucks		\$3.99	15	\$60	12	\$718
Purchase Truck						3000
Incidentals						\$235
<b>Program Total</b>						<b>\$37,500</b>

		#Lawns per week	\$Fee per lot	#Weeks cutting lawns	
<b>PROGRAM REVENUE</b>					
<b>South Side</b>					
City Lots - Cut once every 2 wks.	288	144	12.50	12	\$21,600
Residential					
Commercial					
<b>East Bluff</b>					
City Lots - Cut once every 2 wks.	52	26	\$ 12.50	12	\$3,900
Residential					
Commercial					
Chuck Weaver					\$1,000
LISC Grant					\$11,000
City lots maintained	340				
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>170</b>			<b>\$37,500</b>

**East Bluff - South Side Lawn Care Program**

1 Program Manager, 14 youth employees  
 Manager works 4 hours/day; 6 days/ wk., with 7 youth. Three days in East Bluff, 3 days on South Side  
 Each youth employee works 3 days a week; 4 hours/day, at minimum wage, potentially making \$99/wk.

Program duration -  
 Full-time (Mon-Sat) 12 weeks; June 2 - Sept 5 all employees

1 kid is weed whacking	kids/day	hours/day	lawns/hr.	Lawns/day	days/wk.	Lawns/wk.	
	6	4	1.5	36	4	144	South Side
	6	4	1	24	2	26	East Bluff
						170	Total Lots