

**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
INTERDEPARTMENTAL MEMORANDUM
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY INITIATIVES**

CONSENT AGENDA
ITEM NO. 24

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Dennis J. Campa, Director, Department of Community Initiatives

THROUGH: Terry M. Brechtel, City Manager

COPIES: Frances A. Gonzalez, Assistant to the City Manager; City Attorney's Office;
Finance Department; Office of Management & Budget; File

SUBJECT: Training, Technical Assistance, and Capacity Building Program—Community
Services Block Grant Spring 2002

DATE: November 14, 2002

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This ordinance ratifies submission and authorizes the acceptance of a grant in the amount of \$20,000 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) for the Training, Technical Assistance, and Capacity Building Program for the period of January 1, 2003 through December 31, 2003. This ordinance also approves a budget and personnel complement and Memorandum of Agreement with Antioch Baptist Church for this program.

Staff recommends this ordinance be approved.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On August 23, 2002, the Department of Community Initiatives (DCI) submitted an application to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) in response to the request for proposals for the Community Services Block Grant Training, Technical Assistance, and Capacity Building Program. The Department of Health and Human Services notified the Department of Community Initiatives on September 17, 2002 that this request was approved for funding for FY 2003.

To assist low-income families transition out of poverty and achieve economic self-sufficiency, DCI has implemented asset development and asset protection strategies to strengthen families while reducing reliance on a reactive community safety net and emergency assistance approach. DCI's overall mission and vision for asset building and asset protection is the Family Economic Security Program (FESP).

This grant and partnership with Antioch Baptist Church will complement the Department's asset building component by expanding the VITA program, which provides free tax assistance to low-income San Antonio families. DCI and Antioch Baptist Church will offer VITA to low-income working families and individuals in San Antonio to ensure these families take advantage of the Earned Income Tax Credit and Child Tax Credit. The partnership will also offer access to financial institutions that will open bank accounts for low-income working families who do not currently

have them. In addition, through this grant DCI will also offer a financial literacy program to help families establish a budget and savings plan, schedule and manage their money over the long term and strengthen their credit rating. DCI will work with financial institutions to educate families about sub-prime or predatory loans.

During the 2000 tax season, DCI completed just over 1,000 tax returns. For 2001, DCI sought to expand the VITA program to ensure that more families took advantage of the Earned Income and Child Tax Credits. DCI partnered with the IRS, Annie E. Casey Foundation, United Way, and other community based organizations to educate low-income families about the EITC and CTC. Last year, DCI operated in six sites throughout the city, utilized mobile teams to serve workers at their place of employment, increased service hours and trained over 80 Youth Opportunity Program. All DCI VITA sites also offered electronic filing, which enables taxpayers to receive their refund within seven to ten days. As a result of this increase effort and coordination, DCI completed 2,005 tax returns and filed 88% electronically, helping return a total of \$1.6 million in EITC and CTC to working families of San Antonio, and over \$2.7 million in total tax refunds.

DCI is developing community partnerships and applying for funds in an effort to expand VITA further for 2002. At a minimum, DCI will operate 10 fixed sites and various mobile teams. To ensure that eligible city employees take advantage of VITA, DCI will plan a Family Economic Security Fair in late January when the W-2s are distributed. DCI will offer VITA services and electronic filing as soon as W-2 forms are distributed, to help families and individuals receive their income tax returns faster and free of charge. The goal is to reduce the number of families utilizing Rapid Refund services through paid tax preparers, which results in them paying almost \$200. DCI will seek additional partnerships, similar to the current grant being accepted, to build the capacity of local grassroots organizations to serve the community by operating FESP for the 2002 tax season. This month, DCI will submit an application to the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs to partner with two other grassroots entities for the upcoming tax season. In addition the Community Action Advisory Board has recommended CSBG funding to a local community-based organization to assist us in these efforts.

Through the current grant, DCI will partner with Antioch Baptist Church, a faith-based organization, to build greater capacity to assist low-income families through FESP. DCI already has well-established relationships with organizations serving the inner west side of San Antonio and used this grant as an opportunity to build a new partnership with an organization serving the east side of our city. Under this grant, DCI will build Antioch's capacity to serve the community by operating the FESP for tax season 2002. DCI will provide technical assistance to Antioch in the form of staff, training, site planning, monitoring, performance measurement and evaluation.

DCI will provide a team of five temporary staff who will be hired in partnership with Antioch. This team will consist of an Administrative Assistant I, who will work 25 hours per week, and will oversee the daily operations of the site, and four Office Assistants, working 15 hours per week, who will complete the tax returns and provide clerical support and intake at the site. In addition to the core team, Antioch will recruit volunteers to work with the paid staff to carry out the daily operations of the FESP site. Antioch will also provide space for the operations from January to April 2003.

Through this grant and partnership with Antioch, we will complete 500 tax returns this year, of which 75% are EITC/CTC eligible. The EITC alone could return more than \$525,000 to working families in San Antonio (based on DCI 2002 average EITC).

POLICY ANALYSIS

Acceptance of this grant continues city's goal of strengthening families and more specifically, utilizing VITA as an opportunity for asset building and asset protection. Increasing and utilizing a family's tax return is the first step to improving their economic security and increasing self-sufficiency. Through case management coupled with education, financial literacy, asset protection and building wealth through savings, low-income families in San Antonio will be better equipped to plan for their futures by investing in higher education, home ownership and micro enterprise development.

FISCAL IMPACT

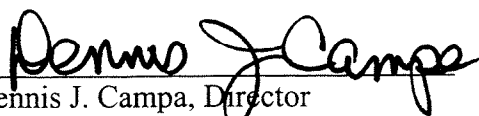
The ordinance authorizes the acceptance of \$20,000 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services to support the Training, Technical Assistance, and Capacity Building Program. The grant does not require a match from the City or other additional general funds.

COORDINATION

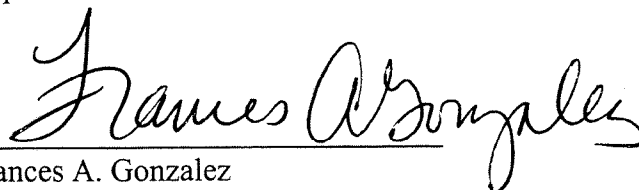
Coordination has occurred with the City Attorney's Office, Finance Department, and Office of Management and Budget.

SUPPLEMENTARY COMMENTS

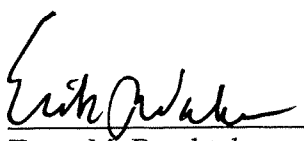
Provisions of the Ethics Ordinance do not apply.


Dennis J. Campa, Director
Department of Community Initiatives

Approved:


Frances A. Gonzalez
Assistant to the City Manager

Approved:


for Terry M. Brechtel
City Manager

Community Action Division
26-xxxxxx

REVENUES:**Budget**

20,000.00

TOTAL REVENUES**20,000.00****EXPENDITURES:****38-01-01****OBJ CODE**

Communications: Cell Phones	02-110	180.00
Car Expense Allowance	02-130	300.00
Fees to Professional Contractors	02-160	1,750.00
Temporary Services	02-161	15,644.00
Binding & Printing Reproduction	02-181	1,026.00
Office Supplies	03-210	500.00
Other Commodities	03-244	600.00

TOTAL EXPENDITURES**20,000.00**

Personnel Complement
Project 26-xxxxxx

	<u>No. of Positions</u>	<u>Positions</u>	<u>Job Class No.</u>
ADD:			
38-12-01	5	Temporary Employee	9001
	5	TOTAL POSITIONS	