



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of October 24, 2009**

DATE: September 17, 2009

SUBJECT: Acceptance and appropriation of an FY 2009 Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) non-competitive grant to fund gang prevention and intervention initiatives in Arlington and region wide.

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

Accept and appropriate \$250,000 in grant revenue from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (101.374900) to the Juvenile and Domestic Relations District Court Services Unit (101.20403) for gang prevention and intervention initiatives.

ISSUES: This is a request to expand services to implement a multifaceted approach to juvenile gang prevention and intervention using one-time federal funds. A large part of this grant, \$165,000, will be dedicated to regional gang prevention and intervention services with Arlington County as the fiscal administrator. The balance of the funds will be used for projects within Arlington.

SUMMARY: Arlington County will receive \$250,000 to implement a multifaceted gang prevention/intervention program for youth ages 9 to 21 who are at risk for gang involvement. This effort, which will be implemented at both the local and regional level, will also engage family members and the broader community using strategies described by OJJDP's Comprehensive Gang Model. Components of this strategy will include hiring regional intervention, prevention, and education (IPE) counselors; mentoring families and siblings; training Court Services Unit staff; joint monitoring of probationers by police and probation officers, and facilitating two community meetings to share information and elicit feedback.

BACKGROUND: This non-competitive grant was awarded through the office of Congressman Moran. The city of Alexandria has received an identical grant that meets both local and regional needs. Because of the transient nature of gangs and their fluid movements in the area, programs to address the issue cannot be confined to one jurisdiction. Accordingly, Arlington is a member of Northern Virginia Regional Gang Task Force (NVRGTF), which implements suppression, intervention, and prevention programs at the local and regional levels based on the OJJDP Comprehensive Gang Model. This approach provides a research-based structure that local communities can use to confront and deal with the problem of gangs. There are five areas of focus: community mobilization, opportunities provision, social intervention, suppression, and organizational change and development.

County Manager: RC/BMD

County Attorney: AT/AM

Staff:

Needs assessment data and current research point to the need for prevention and intervention activities to prevent gang involvement in the first place. The grant will target two population groups, siblings and parents of gang-involved youth. Funds will also be used to train and support probation officers, parents, and the community as a whole. The two population groups are siblings of gang-involved youth, who are especially vulnerable to gang recruitment, and parents, who are often overwhelmed and limited in their ability to effectively manage their households and personal lives. Like their gang-involved children, family members suffer the effects of low self image, poverty, social isolation, difficulty in assimilating to the mainstream culture, and limited opportunities. Parents are often not equipped to use existing resources to support healthy family functioning.

DISCUSSION: Grant monies will be used to fund the following:

1. Contract with Northern Virginia Family Services (NVFS) who will hire IPE Counselors (2.5 FTE) to work across the Northern Virginia region in the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Prince William, and Loudoun, and the cities of Alexandria and Falls Church.
2. Mentoring and counseling family members of Arlington youth involved in the IPE program. NVFS will be contracted to provide this service as well. This program will serve only Arlington juveniles and parents.
3. Gang awareness training for probation officers and the Gang Task Force Coordinator.
4. Two community meetings. The first will focus on teen violence and internet safety for parents and teenagers. The second event will be a community meeting in which participants will learn about gangs and provide their own concerns about gang intervention and prevention.
5. Joint police/probation activities in Arlington, in which probation officers and police conduct informal contacts with at-risk and gang-involved youth and their families in their homes and communities during evenings and weekends. Funds will be used to pay overtime for probation staff.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no financial impact to the County from accepting this grant. All expenses incurred by JDR for this program will be fully reimbursed under the grant. This is a one-time grant and the performance period is October 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010.