

City of Lawrence
Outside Agency
Bi-annual Report
2016

Reports on activity should be submitted electronically to Danielle Buschkoetter, at dbuschkoetter@lawrenceks.org. Reports on activities from January 2016 to June 2016 are due on July 15th 2016. Cumulative reports on activities from January 2016 through December 2016 are due on February 15th 2017.

Agency Name: Van Go, Inc.

Reporting Period (please check one): ☐ January - June (deadline July 15) ☒ January – December (deadline February 15)

1. Give a brief narrative of the activities that were funded with City funds over the reporting period checked above.

Van Go utilized City funds to improve the physical and mental health of at-risk teens and young adults in Lawrence. Activities during this funding period included all three sessions of our JAMS (Jobs in the Arts Make Sense) program and year-round programming for The Arts Train, including four weeks of offsite, supported internships. Van Go's services focused on the goals delineated in the Community Health Plan, providing teens with extensive employment training, social services, and tutoring to address the root causes of poverty, nutrition education and access to healthy foods, and onsite, comprehensive mental health services. Working in collaboration with our community partners, Van Go also provided health assessments, physical activity sessions, and met with school and mental health staff to ensure services are co-supported and not duplicated.

2. Provide specific detail (and supportive documents, if needed) to demonstrate progress made toward your goals/objectives.

Van Go committed to achieving the following objectives, all of which were met or exceeded during this grant period:

- Workforce training through the arts will be provided to 100 at-risk teens and young adults, ages 14-24 in 2016.
- In 2016, 92% of the participants will show an improvement in their pre/post Workplace Evaluation scores or Individual Life Plans.
- Youth will receive 60 life skills lessons in 2016.

3. How have you impacted the citizens of Lawrence?

Youth became employed, productive members of the community, rather than unemployed, high-risk teens and young adults "on the street." Through Van Go's innovative job training program, youth who have few opportunities for employment were hired to create artwork, and receive vital social services, and met the goals of the program, and this grant.

1. Youth experienced the therapeutic process of creating art.

Under the guidance of the art instructors and community volunteers, young people working at Van Go created art projects that benefitted our community, as well as themselves. Through permanent, public display of Van Go artwork, youth see their achievement celebrated throughout the community. For many, this is the first time they've received positive recognition. Public recognition is essential to Van Go's mission and is based on best practices articulated in the model of Risk and Protective factors identified by researchers Drs. Hawkins and Catalano in their Communities that Care model. Opportunities for prosocial

involvement in community and recognition for pro-social involvement connect at-risk teens to their community, and reduce the likelihood they will engage in risky behavior.

2. Lawrence youth received services designed to help them successfully transition into the next phase of their lives.

As the first employer for 80% of youth served, Van Go taught and evaluated vital 'soft skills' that employers value: promptness, task completion, working with others, taking direction, and being a 'self-starter.' Van Go's social workers also provided hours of valuable social services, along with our partners, to ensure the kids are on track to graduate from high school, are mentally and physically healthy, and are accessing community resources.

4. What barriers, if any, have you encountered?

There were no barriers in our ability to administer the funded programming

5. Review the line-item budget you provided in your application. How much of your allocation has been spent?

Van Go spent 100% of our allocation during this grant period.

City funding was leveraged as a match required for a substantial Department of Labor grant, along with additional outside foundation investments, that **brought \$341,500 to Lawrence for direct service to at-risk young people.**