

City of Lawrence  
Special Alcohol Tax  
Bi-annual Report  
2016

Reports on activity should be submitted electronically to Danielle Buschkoetter, at [dbuschkoetter@lawrenceks.org](mailto:dbuschkoetter@lawrenceks.org). Reports on activities from January 2016 to June 2016 are due on July 15<sup>th</sup> 2016. Cumulative reports on activities from January 2016 through December 2016 are due on February 15<sup>th</sup> 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.**

Drug and alcohol prevention work is woven into the daily programming of Van Go's job-training programming. Our Go Healthy component focuses on improving physical and mental health issues that make participants more conscious of maintaining their health, and more capable of making positive choices regarding drug and alcohol use.

During this grant period, Van Go's program staff provided referrals and assisted with the coordination of care of our participants with other Lawrence agencies that provide resources, prevention information, and treatment for drug and alcohol use. These referring and treatment partners included Douglas County Youth Services, The Shelter Inc., DCCCA, Bert Nash Community Mental Health Center, as well as a number of private therapists and drug and alcohol treatment agencies and facilities.

Van Go staff led discussions and collaborated with community agencies to provide activities that focused on prevention, including large-group sessions, as well as one-on-one meetings with participants to make an assessment of current use of drugs and alcohol or the potential for use. These one-on-one meetings also included support that is specific to the at-risk teen and young adult population we serve, such as: self-care, healthy and responsible decision-making, understanding and avoiding unhealthy choices made by family members/friends/peers, setting boundaries, resisting peer pressure, practicing saying no.

**Drug/Alcohol presentations included:**

- USD 497 Prevention Coordinator on services provided through the District for students
- Lawrence Memorial Hospital Community Educator: description of how to access community resources
- Physical Fitness volunteers: practicing self-care and healthy choices
- The Willow (domestic violence) and GaDuGi (sexual violence): information on how substance use and addiction can contribute to violence and how victim/survivors to make reports, seek resources, leave their abuser.
- Private therapist on healthy coping skills for anxiety and depression and assertive communication, both important prevention skills
- Willow Domestic Violence Center: *In Their Shoes* activity highlighting the role of substance abuse in cases of intimate partner violence
- peer research presentations on coping skills
- Dr. Dennis Daily, LCSW, sexuality and intimacy, including the impact of drug and alcohol use

- Self-care, including yoga, mindfulness, and journaling with Amy Bertrand, Van Go social worker and certified yoga instructor
- Michael Showalter, Douglas County Health Department
- Non-verbal communication, resisting peer pressure through body language

## **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 reporting 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.

Van Go utilized *Pathways to Self-Discovery and Change: Criminal Conduct and Substance Abuse Treatment for Adolescents* to address risk factors associated with substance abuse. This curriculum was specifically designed to have long-term effects on decisions about alcohol and drug use. *Pathways* is the evidence-based program used by the Kansas State Juvenile Justice Authority and is a cognitive-behavioral curriculum that includes illustrated, narrative stories of youth who struggle with multiple elements of risk (e.g., family, school, mental health, crime, substance abuse, negative peer associates). It uses modeling, role-play and practice of cognitive-behavioral skills to improve communication, deal with cravings and urges, and develop a sense of empathy. Additionally, personal responsibility to others, overcoming prejudice and negative thinking, managing feelings, and developing a sense of personal identity are covered.

## **3. How have you impacted the citizens of Lawrence?**

At-risk teens and young adults in Lawrence gained valuable strategies for the prevention of drug and alcohol use, which not only reduces reliance on city services, it also prepares them for a productive and healthy life as a citizen of our community.

Youth who are employed or involved in activities leading to employment are less likely than their unemployed peers to engage in negative behavior such as dropping out of school, becoming teen parents, or using illegal drugs. The services provided by Van Go produce significant returns to the youth and community. The Youth Development and Research Fund found that, **“every dollar invested in youth results in more than two dollars returned to the economy in the form of wages and reduced welfare benefits.”** (April Kaplan, *Youth at Risk of Welfare Dependency*, [financeproject.org](http://financeproject.org)).

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

Van Go did not encounter any barriers to fulfilling the requirements of this grant.

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

Van Go utilized 100% of the grant allocation.