

City of Lawrence Outside Agency Annual Report For Calendar Year 2017

Reports on activity should be submitted electronically to Danielle Buschkoetter, at dbuschkoetter@lawrenceks.org by Thursday, February 15th 2018 at 5:00pm. For the following questions please refer back to your [2017 application for funding](#).

Reporting Period: Calendar Year 2017

Agency Name: Van Go, Inc.

1. Refer to the program in which your agency received funding; provide a participant success story that helps demonstrate the accomplishments of the program.

Derek came to Van Go in 2016, having aged out of the foster care system. He was on his own, without a safety net, looking for direction. He heard about Van Go from a social worker who felt that he could benefit from the job training and life-skills the programs provide. Derek applied for The Arts Train and was hired in August 2016. He immediately worked with Van Go's staff social worker to set employment goals; he was especially interested in finding a craft that could sustain him and become a lifelong profession.

After successfully completing the fall session, Derek was given an additional work opportunity in the Van Go woodshop, where he worked closely with our wood shop instructor and mentor, Dr. Bill, to improve his growing skill set in woodworking. Through The Arts Train's summer internship program, Derek was placed at the Lawrence Arts Center as a stage crewmember and assisting in the wood shop building sets. Derek graduated from The Arts Train last August and moved to Pittsburgh, PA, where his girlfriend is attending graduate school. Within a few weeks of arrival, Derek got a job at Carnegie Mellon University in the wood shop and, six months later, he is still successfully employed. Derek is earning a living wage, engaged in a craft, and working his way into adulthood, despite a rocky start to his life. Van Go staff will stay in contact with Derek, a young man whose determination has made us very proud.

2. Refer to your 2017 application for funding; provide a brief narrative of the activities funded with City funds.

Thanks to funding generously provided by the City of Lawrence, Van Go delivered activities through our two program areas:

Van Go addressed the need for at-risk youth to have job training, employment, and mental and physical health services through **JAMS (Jobs in the Arts Make Sense)**. JAMS is Van Go's year-round, nationally award winning youth employment program for at-risk teens ages 14 – 18. During this grant period, JAMS taught job and life skills, and addressed the need for high-risk youth to have meaningful employment opportunities and access to physical and mental health activities. Van Go worked closely with our community partners, most of whom have been referring youth to Van Go for over a decade, to interview and hire teens based on at-risk status: poverty, court involvement, placement in foster care, or having an IEP at school. Teens were hired for 8-week work sessions and, working with professional teaching-artists, and were paid minimum wage to create art.

The Arts Train (TAT) is Van Go's program for older teens/young adults (ages 18-24) who are transitioning into adulthood, most with no safety net. Another successful earn-while-you-learn program, TAT uses the arts to help young adults get their diploma or GED and reach other academic goals, and create an Individual Life Plan (ILP) with Van Go social workers. ILP goals during this grant period included independent living, enrolling in training or certification programs, and consistent mental health treatment. The youth and social worker met regularly to review progress. TAT youth were hired to create works of art, including painting, woodworking

and metal work. During the summer, TAT youth were placed in supported work environments to better prepare them for future employment.

3. Refer to your 2017 application for funding; provide specific detail (use supportive documents, if needed) to demonstrate what progress was made toward your proposed outcomes.

Van Go committed to reach the following outcomes during this grant period:

1. Workforce training through the arts will be provided to 100 at-risk teens and young adults, ages 14-24 in 2017. (109 participated)
 2. In 2017, 92% of the participants will show an improvement in their pre/post Workplace Evaluation scores or Individual Life Plans. (95% in 2017)
 3. Youth will receive 60 life skills lessons in 2017. (56)
4. Refer to the line-item budget provided in your 2017 application for funding; is this accurate to how your allocation was actually spent? If no, what changed and why?

All funding provided by the City of Lawrence was spent as indicated and requested in our proposal.