

# Connecting Community Needs with Resources Grant

## Progress Report

Myers Neighborhood -January 2010

In June of 2010 Myers Neighborhood Association was awarded the Connecting Community Needs with Resources grant from Connecting Communities Foundation. The grant provides the neighborhood with funding to mobilize quality programs into the area to help decrease and prevent crime.

## Where have we been?

### *Single Parents Are Not Alone - Creative Expression*

The Creative Expression program started on September 28, 2010 and hosted 20 excited students from Myers-Ganoung Elementary. The program ran once a week on Tuesday evenings for two hours for ten weeks. During the ten weeks students gained knowledge and understanding of the arts, increased self-esteem, were provided the means to express themselves, and increased their confidence and communication skills. The program aimed to increase positive skills such as a stronger commitment to school and decrease negative skills leading to crimes such as juvenile drug offenses and graffiti.



The program ended with the students showcasing their skills by performing the Lion King in front of parents and peers. The performance was held on November 30, 2010 in front of a packed audience in the Myers-Ganoung Elementary school cafeteria. One teacher stated "the program **provided our students with an outlet for creativity**....this is an area we have had to forgo as we focus on academics." Parents were also very involved in the program by attending rehearsals and the play and helping their kids learn their lines. At the end of the program a survey found 9 out of 9

parents polled noticed a **positive change in their child's attitude and motivation toward school**. The program not only benefited the school but also fulfilled some of the neighborhoods goals as well, which were to increase student and parent involvement in the school.

*"I met a lot of new friends and I have a lot of fun at Creative Expression. This is my first play and the staff is really nice. I am not afraid on stage now, but at first I was shy. Now, I know I can do whatever I want to do. I like everything about Creative Expressions." – Vanessa Marin, 11*

## Where are we going?

### *Compass Behavioral Health Care- C.A.S.T. Encore!*

The C.A.S.T Encore! program will begin on January 12, 2010 at Myers-Ganoung Elementary. It will run once a week on Wednesday's from 2:00-4:00 for twelve weeks, ending in a final play on the 13th week. The program will host 20-25 kids and teach them trust, team building skills, stimulate interaction and sharing of personal stories , engage in discussions about risky behavior, and experiment with bringing their personal experiences to life.

The C.A.S.T Encore! Program aims to decrease juvenile drug offenses and juvenile violations by encouraging pro-social behaviors such as a higher commitment to school, positive social circles, and decreasing early initiations for drug use. The students in this program will write their own scripts to be performed in front of peers and parents.

## What we need to be successful?

### *Oversight Committee*

YES Network was contracted by Connecting Communities Foundations to coordinate, collaborate, and mobilize programs into Myers neighborhood. YES Network is also responsible for building capacity amongst neighborhood residents. One way to achieve all of these aspects is through an oversight committee.

The oversight committee brings the school, nonprofit agencies, and residents together to ensure the programs are effective, successful, and sustainable in the neighborhood. The committee is crucial to the grant but also beneficial for the neighborhood to recruit new members, address issues in the neighborhood, and to strengthen the relationships the neighborhood needs to be empowered.

### **Oversight Committee**

#### **Meeting Dates:**

February 28, 2010

May 30, 2011

June 30, 2011

### *Leadership Training Institute*



The Leadership Training institute is a program of YES Network that aims to give neighborhoods the skills needed to not only address issues in their area but to also foster community organizing and leadership to empower residents. The act of empowerment is the act of giving power or authority to someone or something . It is the means to equip or supply someone with the **ability** and **resources** to accomplish something. By attending the Leadership Training Institute, neighborhood associations will acquire the skills needed to equip their residents with resources. These skills fall into four categories: **1) Leadership Skills, 2) Technical Skills, 3) Community Skills, and 4) Community Engagement.** Classes are held once a month during weekday evenings.

For more information on how you can help or attend LTI Classes please contact:

Milini Simms

520-297-0702

Milini@yes-network.org