

RESOLUTION NO. 09-216

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF KEY WEST, FLORIDA, APPROVING A \$2500.00 GRANT FROM LAW ENFORCEMENT TRUST FUND TO THE MONROE COUNTY EDUCATION FOUNDATION FOR USE BY THE KEYS CENTER—A PLACE FOR GIRLS; PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF KEY WEST, FLORIDA, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1: That pursuant to Florida Statutes section 932.7055, a \$2,500.00 grant is hereby authorized by the City Commission from state forfeiture funds for use by The Monroe County Education Foundation for The Keys Center—A Place For Girls for the purposes expressly authorized by that statutory section.

Section 2: That this Resolution shall go into effect immediately upon its passage and adoption and authentication by the signature of the presiding officer and the Clerk of the Commission.

Passed and adopted by the City Commission at a meeting held this 1st day of September, 2009.

Authenticated by the presiding officer and Clerk of the Commission on September 2, 2009.

Filed with the Clerk September 2, 2009.


MORGAN MCPHERSON, MAYOR

ATTEST:


CHERYL SMITH, CITY CLERK

Donald J. Lee, Jr.
Chief of Police



Key West
POLICE DEPARTMENT

RECEIVED

JUL 31 2009

City Attorney's Office

TO: Mr. Jim Scholl, City Manager
FROM: Chief Donald J. Lee Jr.
DATE: 6-10-09
RE: Executive Summary- Monroe County Education Foundation

Action Statement

The Key West Police Department intends to donate **\$2,500.00** from State Forfeiture Funds to Monroe County Education Foundation, (doing business as The Keys Center- ~~a place for girls~~). This donation is specifically to assist this organization in their efforts to help support the counseling component of the Keys Center program.

Background

The Keys Center (formerly known as PACE) is a voluntary alternative education and counseling program intended to meet the individual needs of some of Key West's most challenged students. It is designed to actively and positively intervene with students who contend with multiple school and life issues that are in jeopardy of failing to cope with those issues.

Advantages and Disadvantages

The Key West Police Department works diligently to positively impact our youth. This program focuses on reducing juvenile delinquency and crime through early intervention for students who have been identified as at-risk of becoming involved in the Juvenile Justice System. The program targets middle and high school students, which makes the program's mission and the mission of the Key West Police Department very similar.

Financial Impact

The funds used for this pledge will be taken out of the Law Enforcement Officers Trust Fund, specifically State Forfeitures. There will be no impact on the City Budget, thus no impact on taxpayers.



RESPECT - INTEGRITY - FAIRNESS

Key West Police Department 1604 N. Roosevelt Blvd. Key West, FL 33040 (305) 809-1111
www.keywestcity.com



Donald J. Lee, Jr.

Chief of Police



Key West

POLICE DEPARTMENT

Recommendation

Donate \$2,500.00 to Monroe County Education Foundation, The Keys Center- *a place for girls.*

This request complies with the requirements of Florida Statute section 932.7055.

City Manager: _____

City Attorney: _____

Finance: _____



RESPECT - INTEGRITY - FAIRNESS

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www.keywestcity.com





RANDY ACEVEDO
Superintendent of Schools

***“Student Success...
Whatever it takes”***

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STEVEN PRIBRAMSKY
Chair

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ANDY GRIFFITHS

District # 3
DR. R. DUNCAN MATHEWSON, III
Vice Chair

District # 4
JOHN R. DICK

District # 5
DR. DEBRA WALKER

Chief of Police
City of Key West
Donald J. Lee, Jr.
1604 N. Roosevelt
Key West, FL 33040

May 6, 2009

Dear Chief Lee:

On behalf of the Keys Center and the girls that we serve, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for the opportunity to submit a request for funding through the City of Key West Shared Forfeiture Funding that we recently discussed with Mayor McPherson. (via e-mail) Our request is in the amount of \$10,000 to support the counseling component of the Keys Center program.

As you may recall, the Keys Center (formerly known as PACE) is a voluntary alternative education and counseling program intended to meet the individual needs of some of Key West's most challenged students. It is designed to actively and positively intervene with students who contend with multiple school and life issues that are in jeopardy of failing to cope with those issues.

This program focuses on reducing juvenile delinquency and crime through early intervention for students who have been identified as at-risk of becoming involved in the Juvenile Justice System. Our target population includes middle and high school students who have critical risk factors and related issues including: academic underachievement, victims of neglect and abuse, a family history of incarceration, parents or girls themselves with a mental illness, death of a parent, disrupted home life, health problems, substance abuse, and poverty.

Our goal is to stop the cycle of illiteracy, teen pregnancy, substance abuse and unskilled workers



The Keys Center-A place for girls
5901 College Road, Suite #202A
FKCC-Public Safety Building
Key West, FL 33040
305-293-1400 ext. 51355, Fax 305-292-5156
<http://www.monroe.k12.fl.us/KeysCenter/default.asp>

through the reduction of these high risk factors in the lives of our students utilizing a positive alternative education and counseling approach that focuses on improving protective factors which allows students to get back on track, graduate high school and become productive members of the community.

Our request to the City of Key West in the amount of \$10,000 in its entirety will be used to fund counselors' salaries in the Key West Center. The counseling component of our program is what differentiates us from other "alternative" programs and what has ensured our success for over 10 years in the Key West area. Our plans for the 2009/2010 school year are to continue services to at-risk girls and add a boys' component to the program.

The counseling component is vitally important to the success of every student (girls and boys) who attend the program. The counselors work with the students in all aspects of the program from the time of the initial interview to determine the student's eligibility to participate in the program, until the time the student completes the program and transitions on to college or the world of work. The level of support the counselors provide for the students is unparalleled in traditional school settings.

The scope and duties of the counselor necessitates that the ratio of counselor to students be maintained at 1:15 and that the counselors hired are Master's level and experienced in working with at-risk teenagers. The counselors are responsible for partnering with community agencies to identify students who are at-risk of dropping out, spearheading the referral and in-take process, ensuring a smooth transition into the program for new students, providing individualized, family and crisis counseling, including the monitoring of a 24 hour crisis hotline. The counselors conduct in home visits and parent conferences. They develop curriculum for psycho-educational groups based on the needs of the students, train students in peer mediation, and meet with students to set goals to help them reduce the risk factors that first brought them to the program. The counselors work with all students on improving their self-esteem through community service activities and empower students through the development of positive problem solving skills.

The counselors work in tandem with the academic staff to ensure that students are successful academically as well as socially. They make referrals for students to partner agencies to meet the needs of the students that include well woman visits, dental care, basic medical services, prescription drugs, mental health care, food and clothing. The counselors provide follow up for students not attending school and at times go to their homes to pick them for school. The counselors advocate for the students when family conflicts arise, teaching families how to work together to resolve issues. The counselors are an integral part of the Keys Center team providing staff with insight into the "hows" and "whys" of student behaviors.

The Keys Center is the only dropout prevention program of its kind in Key West. We decrease dropout rates by offering students an alternative to traditional high school placement through the Keys Center. The program allows students to voluntarily "choose" to attend school in a safe and positive environment where their academic and social service needs are individualized. It is a setting where staff works together as a team to help the students succeed academically and socially.

For many of the at-risk students served by the Keys Center program this is their "last chance." In their own words had the program not continued they would "have dropped out and probably been on drugs by now." The Keys Center provides a safe, supportive environment for some of

Key West's most challenged students, offering students hope for the future, the opportunity to get back on track and graduate high school, and teaches them to believe in themselves and accomplish their dreams.

As we continue the Keys Center program next year and add the boys' component, the greatest challenge we face is funding for our counseling program, as the counseling program is funded in its entirety through grants, fund raising and community support. Partnerships are crucial in maintaining the counseling component and hope that the City of Key West will join us in making a difference in the lives of these students.

Thank you again for the opportunity to request funding through the City of Key West and should you have additional questions you may contact me personally.

Warmest regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Diana C. Reagan". The signature is written in black ink and includes a long, horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Diana C. Reagan
Director
enclosures

The Keys Center-*A place for girls*

A positive alternative education and counseling program

In an unprecedented move, The PACE Center for Girls, Inc. announced the closing of the 3 centers (schools) serving at-risk girls in Monroe County, Florida in March 2008, due to state level budget cuts.

The local school district, community college, and local business and community leaders together established a stop gap program for the girls to complete the school year. Monroe County School District made the commitment to provide educational and counseling services for the girls through the end of the 2008 school year, the community college donated facility space, and local business and community leaders brought financial backing. The new Keys Center program was opened 2 weeks later allowing all 60 girls to complete the school year and the 12 seniors to graduate.



The program for at-risk girls slated as “The Keys Center” (serving the Florida Keys) opened for school year 2008/2009 through a joint initiative between the Florida Keys Community College and the Monroe County School District. The Florida Keys Community College committed to provide facility space for the Lower Keys program as an in-kind donation of 3 classrooms and 2 offices and the school district matched this donation with facility space for the Middle and Upper Keys Outreach programs for the 2008-2009 school year. The local school district funded the salaries for the teaching staff, an office manager and the director, while the counselors’ salaries and the counseling support services are provided through private grants, local fundraising efforts, and county government initiatives.

The Keys Center operates 3 centers for at-risk girls in the Florida Keys, spanning 120 miles, to provide equity of service for all areas of the county. The main center is located on the campus of the Florida Keys Community College in Key West, and the Middle and Uppers Keys are served by outreach centers located on the area high school campuses.



The Keys Center initiative has been established as a positive alternative education and counseling model intended to meet the individual needs of some of our most challenged students. It is designed to actively and positively intervene with students who contend with multiple school and life issues that are in jeopardy of failing to cope with those issues.

One of the secrets to our success is truly understanding the relationship between victimization and juvenile crime, and then creating a safe environment where the students share their experiences and begin the healing process. To accomplish this we value all students and teach them to believe in themselves. We help students gain an understanding of their true potential and that they deserve a life that focuses on their successes not the poor choices they made in the past. We look for opportunities to recognize their success, help them build self-confidence, and understand the importance of a positive perspective. Our goal is for each student to become a productive citizen, who will take responsibility for themselves. We help them get back on track academically, graduate high school, and begin careers and/or go on college.



The essential components of the Keys Center program focus on best practices in the areas of education and counseling delivered by highly qualified staff:

- The Keys Center is a voluntary prevention program, where every student who attends makes an informed decision to participate in the program, students cannot be mandated to attend our program by school personnel, judges or their parents
- Applicants are prioritized based on risk factors that include academic underachievement, substance abuse, truancy, and abuse
- Parents and students sign enrollment contracts to ensure a complete understanding of the expectations of the program and that the parents fully participate in the educational process
- Individualized educational plans are developed for each student encompassing high school academics through credit recovery, computer based classes, college level dual enrollment classes, and vocational educational options
- Students and family members receive counseling services that focus on reducing and eliminating the risk factors that first brought them to the program including crisis intervention, development of individualized treatment plans, family counseling, and weekly psycho-education groups

- Weekly case management meetings are conducted by staff to ensure coordination of services, among the academic and counseling staff working in partnership to meet the individual needs of the students
- Every student is involved in community service projects as part of their treatment program, as giving back to the community is an essential component of their learning process
- Students and staff members participate in a wellness programs which focus on physical fitness, healthy eating, and making healthy lifestyle choices.

The best evidence of the success of the program comes from the students who have completed the program. Myrna, a 2008 graduate, whose home life was filled with violence and drug use during her time in the program, had this to say about PACE/The Keys Center and it's affect on her life:

“Things are going very well for me up here i like it alot.(job corp) I am class president of my class, I am room captain of my dorm, I am a tutor because my T.A.B.E test scores were so high and I am also running for secretary of the Student Government Association (S.G.A). The culinary Arts class is full until January. So im thinking about doing computer tech. but I'm not quite sure yet. I was just writing to tell you how much i appreciate everything that not only you have done but what the entire pace staff has done for me. You all have helped me so much words cant explain. You have taught me positive things that I use everyday in my daily routine. When I was ever having trouble or the slightest doubt about any kind of situation you were always there to lend a helping hand because of your kind and helping heart and positive feedback im staying out of trouble and doing something with my life. Thank you so much for everything its highly appreciated and because of it i feel that i am highly favored and blessed. Once again thank you so much!!! “

To continue to meet the needs of at-risk girls like Myrna, we rely on community supporters to provide support for our girls through the counseling component of our program and invite you to join as we continue to make a difference in the lives of these girls now and in the future.