

TO: Juvenile Welfare Board Members

FROM: James E. Mills, Executive Director *JEM*  
Browning Spence, Director, Strategic & Community Planning *BS*

### Requested Action

The Board is requested to allocate up to \$50,000 for match purposes to Eckerd College for the start up year of the AmeriCorps, Athletes in Service to America grant.

### Options

1. Approve the request.
2. Deny the request.
3. Any other action directed by the Board.

### Recommended Action

1. Allocate up to \$50,000 to Eckerd College for the start up year of the AmeriCorps, Athletes in Service to America grant.
2. Budget for a second year of Athletes in Service to America in the amount of \$50,000 subject to the TRIM process.
3. Require the following special conditions:
  - a. Funding is subject to the development of an acceptable plan and budget.
  - b. Program must be developed in a manner sensitive to gender equity.

### Source of JWB Funds

FY 99-00 Transitional Unallocated Funds

FY 00-01 Transitional Allocated

### Fiscal Impact

FY 99-00 Transitional Unallocated Funds will be reduced from \$270,058 to \$220,058  
\$50,000 will be budgeted for FY 00-01

### Narrative

The AmeriCorps, **Athletes in Service to America** program is a multi-site National Direct Service Program funded through the Corporation for National Service since 1995. The Northeastern University's Center for the Study of Sports in Society has coordinated the national implementation of the program. Currently, the program is being implemented at four sites including Northeastern University, Canisius College, University of Kentucky, and ACES in Chicago. Former Dean of Students at Canisius, Tom Miller, who is currently Dean of Students and Vice President of Student Affairs at Eckerd College, is seeking to implement the fifth operating site in Pinellas County.

Eckerd College has contacted the City of St. Petersburg and has received the support of the City to implement the program in the Challenge 2001 area plus the Childs Park area. The Student Services Department of the Pinellas School District is willing to work with Eckerd in developing the program.

Eckerd College recently became aware of this grant opportunity and is required to respond quickly to receive funds. The timing has not yet allowed for a detailed action plan. Eckerd is proposing to convene a planning committee with the City of St. Petersburg, JWB, and School District staff to develop the implementation details. Based on the progress of other sites, this initiative has the potential to provide training, tutoring, and mentoring to approximately 2000 youth.

The program's mission is to reduce youth violence and promote academic success. This is accomplished by utilizing the skills and status of student-athletes, along with the power of sport to help bring about social change. The success of this program is based on the training of all corps members with Project Teamwork, a diversity, sensitivity and awareness, and conflict resolution program, and the Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) program, an intense gender violence prevention program. Once trained, these corps members utilize the Project Teamwork and MVP curriculum to conduct workshops in conflict resolution, cultural diversity, and gender violence prevention for youth within schools and community-based organizations. Members will also provide academic tutoring and establish quality mentoring relationships with area youth.

The two training programs, Project Teamwork and MVP, are recognized as quality programs. President Clinton and the Lou Harris Poll have recognized Project Teamwork as a model violence prevention program. Project Teamwork has also received the Peter Drucker Award for the most innovative non-profit program in the social sector. An evaluation of the program reports the following results:

- lower levels of violence in schools and communities
- improved academic performance
- a greater appreciation by students of cultural differences

Highlights of the program include:

- enrolling up to 18 corps members who will be enrolled college students or hold undergraduate degrees, and all members will be former or current intercollegiate varsity athletes.
- facilitating the opportunity for corps members to complete their service year and earn education awards.
- providing 30,600 hours of service to the middle school youth of southern Pinellas County.

The estimated Federal share for this grant is \$280,000 per year. The required match is \$140,000 in cash and in-kind donations. These funds provide stipends for the AmeriCorps members, administration, training and education, curriculum, operating costs, and travel. At this time, Federal Funding is available for two (2) years.

Using the **Athletes in Service to America** model, Eckerd College will provide an in-kind donation by monitoring the program, managing finances, and providing principle staff. The City of St. Petersburg has committed to aiding in recruitment of former athletes as AmeriCorps members and assisting this endeavor with access to the resources available through their existing Recreation Department.

The Athletes in Service to America AmeriCorps program is consistent with the JWB Strategic Plan. It offers an opportunity for JWB, Eckerd College, the City of St. Petersburg, and Pinellas County Schools to join in a partnership to support the implementation of a positive youth development program.

Staff Resource Person: Kathleen Peters