

VDF-RFGP SMALL GRANT PROPOSAL – ATTACHMENT THREE – SOS

1. Veteran Service Event/Program/Project Proposed

- a. Total VDF Grant amount proposed by Grantee: \$ 4,500.00
- b. Total Budget for the Event/Program/Project: \$ 4,500.00
- c. Event/Program/Project Title: Pinal County Veterans Treatment Court Continuing Education, Graduation, Incentives, Transportation, Emergency Lodging, and Peer Mentor Support.
- d. Description: Pinal County Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) is operated and funded largely by the Adult Probation Department (e.g., Probation Supervisor, Officer, and Research Analyst – functioning as the Court Coordinator). The Superior Court funds the Presiding Judge for the program and the County Attorney and Public Defender offices' assume their costs respectively.

Graduation and incentive expenses, before the first VDF grant award of \$2,500.00 (2018), were covered by donations from local Vet Centers and individual Team members (i.e. VTC Coordinator, Presiding Judge, and various Pinal County Veteran Assistance providers).

As a result of VDF grant awards, Pinal County VTC has been able to send mentors to Combat Training provided by NADCP-Justice for Vets, which included lodging costs. The VTC Coordinator was able to participate in a national VTC workgroup that convened at the American Probation and Parole Association conference in New Orleans (included registration, travel and lodging costs). The VTC probation officer was able to attend and participate in the National Association of Drug Court Professionals Conference where she received this year's Justice for Vets Hank Pirowski Award (included registration, travel, and lodging costs). The VDF grant covers the incentives for participants demonstrating a commitment to the program and their rehabilitation. We recognize that incentives don't need to be monetary to be effective; however, we know from other specialty court programs (run by Pinal County Superior Court and other Courts) that monetary incentives (direct or indirect¹) are associated with program retention and overall morale. Each month a VTC participant is selected as the Star Performer and they are awarded a certificate and a \$20.00 grocery store gift card to be used towards gasoline or food. Participants that graduate from the program are awarded a

¹ Indirect incentives are items of value but that do not result in 'cash in hand' for the participant - i.e. our VTC Coordinator puts together candy bags with motivational and/or encouraging tags for VTC participants that are complying with VTC directives or are making good progress in the program. Acknowledgement and praise from the VTC Team including the Judge are also indirect incentives that are more meaningful to the participants than direct incentives.

certificate and two grocery store gift cards (\$40.00). Graduation ceremonies, pre-COVID, provided all VTC participants an opportunity to share a celebratory meal at no cost. Post-COVID, we hold smaller ceremonies and offer cupcakes.

Having funds available to assist with transportation costs is of great benefit to our participants that do not have access to a vehicle or have a vehicle but no valid license or ability to outfit vehicle with required Motor Vehicle Department mandates (i.e., ignition interlock). These participants are dependent on transportation to get them to and from VTC hearings – 30+ miles from where most of them reside (1-2 times per month depending on VTC phase), Veteran Centers, Community Based Outpatient Clinic, the VA Hospital in either Tucson or Phoenix, Mentor Support Groups, and other VTC directives (i.e., substance abuse or mental health counseling). The size of Pinal County creates quite an issue when public transportation is nonexistent. For our VTC participants that do not have transportation, we now have the ability to schedule a Lyft and that cost has been covered by previous VDF awards.

Up until late 2020, there was no emergency shelter for homeless VTC participants who were either waiting on a bed at a residential facility or during transition from one residential facility to another. Participants now have two options – a local run veteran’s assistance center that has built an emergency shelter or a night stay at a local motel, which we were able to afford through VDF awards.

- e. Location: Pinal County, AZ
- f. Event/Program/Project Dates: Continuous
- g. Date(s) Funds are Required: October 1, 2022

2. Target Arizona Veteran Population

- a. Target Arizona Veteran Population: To be eligible for the VTC, participants must be at least eighteen (18) years of age, a resident of Pinal County, have a veteran status confirmed by the Department of Veterans Affairs, have moderate to severe criminogenic risk/needs (as determined through use of a validated risk and need assessment tool), and the capacity and willingness to participate in the court as evidenced by a voluntary entrance of a guilty plea prior to entrance or a voluntary acceptance of the modification into the VTC post plea.
- b. Benefits to target veteran population from Event/Program/Project: Response to behavior can effect participant motivation and willingness to change. We know that people tend to respond more favorably to positive than negative reinforcement and research supports that a tangible

reinforcement system is an effective intervention to promote drug abstinence and treatment retention. Having a small budget for monetary incentives or rewards upon completion of the VTC (including food and cake during a celebratory lunch) positively benefits the VTC participants by acknowledging the hard-work and dedication they make towards changing their lives for the better.

3. Grantee's Plan for Event/Program/Project

- a. Date Grantee began or will begin preparation for event/program/project: Continuous. The Pinal County Veterans Treatment Court has received three VDF grants totaling \$11,900.00 to date. The current balance in the account is \$.00. The Pinal County VTC program is dependent on grant awards to sustain current operating practices.
- b. How Grantee will involve target veteran population in planning of event/program/project: Past and current/actively participating VTC participants will be asked to respond to a survey indicating which incentives are of value to them and what rewards (including food) they would like to see at recognition/graduation ceremonies. All services afforded to VTC participants (incentives, transportation, emergency shelter) are benefits of the program that are dependent on donations/grant awards.
- c. How Grantee will involve target veteran population in event/program/project: VTC participants receive the incentives during the course of their VTC involvement and if successful, are the recipients of the graduation/recognition ceremonies. VTC participants demonstrating need for transportation or emergency housing assistance will receive it.
- d. What Grantee will do at and during event/program/project: Grantee (Pinal County VTC), as the oversight for the Veterans Treatment Court program, will manage the budget for and document all spending for incentives, transportation reimbursements and recognition/graduation ceremony costs.
- e. Who else will perform and complete event/program/project: n/a
- f. How Grantee will advertise event/program/project to target veteran population: Advertisement is only available to the population that is involved in the criminal justice system and eligible for the Veterans Treatment Court. The Adult Probation Department covered the costs to publish a VTC brochure, which is presented to eligible probationers as advertisement of the VTC program prior to their commitment to participate. A second publication of the brochure was paid for with VDF grant money during FY 2018. A third publication was printed

in May 2021 and was paid for by the current VDF grant award. A fourth version will be necessary as the presiding judge will change this year.

- g. Date(s) when Grantee will advertise event/program/project: ongoing/continuous

4. Results

- a. Describe how Grantee will show how the veteran population benefited from event/program/project proposed: Grantee will show benefits via VTC performance measures, which track incentives and sanctions applied, program outcomes, and treatment related activities. A fact sheet (see attached) is provided to the County Board of Supervisors and the Superior Court Administration to demonstrate program performance.
- b. How Grantee will compare and show actual expenditure to proposed budget: Grantee will keep accurate financial records and track all VDF grant expenditures.

5. Mission and Qualification

- a. Briefly describe Grantee's service and support mission to veterans: Pinal County Veterans Treatment Court (VTC) was developed in early 2016 and held its first hearing in June of 2016. The Mission of the VTC is to successfully return veterans as active, contributing members of their community through a collaboration of the Criminal Justice System and Administration of Veterans Affairs. Goals of the Pinal County VTC include affording veterans the opportunities to regain stability in their lives, find housing or employment if needed, and acquire services for physical and psychological healthcare as well as substance use issues.
- b. Briefly explain how grantee is qualified to perform and complete proposed event/program/project: In the summer of 2017, the Pinal County VTC team was awarded an opportunity to participate in the collaborative Veterans Treatment Court Planning Initiative Training Program provided by the Bureau of Justice Assistance and Justice for Vets. A component of that training allowed us to observe a model VTC program in Colorado Springs, CO. As a result of that training we collaborated with Arizona Complete Health to establish a Peer Mentor program. As a result of VDF grant money we are able to provide food at the bi-weekly peer mentor/mentee support groups and were able to cover the lodging expenses to send three of our four peer mentors to a nationally recognized Boot Camp for peer mentors in a Veterans Treatment Program. In FY 20, we were able to send the Coordinator to a national conference (American Probation and Parole Association) for participation in a Veterans Treatment Court workgroup. In FY22, we were able to send the Probation Officer to a national conference (National Association of Drug Court Professionals (NADCP) to receive the Hank

Pirowski Award). We continue to need funding for implementation of evidence-based aligned components to enhance our VTC program (i.e., incentives/graduation and transportation budget, and a Peer Mentor program through a collaboration with Arizona Complete Health).

6. Event/Program/Project Funding Considerations

- a. Total dollar amount Grantee needs for performance and completion of event/
program/project \$ 4,999.99
- b. Total dollar amount Grantee will request from other funders for event/program/project:

\$ 0.00

- c. Please list other event/program/project funding sources here and dollar amount:

| NAME | AMOUNT REQUESTED |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| <u>Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame Society (AVHOFs) or</u> | <u>Challenge Coins for Graduates</u> |