



District Attorney's Expose Excellence Youth Program

June 2, 2021

Fort Bend County launched a new youth outreach program called the “Expose Excellence Youth Program.” The program is a collaboration between the Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office, the Fort Bend County Juvenile Probation Department, the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office, and the Fort Bend County Community Supervision & Corrections Department.

The concept for the youth outreach program was originally conceived by District Attorney Brian M. Middleton. District Attorney Middleton was troubled by the repetitious presence of kind-hearted, non-violent juvenile offenders within the justice system and observed that many of the offenders ended up in the system due to a lack of proper guidance. Although beginning steps were taken as early as 2019, recent social justice events and the pandemic's impact in the community hastened the creation of the youth program.

COVID-19 diminished many of the protective factors that existed prior to the pandemic. As a result, there are more children in our community who are considered at-risk and in need of some level of intervention. The Expose Excellence Youth Program will help youth acquire positive self-awareness, cultural competency, aspiration, and self-expression. The program will help youth to do well academically and to be well emotionally. It is designed to expose youth to themselves and to the world. Teaching youth how to take personal responsibility, and opening doors to opportunity, will assist them to become successful citizens in society.

The youth program will offer:

- Job Skills and Career Training
- Business and Entrepreneur Workshops
- Recreational Activities
- Life Skills Training
- Field Trips
- Self-Expression Activities (Spoken Word, Poetry, and Visual Arts)
- Tutoring Services
- Driver's Education
- Financial Aid Advocacy and Support
- Academic Support and Advocacy
- Exposure to Fine Arts
- Mental Health and Substance Abuse Support

Outreach programs have a proven track record of success and represent a smart on crime, best practices approach to crime prevention. Moreover, our children are our future. We must invest in our children to ensure our future success. And with the drastic change to educational delivery and social behaviors due to the pandemic, this program addressed a need just in time.

The Expose Excellence Youth Program has produced two public events as part of a countywide tour to publicize the program, recruit community partners, recruit participants, and begin to provide a positive impact in our communities depressed by the pandemic's restrictive mandates.

The Fort Bend County Commissioner's Court has earmarked two million dollars of ARPA funds to support this program over the next four years. Part of that expense is community events, the next of which is scheduled for June 18, 2021, from 6-9 p.m. To produce that event, the District Attorney's Office needs to expend those funds immediately. The items requested include:

1. Advertising literature and supplies (swag): push cards, t-shirts, pens, stress balls and related giveaways.
2. Event tents: Renting tents for the event, which is outdoors at Hunter's Glen Park in Missouri City.
3. Entertainment: Renting a DJ to provide a sound system and entertainment throughout the 3-hour event. A nationally-renowned artist will also present, and has cut his fee by almost 90%! The product of his live artistry will be donated to support the program and revitalize the fine arts in our youth.

These events include representatives from local school districts, higher education, military recruiters, social services, and non-profits serving our youth. The goal is to expose youth to the many and varied services they may not otherwise have easy access to. This includes job skills, educational opportunities, and fine arts. Local elected officials attend to support the youth and to build a positive relationship with them and their neighborhoods.

Additionally, the District Attorney's Office seeks to employ a community outreach coordinator for this program. Currently, there is no dedicated staff in the office to run this program. This cost is included in the youth program budget approved by commissioner's court.

At a time when many are just now emerging from government-sanctioned pandemic lockdowns, our local government seeks to reestablish a beneficial relationship supportive of a transparent and accountable leadership, while developing our youth into the leaders of tomorrow.