



Allegheny County Department of Human Services

RFP Response Form

RFP for Teen Programming

PROPOSER INFORMATION

Proposer Name: Operation Better Block, Inc.

Authorized Representative Name & Title: [REDACTED]

Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Website: obbinc.org

Legal Status: For-Profit Corp. Nonprofit Corp. Sole Proprietor Partnership

Date Incorporated: 1971

Partners included in this Proposal:

Organizational partners with whom OBB has active Memorandums of Understanding related to JGC programming:

1. Tree Pittsburgh
2. Upstream
3. Phipps Conservatory
4. Oasis Farm and Fishery
5. Feed the Hood
6. Aspire to Inspire
7. Farm to Table Western PA

How did you hear about this RFP? *Please be specific:* Taili Thompson, Director of Crime Prevention at Operation Better Block, Inc.

Does your organization have a telecommunications device to accommodate individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing? Yes No

REQUIRED CONTACTS

	Name	Phone	Email
Chief Executive Officer	Jerome Jackson	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

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Contract Processing Contact	Hayly Hoch	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Chief Information Officer	Click here to enter text.	Enter number.	Click here to enter text.
Chief Financial Officer	Gina McMillan	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
MPER Contact*	Hayly Hoch	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

* *MPER is DHS's provider and contract management system. Please list an administrative contact to update and manage this system for your agency.*

BOARD INFORMATION

Provide a list of your board members as an attachment or in the space below.

See attached Board of Directors document.

REFERENCES

Provide the name, affiliation and contact information [include email address and telephone number] for three references who are able to address relevant experience with your organization. *Please do not use employees of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services as references.*

1. Denele Hughson, Executive Director of Grow Pittsburgh [REDACTED]
2. Carlos Thomas, Executive Director of Feed the Hood [REDACTED]
3. Mike Hiller, Executive Director of Upstream [REDACTED]

PROPOSAL INFORMATION

Date Submitted: 3/2/22

Amount Requested: \$300,000

CERTIFICATION

Please check the following before submitting your Proposal, as applicable:

X I have read the standard County terms and conditions for County contracts and the requirements for DHS Cyber Security, EEOC/Non-Discrimination, HIPAA and Pennsylvania's Right-to-Know Law.

X By submitting this Proposal, I certify and represent to the County that all submitted materials are true and accurate, and that I have not offered, conferred or agreed to confer any pecuniary benefit or

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other thing of value for the receipt of special treatment, advantaged information, recipient's decision, opinion, recommendation, vote or any other exercise of discretion concerning this RFP.

Choose one:

My Proposal contains information that is either a trade secret or confidential proprietary information and I have included a written statement signed by an authorized representative identifying those portions or parts of my Proposal and providing contact information.

OR

My Proposal does not contain information that is either a trade secret or confidential proprietary information.

ATTACHMENTS

Please submit the following attachments with your Response Form. These can be found at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations>.

- Partner commitment letters, if applicable
- **MWDBE and VOSB documents (attach searches)**
- **Allegheny County Vendor Creation Form**
- Audited financial reports or other financial documentation for the last three years
 - a. **Most recent audit (2019)**
 - b. **21- 22 operating budget**
 - c. **20-21 operating budget**
- **W-9**

REQUIREMENTS

Please respond to the following. The maximum score a Proposal can receive is 100 points. Your response to this section should not exceed 12 pages. (Pages 1-3 are not included in the page count).

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Organizational Experience (20 points possible)

1. Describe your organizational experience serving the target population, specifically teens from diverse communities and populations. Please including examples of ways in which your organization connects with teens.

Established in 2010, Operation Better Block, Inc.'s (OBB) Junior Green Corps (JGC) program has successfully engaged more than 150 youth over the past twelve years. The JGC is a year-round, stipend based job-readiness program for Pittsburgh youth ages 13 to 19. JGC engages up to 20 youth in OBB's mission to strategize, organize and mobilize, block by block, to benefit the Homewood Community through the implementation and maintenance of green infrastructure projects.

In 2021, the JGC successfully engaged 21 youth over the course of the year. Of these 21 youth, 48% are Homewood residents with the remaining youth joining from Wilksburg, East Liberty, East Hills, and more. Our JGC members attend a variety of schools throughout the Pittsburgh area including Westinghouse Academy, Allderdice High School, Pittsburgh Student Achievement Center, and more. 100% of 2021 JGC participants identified as African American, closely reflecting the racial demographics of Homewood, a majority Black community with 98% of residents identifying as African American. Our program balances gender identity with 11 youth identifying as young women and 10 identifying as young men. In 2021, 6 of the youth were newly hired, while the remaining 15 had been involved for a year or more. Among those involved for numerous years were five graduating seniors. All five seniors had been involved in the JGC program for at least four years, and each senior successfully transitioned into post high school positions or educational programs with OBB's support. After a difficult start to the year as a result of COVID19 restrictions and temporary closures, JGC's average attendance rate more than doubled from 29.82% in May of 2021, the month in which we returned to in-person programming, to 60.77% in our final quarter of 2021, boasting a high of 74.85% average rate of attendance in November. Moving into 2022, we have retained 81% of youth, not including those who successfully graduated.

2. Describe your organizational experience working in high-need communities.

Operation Better Block, inc. was established in 1970 to promote the revitalization of the Homewood community in wake of the social disturbances that impacted urban neighborhoods throughout the 1960's. To achieve this mission, Operation Better Block focused on utilizing a strategy of community organization predicated on the belief that the problems of physical development, economic development, and cultural development could be best enhanced by working with the individual residential blocks which comprised the neighborhood. Implicit in this approach was the recognition that community development must be a bottom-up process in which neighborhood residents assume the primary role in formulating community development goals and objectives consistent with their perception of community needs, and where they take the major responsibility for community problem-solving. For more than 50 years, Operation Better Block has prioritized grassroots engagement and knowing the people we serve in Homewood.

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Operation Better Block supports Homewood residents through our various programs. Our Community Development department engages residents in grassroots development through our Cluster Meetings and Cluster Planning. Through our Violence Prevention programming, Operation Better Block works to implement community-based solutions to reduce crime and violence. Our Residential Services department hosts our Bridge to Benefits program, providing emergency assistance to Homewood residents. Additionally, residents can begin building long term financial stability through our Job Placement and Homeownership programs. Operation Better Block leads Green Initiatives such as community clean up events, tree plantings events, vacant lot beautification, soil lead testing, air quality monitoring, local produce deliveries and more as a part of our vision to implement sustainable solutions to challenges unique to Homewood.

3. Describe your organization's commitment to serving all individuals regardless of their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE), intellectual or physical ability, English language proficiency or life experiences. Provide specific approaches used and examples of how they are reflected in your work.

OBB is fully committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion in our employment, as well as access and participation in our community programming. OBB does not discriminate against individuals based on race, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, ability or genetic information.

As a Homewood based organization, OBB strives to reflect demographics of Homewood in both our employment and community programming recruitment. OBB has a vibrant network of community stakeholders established through our Cluster Plan efforts. This network of residents, which divides Homewood into nine smaller Cluster areas plus the Business and Institutional Core, is the backbone of OBB's community development and outreach efforts. Engaging with Homewood residents through the Cluster model ensures that OBB's project priorities align with the challenge's identified and experienced first hand by our community members. In 2020, we launched a revisioning of our original Cluster Plan; through this Cluster Plan 2.0 process, we have invigorated our grassroots network with renewed energy and momentum that we hope to channel in moving our 2022 projects forward.

Program Design (55 points possible)

4. Provide an overall description of your proposed Programming and how it will provide teens with the opportunity to engage in enriching and interesting activities. If applicable, include how input from teens and/or best practice research was/will be taken into consideration in the design of the Programming.

In 2022, we aim to expand the impact and reach of Operation Better Block's Junior Green Corps program. As a year-round program that engages youth ages 13 to 19, the Junior Green Corps (JGC) is a keystone in Operation Better Block's work to organize, strategize, and mobilize for the benefit of the Homewood community. As a hands-on, job readiness program, the JGC furthers this mission by working directly with youth to develop essential career and independent living skills, ensuring their long term financial stability and self sufficiency. By engaging the JGC in the effort to prevent blight

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and address the disproportionate environmental hazards present in Homewood as a community of color, JGC members cultivate a sense of responsibility and civic pride in Homewood ensuring that our youth grow into future community leaders who are invested in our community's health and prosperity. As the powerhouse behind implementing and maintaining green solutions to community identified problems, our youth are fully immersed in experiential sustainability projects which equip them with the tools and experience needed to become the next generation of green industry experts. Examples of green infrastructure projects implemented and continuously maintained by JGC include our urban farm garden and market, vacant lot reclamation and greenspace transformation, street tree plantings and care, community litter clean-up events, rain garden and barrel installation, air quality monitoring, soil lead testing and remediation, and more. JGC members have the opportunity to take ownership of green infrastructure projects by partaking in design decisions and assuming leadership roles during large community volunteer events. These hand-on projects, in combination with evidenced based curriculum and connection to industry professionals from OBB's organizational partners, provide a unique opportunity for vocational skill building. Finally, in this unprecedented moment of isolation, our JGC program presents an opportunity to strengthen community relationships by creating a safe and supportive network for current and former JGC youth during the difficult transition into young adulthood.

5. Describe how your Programming will provide a physically and emotionally safe space for teens.

JGC has proven to be a refuge for our youth. Many of our youth experience instability in their home environment, and report feeling frustrated with current school conditions. JGC is unique in that it is one of few year-round programs for Pittsburgh teens. During the school year (September to June), JGC meet daily, Monday through Thursday, from 3:30- 5:00 PM. Come June, JGC members will transition to our full time summer schedule, working 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, Monday through Friday. This structure provides a stable and reliable network for youth, many of whom are fatigued by volatility in other aspects of life.

Youth safety, both emotionally and physically, is always OBB's top priority. We aim to proactively create a safe space for youth by engaging youth in drafting and regularly revising shared expectations of the team. As part of our independent living skills curriculum, we are committed to facilitating brave conversations around mental health, diversity and inclusion, healthy relationships, conflict resolution, and more with the help of field experts. We recognize that social emotional learning is just as essential to youths' self sufficiency and resiliency as vocational skills. Our staff have invested time and energy into building trust with each team member, and have built in a variety of opportunities to check-in and regularly document youths' physical and emotional health. On a weekly basis, staff record informal case notes on youths' attendance and behavioral patterns, as well as changes in living, learning, and relationship statuses. On a quarterly basis, staff meet one on one with youth to complete self and supervisor evaluations. These evaluations provide the opportunity to reflect on strengths and needs, identify gaps in support, and develop individualized action plans to access resources.

6. Describe how your Programming will provide teens with opportunities to make positive connections to peers, adults and their community.

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Forging strong relationships with peers, adults, and the Homewood community is a core value driving our JGC programming. To encourage peer to peer connections, we prioritize flexible socialization time and team building experiences for our JGC team. Beyond active JGC peers, we are expanding opportunities for youth to connect with former JGC alumni. In 2021, OBB hired JGC alum, Keshawn Brooks, as Program and Projects coordinator to assist with co-managing the JGC program. We have also engaged JGC alum, Shequea Brewer, as a guest speaker through her Aspire to Inspire workshop series. Youth are connected with green industry professionals through our weekly partner workdays. We are intentional to connect youth with BIPOC professionals to increase visibility and mentorship avenues for youth of color in new career fields. For example, Chef Carlos Thomas of Feed the Hood, meets with our youth weekly during the winter season to explore Black foodways and food service industry careers. Throughout the course of our 2021 summer season, JGC members participated in 45 partner organization workdays, 3 urban farm tours, and an annual trip to Cincinnati to learn about sustainable urban planning, during which youth connected with and learned from 17 different green industry professionals. Beyond JGC alumni, OBB staff, and organizational partners, JGC youth are connected to Homewood community members during community volunteer events such as our bi-annual Redd Up, Annual Tree Planting event, Seedling Sale, and more. During these events, JGC youth assume leadership roles in coordinating community volunteers, providing the opportunity for intergenerational learning and relationship building. In these ways, JGC youth are weaving a tight knit and diverse network of support within the Homewood and Pittsburgh community at large.

7. Why do you think teens will want to participate in your Programming?

OBB's JGC is unique in the benefits that it offers Pittsburgh youth. First and foremost, we believe that youths' time is valuable, and they should be compensated appropriately. As a stipend based program, youth are paid for their daily attendance at JGC. In 2021, youth received \$5 per day for their 3:30- 5:00 PM attendance during the fall, winter, and spring seasons totaling 36 weeks; this daily rate increases to \$25 per day for their 10:00 AM- 4:00 PM attendance during the summer season totaling 10 weeks. In 2021, youth provided feedback that while this stipend rate is acceptable when they join JGC between the ages of 13 and 15, it is no longer competitive when they achieve the working age of 16. We are extremely supportive of our Jr. Green Corps moving on to consistent employment opportunities while continuing to engage in programming. However, many of our youth opted to work more hours at their second jobs, primarily in the service industry, where employers were offering increased pay and bonuses. Moving forward, we hope to increase the stipend for our Jr. Green Corps, as it has not changed in twelve years of programming. With support from the Department of Human Services, we aim to increase the fall, winter, spring stipend rate to \$10 per day while increasing the summer stipend rate to \$35 per day in order to reflect the true value of our JGC members' time.

Beyond the daily stipend, there are numerous bonus opportunities to incentivize JGC youth engagement. For example, if youth have perfect attendance for a week of programming, they receive an additional bonus between \$15 and \$25. Youth also receive bonus pay for workdays that take place on the weekend, at the end of each marking period if they maintain a 2.5+ grade point average, and if they successfully recruit another JGC member who stays with the program beyond the one month probationary period.

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Youth also have the opportunity to pursue leadership promotion positions. Each fall season, youth can anonymously nominate a JGC peer they feel displays outstanding leadership and work ethic to become Team Leaders. Utilizing these nominations, staff conduct interviews and offer Team Leader promotions. Team Leaders engage in specialized leadership trainings, and assist staff with team management. Beyond the learning opportunity and resume builder that this leadership opportunity provides, Team Leaders receive a stipend raise of an additional \$15 throughout the summer season. In 2021, we are proud to have promoted two JGC members to become Team Leaders.

Our team building experiences are consistently one of the highlights that JGC members cite for staying engaged and connected to our program. Every week we carve out time for ice-breaker activities that build trust and strengthen team unity. Throughout the fall, winter, and spring quarters, we look forward to seasonal celebrations such as autumn hayrides and winter holiday parties. During the summer, we look forward to “Fun Fridays,” weekly field trips from 1:00- 4:00 PM every Friday afternoon that alternate between educational, such as visits to the Heinz History Center, urban farms, Phipps Conservatory, and team building experiences chosen by youth, such as high ropes courses, lasertag, and movie nights. These experiences are a weekly reminder that JGC is more than a job-readiness program; it is an opportunity to plug into a strong and supportive community.

Another experience that JGC members look forward to each year is our annual trip. Many of our youth have never left Pittsburgh, and do not have the opportunity to travel with family because of financial constraints. OBB recognizes that travel experiences are essential for youth to develop as global citizens. With this in mind, we plan an overnight trip to a new city every year for our active JGC youth, all expenses paid. Our 2021 annual to Cincinnati is a great example of a meaningful experience that melded teambuilding and immersive learning. During this trip, our JGC connected with the Groundwork Green Team, a Cincinnati based youth program that mirrors our own in almost every respect. By connecting with youth who shared similar work experiences and values, our program participants were able to compare solutions and setbacks in our parallel urban agriculture and green infrastructure work. When meeting with Green Umbrella’s Executive Director to learn why Cincinnati has been voted one of the “most sustainable cities,” Jr. Green Corps members explored different definitions of sustainability and the unique social, fiscal, and environmental considerations that influence a community’s resiliency. Finally, Jr. Green Corps participated in a Q&A with Black entrepreneurs who are leading Cincinnati’s green industry. Our trip to Cincinnati opened the door for Jr. Green Corps to see the global implications of their important local work.

Finally, youth are motivated to continue engagement with JGC throughout their teenage years because OBB is fully committed to supporting youth in the transition to young adulthood. We approach this in a variety of ways. First, for every year that youth are active in our program, they earn \$500 towards a graduation award. As long as a youth remains engaged in our program through their high school graduation, they can receive up to \$2000 upon graduating from our program. This award is essential in supporting youth during this transition to independent living whether it funds secondary education, a bus pass to reach their first post high school job, or towards a vehicle of their own. Next, OBB can provide one on one support for youth following graduation. For example, in 2021, one of our JGC graduates, Bree, moved on to Indiana University of PA (IUP). As a first

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generation college student in her family, she had difficulty applying for and accessing student aid. Bree and her family were shocked when a tuition bill with an outstanding balance arrived at the end of her first fall semester, threatening to keep her from registering for the spring semester and returning to campus. OBB was able to coordinate with IUP's office of student aid and Pittsburgh Promise, assist with digesting the FAFSA application, provide scholarship resources, and coordinate local fundraising to ensure Bree's tuition bill was paid, and that she had a solid payment plan moving forward. Another JGC alumni, Maleeke, approached OBB approximately 6 months after graduating the program in 2021. Maleeke had difficulty applying for local jobs as a result of missing personal identification documents. OBB supported Maleeke in securing new identification, updating his resume, scheduling interviews, securing appropriate interview attire, and transport to interviews. With this support, Maleeke is working full time in a local deli market, gaining valuable skills and experience to pursue his dream of becoming a farm-to-table chef. We are thrilled that JGC members remain connected to OBB after graduating so that we may continue to be a pillar in their network of support during the transition to young adulthood, and connect them with the various community programs OBB has to offer as adults.

8. Describe how you will market your Programming and open referral pathways.

Recruitment is a year-round responsibility for our staff in order to ensure we continuously engage 20 youth in the JGC program. We employ a number of strategies to market our program to Pittsburgh youth. Our recruitment flier is shared with youth and adults through consistent social media posts, email newsletters, seasonal mailers, and sharing with organizational partners. We also distribute recruitment materials while tabling at community outreach events and resource fairs. Next, we have begun integrating school visits into our recruitment process, and aim to visit two schools per month. We are lucky to have strong connections to local Pittsburgh schools such as Westinghouse Academy, Allderdice High School, Faison Middle School, Obama Academy, Student Achievement Center, Neighborhood Academy, Imani Christina Academy, and more. During school visits, we conduct classroom presentations and tabling during lunch periods. We have had particular success targeting 8th and 9th grade classes to enroll youth as early as possible in our JGC program. It is our hope to engage active JGC youth in these recruitment strategies by inviting Team Leaders to accompany and participate in presentations, or develop video testimony. Because peer to peer outreach and recruitment has served as the primary source of referrals to JGC in the past, we incentive active members to recruit youth already in their network, such as siblings, cousins, or friends, with a recruitment bonus that they receive once new members have engaged beyond the one month probationary period. We are always working to make our application and interview process more accessible. In 2021, we converted our application to an online format that is easily accessible via smartphone, and are able to conduct interviews via zoom to expedite the process. Active JGC youth feedback is a driving force in continuously adapting our recruitment, application, interview, and enrollment process.

9. Describe how you will staff your Programming and the strategies you will use to recruit, hire and retain racially diverse staff, staff with relevant lived experience and staff that reflect the population served.

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Reginald Good, Director of Residential Services: Mr. Good has served as OBB's Director of Residential Services for 2 years. In this role, he supervises the Bridge to Benefits program, Homeownership Stabilization program, Job Placement programming, Green Initiatives programming. Mr. Good is committed to cultivating financial literacy and resilience, building generational wealth, bringing quality work opportunities to Homewood, and supporting youth in preparing for their post high school careers. Mr. Good has been essential in expanding our Jr. Green Corps job readiness programming by working with youth to create individual career plans, and assisting with recruitment for our new Cluster Steward program for Homewood residents in transition between employment opportunities.

Hayly Hoch, Green Initiatives Coordinator: Hayly jumped head first into her role as Green Initiatives Coordinator at OBB at the beginning of 2021. In her first year of work, Hayly successfully relaunched the JGC program after a temporary pause in programming, has brought balance and an organized strategy to executing ongoing green initiatives projects, led the expansion of the JGC garden and market effort, and successfully implemented the new Cluster Steward program. Hayly's background in youth education, psychiatric rehabilitation through vocational skills development, and Agricultural Ecology provide her with a unique skillset tailored to manage the multifaceted aspects of OBB's Green Initiatives. Hayly prioritized building relationships with JGC youth, Homewood community leaders, and organizational partners during this first year, and is committed to working collaboratively through the Cluster model to ensure green initiatives in Homewood center residents' priorities and are designed to sustain long term.

Keshawn Brooks, Programs & Projects Coordinator: A Homewood native, Keshawn Brooks joined the OBB team in 2021 as the Programs & Projects Coordinator. As a former JGC graduate, Keshawn is intimately familiar with OBB's mission and valuable work. He is a first hand example of the immense impact that our JGC youth programming can have, demonstrating that investing in our youth now has a spectacular return for the long term impact. Keshawn is a central thread in the network of Homewood community partnerships and relationships. With a background in criminal justice and sociology, Keshawn divides his time between OBB's Violence Prevention initiatives and co-managing the JGC program. He is an invaluable asset to our team, and is fully invested in Homewood's future.

10. Describe how your Programming set teens on a positive trajectory toward adulthood and any skills you expect teens to gain (e.g., socioemotional, leadership, workforce-related, conflict resolution skills).

There is no greater testament to JGC's impact to set youth on a positive trajectory into adulthood than the journey of Keshawn Brooks, OBB's Program and Projects Coordinator. As mentioned previously, Keshawn is a JGC program alumni himself, having enrolled in the program in 2012 and graduated in 2016. Upon reflection, Keshawn notes that "OBB not only changed my life, it saved my life." Over the course of his participation in JGC, Keshawn watched his close friends choose very different paths. He often references a photo of his friend group taken at the start of his high school career stating "Six other guys [in this photo]. You know what? Three are in jail and three have been shot. Without OBB I'd be in one category or the other." With OBB's support as a JGC member, Keshawn developed vocational and independent living skills through leadership opportunities, and

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successfully transitioned into post-secondary school education. After completing his degrees in criminal justice and social work, Keshawn returned to Homewood to pursue a career in youth development so that he can provide the same support to today's youth that was essential in his our story.

At the center of our work with Jr. green Corps is the development of vocational and independent living skills to equip youth to become Homewood's future leaders in a green economy while cultivating financial independence. The hands-on projects and experiential learning described above provide the opportunity to hone a multitude of skills. Through quarterly self evaluations and skills surveys, we are able to document JGC skill development. In 2021, an overwhelming majority of Jr. Green Corps members demonstrated confidence in the vocational skills and industry knowledge that is core to our program. When surveyed throughout the past several months, 92% of JGC members rated themselves as good or advanced in their ability to listen, 82% of JGC members rated themselves as good or advanced in working as a team, and 77% of JGC members rated themselves as good or advanced in task completion and dependability, ability to stay focused, problem solving, engineering and equipment safety, job knowledge, work quality, communication and listening skills. Additionally, the Jr. Green Corps showed overall growth in confidence in the following skill and knowledge areas: preparedness, attitude, engagement, willingness to take initiative, work quality, communication and listening skills, community and civic engagement, air pollution, career planning and readiness. Beyond these vocational skills, youth are developing and practicing independent living skills throughout their tenure as JGC members. Examples of these skills include financial literacy, mental health advocacy and resources, and utilization of fresh, healthy food through cooking workshops.

Finally, as demonstrated with our 2021 JGC alumni, OBB provides the opportunity to stay connected to our community programming. These supportive services and resources, like Job Placement and Emergency Assistance, as well as sustained relationships with staff, can be a lifeline for youth transitioning into young adulthood.

Implementation Challenges (15 points possible)

11. If your Program experiences low attendance, how will you engage more teens?

We are thrilled to report that attendance rates steadily improved throughout the 2021 year, and hope to keep this momentum moving forward by aiming to exceed a 60% average attendance rate every month in 2022. Our rolling recruitment model described above will provide an avenue for engaging new youth, but we aim to address barriers to participation with current youth as well. Feedback for active JGC members indicate that the greatest barriers to youth participation are transportation, instability at home, and lack of competitive pay compared to part-time work opportunities.

In 2021, we discovered that transportation is a huge barrier to participation for our youth. More than 40% of Homewood households do not own a vehicle and presumably walk or utilize public transportation. Our youth, some of whom live more than two miles away from the Operation Better Block office or who split time between different households, primarily walk to our program. Inclement weather, changes to a guardian's schedule, or missing the school bus severely reduced attendance,

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and many youth would consistently skip Jr. Green Corps if they did not have cash for a bus ride or jitney. Moving forward, we hope to secure annual bus passes from Port Authority for youth so that they may independently travel not only to our program, but to additional work opportunities, school, and more.

Next, we learned that JGC members skip programming if there are changing conditions at home. For example, youth's residence may change frequently between parents, grandparents, or siblings. This creates difficulties for OBB staff to coordinate with guardians, and can prevent JGC youth from regularly attending programming. It may also impact youths' access to smartphones and devices essential for maintaining communication. Additionally, youth may have child care responsibilities within family structure. We have seen this situation much more frequently in the past year with child care and school facilities frequently closing as a result of COVID19 infection rate breakouts. For home related absences, we work one on one with you to understand the individual situation, coordinate with guardians if appropriate, and provide virtual engagement opportunities.

Finally, as mentioned previously, youth express that the current stipend rate is not competitive. We hear that youth want to engage and remain active in JGC, but cannot pass up the opportunity to build financial independence at other work opportunities. It is with this in mind that we aim to increase the daily stipend rate with the support of The Department of Human Services. By providing an increased, competitive stipend rate, JGC youth will have increased freedom in choosing how they spend their valuable time without sacrificing financial independence.

12. If one of the teens in your Program experiences behavioral or mental health issues, what will you do?

Our JGC program has a four phase process for addressing behavioral issues that we review individually with new JGC members, and annually with active JGC members. This process outlines program rules and violations, as well as creative conflict resolution strategies that directly engage the youth in problem solving by creating individualized action plans and agreed upon follow up timelines. We recognize that conflict is inevitable, and choose to view this inevitability as a natural opportunity for youth to build skills and resiliency instead of viewing conflict as a barrier to programming.

As mentioned previously OBB staff attempt to proactively address behavioral and mental health issues by regularly checking in with youth via weekly informal case notes on living, learning, work, and relationships changes in order to document patterns and identify gaps in support. In addition to these weekly check-ins, youth track their progress on a quarterly basis via self evaluations. These evaluations provide youth with a structure to lead a conversation with staff on strengths and needs. These evaluations also provide the opportunity to set goals that ensure youth are engaging in projects that align with their interests and aspirations. Throughout the year, we sustain an open dialogue around mental health as a part of our independent living skills curriculum to reduce stigma around mental health and disrupt the cycle of isolation that accompanies mental health issues.

As a long running youth program, OBB already has experience with aiding and supporting youth experiencing mental health crisis. Unfortunately, the burden of the COVID19 pandemic resulted in a

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JGC youth experiencing a mental health crisis this past year. The JGC member approached a trusted staff member and disclosed self harm and suicidal ideation. OBB staff, having participated in Mental Health First Aid training, prompted youth with questions to assess risk level and provided active listening support. Staff, having made clear that they cannot keep information secret if there is a threat to individual's life or others, initiated a individualized action plan that immediately connected youth to crisis professionals at RESOLVE, provided additional crisis resources such as national hotlines and text lines, assisted with scheduling more frequent appointments with youth's therapist, encouraged youth (aged 18) to disclose information to guardians in order to include them in supportive decision making, ensured youth would not be left alone or isolated for the next 24 hours, and developed an agreed upon timeline for regular weekly check-ins to follow up on action plan items. Once crisis intervention had been implemented, staff worked with youth to identify sustainable strategies, such as therapy text services, that could prevent crisis in the future. Youth safety will always remain OBB's top priority.

13. If a parent of a teen in your Program expressed the family's need for support outside of what your Program can provide, what will you do?

Ensuring youths' families are stable and secure is a sustainable strategy for ensuring long term stability and security of youth. OBB can provide support to youth families in a variety of ways. If youth families are experiencing food insecurity, our Green Initiatives Coordinator is able to assist with enrolling in community food assistance, and can provide access to free or reduced fresh produce deliveries. If families are in need of emergency assistance, OBB's Bridge to Benefits program, designed to link financially struggling families to public benefits and services, can provide rent or utility payment relief to avert financial crises. Finally, we are committed to supporting families in building long term financial security and generational wealth through our Job Placement and Homeownership programs. If youth families reside outside of Homewood, we can make referrals to partners within our network of social advocacy organizations.

Budget (10 points possible)

14. In the space below, provide a detailed one-year, line-item budget that reflects a realistic estimate of the costs associated with implementing and sustaining the Programming.

Project	PURPOSE	ANNUAL EXPENSES
TOTAL REQUESTED		300,000
Operating	Payroll Expenses	100,000
	stipend	8100
	professional dev	300
	supplies	6200
	food	1500
	social/ community activities	2250

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		61075
	stipend	6000
	educational training activities	1000
		10000
		500
		40,000
		35,000
	travel	21450
Green Project: Air Monitoring	supplies	350
Green Project: Garden/ Market	supplies	1000
Green Project: soil testing	supplies	2000
Green Project: tree planting	supplies	2000
Green Project: vacant lot/ beautification	supplies	1275

15. In the space below, provide a budget narrative that clearly explains and justifies all line items in your proposed line-item budget.

I. Operating

- A. Payroll Expenses: includes salary and wages, payroll taxes, and benefits for 2 full time staff.
- B. Stipend: stipend for Green Initiatives Intern at \$15/ hr x 15 hrs/ week x 20 weeks to assist with JGC full summer schedule; stipend for academic support tutor at \$15/hr x 10 hrs/ week x 36 weeks
- C. Professional Development: conference, webinar, etc. for 2 OBB staff

II. Jr. Green Corps

- A. supplies: includes \$5,600 for purchase of 20 laptops to be kept on site for academic support and project research (quote via Sierra Experts); \$600 towards youth uniform (gloves, boots, t-shirts)
- B. food: snacks during fall, winter, spring seasons; food for youth celebrations such as JGC graduation or holiday parties; food for cooking lessons
- C. social/ community activities: funds team building activities such as field trips and summer 'fun Friday' activities
- D. Stipend: \$6000 for graduating senior awards; \$61075 assumes 70% attendance rate for 20 youth
 - 1. SCHOOL YEAR: \$36000= \$10/day x 4 days/week x 36 weeks + \$10 attendance bonus
 - 2. SUMMER: \$40000= \$35/day x 5 days/week x 10 weeks + \$25 attendance bonus
 - 3. WEEKEND WORKDAYS: \$9000= \$25/day x 18 days
 - 4. 2 TEAM LEADER RAISES: \$1500= \$15/day x 5 days/ week x 10 weeks

RFP for Teen Programming

- E. Educational training activities: funds to cover youth conference attendance, speaker fees, etc.
 - F. Travel: includes \$10,000 for annual trip; \$500 for van gas and annual maintenance; \$40,000 for purchase of 15 passenger van; \$35,000 for purchase of pick-up truck; \$21,450 for 20 annual bus passes via Port Authority
- III. Green Project: Air Monitoring
 - A. Supplies: include purchase of 2 new PurpleAir monitors
- IV. Green Project: Garden/ Market
 - A. Supplies: includes purchase of irrigation materials, seeds, compost, seedling start pots, potting soil, hand tools, produce packaging materials
- V. Green Project: soil testing
 - A. Supplies: purchase of 100 prepaid soil test kits from UMass plus cost of shipping
- VI. Green Project: Tree Planting
 - A. Supplies: Purchase of 50 trees annually (2 planting events per year) plus deer protection, watering bags, stakes, etc.
- VII. Green Project: Vacant lot/ beautification:
 - A. Supplies: cost of landscape supplies/ equipment, mulch, litter pick up supplies

<i>Financial</i>				
<i>Notes</i>	Operation Better Block 2020/21 Operating Budget			
		Operating Budget	Committed Funds	Pending Funds
	REVENUE			
	Grants/Contracts/Contributions	\$ 73,000	\$ 73,000	\$ -
	Local Government	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
1	State Government (PA Dept of Urban Ag)	\$ 2,500	\$ -	\$ -
	Foundations (itemize on separate lines)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
2	Richard King Mellon Foundation	\$ 300,000	\$ 300,000	
3	Heinz Endowment Green Initiative	\$ 70,000	\$ 70,000	
4	Poise Foundation	\$ 5,000		\$ 5,000
	Corporations/Small Business			\$ -
5	Highmark NPP	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	
5	UPMC NPP	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	
5	Dollar Bank NPP	\$ 150,000	\$ 150,000	
6	Bank of America Neighborhood Builders Award	\$ 25,000	\$ 25,000	
7	Other Corporate and Small Business	\$ 20,000		\$ 20,000
8	Individuals	\$ 250		\$ 250
	Other: COVID-19 Emergency Relief Funds (Grounded)	\$ 29,000	\$ 29,000	\$ -
9	Earned Income	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	Rent: 801 N Homewood	\$ 13,200	\$ 13,200	
	Rent: Bennett Street - 3 units	\$ 19,500	\$ 19,500	
	Rent: Homewood Senior Station	\$ 28,500	\$ 28,500	
10	Supportive Services	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	
11	Fiscal Agent and Shared Services	\$ 25,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 10,000
12	Gala Event (Net - Minus Expenses)	\$ 6,500		\$ 6,500
	Publications and Products			\$ -
	Membership Income	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
	In-Kind Support	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
13	Other - interest	\$ 350	\$ 350	\$ -
	TOTAL REVENUE <i>calculated field</i>	\$ 1,082,800	\$ 1,038,550	\$ 41,750
		Total		Amount

EXPENSE		Operating Expenses	Requested in Proposal
	Personnel	\$ -	\$ -
14	Salaries and Wages	\$ -	\$ -
	Executive Director	\$ 90,000	\$ 45,000
	Direct Resident Services	\$ 61,250	\$ 31,100
	Office and Property Manager	\$ 57,292	\$ 57,292
	Green Innovation	\$ 34,000	
	Resident Services	\$ 35,417	
	Director of Comm & Econ Development	\$ 65,000	
	Building Maintenance	\$ 12,000	\$ 12,000
	Development Coordinator	\$ 36,500	\$ 25,000
	Accountant (Part-Time)	\$ 27,000	\$ 25,000
	Project Coordinator	\$ 31,500	
	Receptionist	\$ 23,500	\$ 23,500
15	Payroll Taxes	\$ 59,000	\$ 20,000
16	Benefits	\$ 90,374	\$ 33,000
	Consultants and Professional Fees	\$ -	\$ -
17	Legal	\$ 3,000	
18	NPP Contracted Services	\$ 120,000	
19	Special Projects	\$ 9,500	
20	Cluster Plan maps & visuals, strategic plan development	\$ 20,000	
21	Homeowner Stabilization	\$ 20,000	
22	Junior Green Corps Stipends	\$ 24,000	
23	Travel/Professional Development	\$ -	\$ -
	Local Mileage/Parking	\$ 1,880	\$ -
	Long Distance Travel	\$ 15,000	\$ -
	Vehicle Expense	\$ 1,300	\$ -
	Staff Development & Training	\$ 8,000	\$ -
	Meetings	\$ 7,500	\$ -
24	Operations	\$ -	\$ -
	Rent/Mortgage	\$ -	\$ -
	Utilities	\$ 11,600	\$ 11,600
	Trash Removal	\$ 6,800	\$ 6,800

	Real Estate Taxes	\$ 4,300	\$ 4,300
	Repairs & Maintenance	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
	Advertising	\$ 5,800	\$ 5,800
	Telecommunications	\$ 11,500	\$ 11,500
	Postage/Messenger	\$ 700	\$ 700
	Printing and Copying		
	Equipment Lease	\$ 9,400	\$ 9,400
	Supplies	\$ 12,000	\$ 7,700
	Website	\$ 1,900	\$ 1,900
25	Programming Expenses		
	Marathon, Redd-Up, Beautification	\$ 11,500	
	Façade Improvement/Residents	\$ 75,000	
	Junior Green Corps	\$ 35,800	
	Emergency Assistance	\$ 15,000	
26	Other		
	Payroll Processing	\$ 3,500	\$ 3,500
	D& O Insurance	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
	Dues, Subscriptions & Publications	\$ 3,100	\$ 3,100
	Bank Charges & Interest	\$ 2,000	\$ 2,000
	Pension Admin	\$ 1,400	\$ 1,400
	BCO Registration	\$ 300	\$ 300
	Flowers/Bereavement	\$ 200	\$ 200
	Donations - Other Organizations	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000
	TOTAL EXPENSE <i>calculated field</i>	\$ 1,072,813	\$ 350,092
	SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) <i>calculated field</i>	\$ 9,987	

Financial Note: All calculations are actual per an agreement or estimated based on prior years and rounded, (with some exceptions such as staff salaries) most often to the nearest \$100.

- 1 For Junior Green Corps supplies
- 2 Richard King Mellon Foundation Request
- 3 For Junior Green Corps soil testing, gardening, tree planting and parklet maintenance
- 4 Funding match for Institute for Sustainable Communities
- 5 Six years of funding (\$450,000/year) is committed per NPP agreement through 2021

- 6 25% of \$100,000 Bank of America is permitted for staff costs
- 7 Based on average of funds received each year for special projects. Each year OBB applies for and receives special project funds. Examples include First Commonwealth Bank, Rand Corp, AA Enterprises, Nine Mile Run Watershed, Bridgway Capital, Neighborhood Allies.
- 8 At 25% of prior annual giving.
- 9 Based on actual rental income.
- 10 Resident services for Homewood Senior Station (\$5,000) and Susquehanna Homes (\$10,000) per signed agreement
- 11 Assumes approximately \$10,000 from Homewood Children's Village for shared Accountant and net of \$15,000 for Re-Imagine. Note: Hillman \$440,000 Re-Imagine award is allocated over two years to University of Pittsburgh, program staff and rental. OBB receives \$25,000/year as fiscal agent. Due to potential delay, only \$15,000 of the \$25,000 is anticipated for 2020/21.
- 12 Event was on track to net \$14,000 in 2020. Assumes 50% decline in April 2021 due to COVID 19.
- 13 Savings Account
- 14 Includes no cost of living increase for current staff and one additional staff (Accountant - who will save \$15,000 annual in CPA fees and provide shared service revenue estimated at \$10,000 in year 1 from Homewood Children's Village.)
- 15 FICA @7.5%, PA UC @ 2.1%
- 16 Health Insurance, Pension, Life & Disability, Workmen's Comp
- 17 Based on prior year.
- 18 Community Empowerment Association, Homewood Children's Village, Rosedale Block Cluster, Nine Mile Run Watershed Association
- 19 Based on prior year and includes PA Dept of Ag Junior Green Corps
- 20 If funding is available, this item includes professionals services in updating the Cluster Plan maps and visuals and strategic plan facilitation.
- 21 Tangle Title and Wills legal support
- 22 18 Youth
- 23 Based on prior year.
- 24 Increased from priot year due to anticipated increase cost of COVID-19 Safety Plan requirements.
- 25 Junior Green Corp based on prior year.
- 26 Based on prior year.