

**The Shining Light Foundation  
Gannett Foundation Grant Application**

**Project Proposal**

Needs Statement

*Objectives of the project to be funded –*

The program objective is to make it possible for Lafayette Parish school students, pre-kindergarten through eighth grade, to participate in cultural enrichment programs through education-based field trips, obtain musical instruments, participate in musical appreciation programs, attend summer programs that inspire and motivate children, secure supplies and equipment, and make it possible for children to access tutoring services. Assistance is provided to families who cannot financially support these extra-curricular activities. We are an organization of last resort to help the individual child in financial need. The expected outcome for the students is to help them be successful in school, which sets the foundation for them to be successful in life.

*Whether the project is new or ongoing –*

This is an ongoing project that was established by the Shining Light Foundation in 1997. Community leaders recognized a need for school children that was not being met by any other agency in Acadiana. Many schools do not have enough instruments for the students who need them to participate in bands and orchestras. Also, many students are left behind while their classmates go on field trips. By providing this financial assistance, more elementary and middle school children, that participate in extra-curricular activities, are exposed to new ideas and are encouraged by exploring different avenues of learning. This ultimately leads to improved learning and skills that build and instill confidence. Band participation fosters a lifelong appreciation and engagement in music where students are challenged to explore their potential through creativity, communication, collaboration, and critical thinking.

*Constituency to be served –*

Lafayette Parish School System students, pre-kindergarten through eighth grade, will participate in the Cultural Enrichment Program. We anticipate that there will be approximately one hundred eighty (180) applications for assistance through this program and the number is increasing, particularly with the current employment downturn in the Lafayette area. The August 12-14, 2016 flood in Acadiana will also drive the need for assistance since families are financially burdened recovering from this disaster event. Program participants will range from four (4) years of age to fourteen (14) years of age. Based on demographic data analysis, the anticipated ethnicity breakdown is African-American at 57% or one hundred three (103) students; White/Caucasian at 38% or sixty-seven (67) students; Hispanic at 3% or five (5) students; Asian American at 2% or four (4) students; and, American Indian at 0.4% or one (1) student. Parents and guardians of these students come from low socioeconomic,

underserved areas of Lafayette Parish but understand and appreciate the importance of education and exposing their children to the arts (music) and experience cultural enrichment opportunities.

*Community and volunteer involvement –*

Shining Light Foundation volunteers attend Lafayette Parish School System principal, guidance counselor and teacher orientations and inform them of our programs and services. Volunteer facilitators advise school administrators how to access our website, application forms, and how to submit these to our organization. A volunteer “school liaison” works closely with principals, guidance counselors and teachers to ensure the application process is effective for the parent/guardian, their child and the school system. Applicants’ parents are encouraged to contribute toward the school activity (if possible). The Shining Light Foundation program committee conducts a monthly review of applicants for consideration. Once approved, the Executive Director sends out an award letter with scholarship funding enclosed to the school.

Sustainability Statement

*Your organization’s qualifications to carry out the project –*

The Shining Light Foundation has eighteen (18) Board of Directors that come from a variety of backgrounds who bring together a wealth of experience and professions including teachers (former and current) and principals. Additionally, there are others who have non-profit managerial experience, financial management, education (University of Louisiana-Lafayette), community leadership and volunteerism, etc.

Our website, [www.shininglightfoundation.org](http://www.shininglightfoundation.org), provides information for principals, guidance counselors and teachers on how to access funding through an application process. Additionally, our organization will send letters to all principals and counselors at the beginning of the school year to advise them of our program for children in need.

*How the project will be evaluated –*

Student and teacher’s experiences are measured by providing the teacher with an evaluation form to assess how the student mastered skills, competencies and knowledge gained by their program participation. We also seek input from school principals, guidance counselors, as well as the school board superintendent on how we can improve our programs and services. The Board of Directors, President and Executive Director meet monthly to review results and make any necessary adjustments to improve the quality of the program for the student and their learning experience.

*Plans for continued funding of the project, if applicable –*

The program will be sustained by enhancing our financial development plan to include, but not limited to, seeking additional grant funding via a contracted consultant/grant writer, cultivating current donors, implementing a planned giving program, growing our

membership base, growing our signature special event Zydeco BASH, seeking additional corporate sponsorships, and possibly becoming a United Way agency (next funding cycle is February 2017). The Shining Light Foundation Board of Directors is entirely volunteer based and has been since its inception in 1997. Thus, our administrative expenditures are nominal.

*List of other funding sources, committed and applied for pertinent recent publications may also be included –*

The Shining Light Foundation has written a grant proposal with the \*Junior League of Lafayette in the amount of \$3,500.00 which is still pending. Another grant proposal that has been written but yet to be awarded is through \*Cox Charities in the amount of \$6,000.00.

Our organization anticipates receiving grant funds from the Pugh Family Foundation this year in the amount of \$3,000.00. This is the only committed grant funding at this time.

*Recent pertinent publications –*

The Advertiser.com / The Sunday Advertiser – page 14D, Sunday, May 1, 2016, “Zydeco/Cajun bash shines light on deserving schools”

\*NOTE: Potential grant income amounts were not included in the development of the *Organizational Budget* since these proposals are pending and have not been awarded at this time.