

April 03, 2001

Mr. Roy E. Verley, Director
Philanthropy Corporation
P.O. Box 10301
Palo Alto, CA 94303-0890

Dear Mr. Verley,

The Monterey County Fire Chief's Association has established a goal to improve accessibility of the local fire service to our Spanish Speaking Community with a Spanish language Fire Safety Public Education Program. This program will include the recruitment of local Hispanic Community leaders to help address areas in which our agencies can work to improve the implementation and delivery of the fire departments Fire Safety Message. We have overwhelming support from the local Hispanic community and would like to extend this opportunity to the Hewlett-Packard Foundation to join our coalition.

I am pleased to submit the enclosed request of \$48,500 for consideration by trustees of the Hewlett-Packard Philanthropic Corporation on behalf of the Monterey County Fire Chief's Association. If you have any questions regarding this program please contact me so that I may address them personally.

Sincerely,

Dan Hernandez
Secretary/Treasure
Monterey County Fire Chief's Association

Breaking the Fire Department's Language Barrier

The Development of a Spanish Speaking Fire Safety
Awareness, Prevention and Education Program

Monterey County Fire Chiefs Association
Grant Proposal
To

Hewlett-Packard Company Philanthropic Grants

April 5, 2001

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Executive Summary

The Monterey County Chief's Association proposes to provide a fire safe public education program for the Spanish speaking community based on Hispanic language and cultural expectations. Our goal is to provide quality access to all members of our community. We are seeking \$48,500 to fund a portion of this valuable project which will provide long lasting benefits to both the local community and our Association members.

Introduction

The Monterey County Chief's Association is an organization of 29 fire agencies. This association encompasses over 458 square miles and services communities along the California central coast from Moss Landing to Big Sur and inland from Salinas to King City. The departments, paid and volunteer, serve a mix of urban, rural and farming communities.

The mission of the Monterey County Fire Chief's Association is to enhance the development of local programs to insure greater protection of life and property from fire and natural disaster. This is accomplished through the development and delivery of programs such as Fire Prevention, Public Education, Emergency Response and Training.

Problem Statement

“What we have here is a failure to communicate!”

From the movie, Cool Hand Luke

On September 16, 1999, leaders from the Spanish speaking community of Monterey County addressed the Monterey County Fire Chiefs Association (MCFCA). The leaders, listed below, expressed their concern that the fire agencies of the county excluded the Spanish speaking population from actively participating in community efforts to develop and maintain a fire safe environment. Specifically, the leaders believe that the Spanish-speaking citizens do not understand the fire safe messages transmitted from the fire agencies whose primary language and culture is English based. They also expressed their belief that the fire agencies display little understanding of the Spanish speaking culture, further complicating efforts of cross communication.

- Gerardo Ramirez, Allstate Insurance
- Laura Vega, Director Hispanic chamber of Commerce, Salinas
- Cosme Padilla, League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC)
- Dr. Henry Villanueva, California State University of Monterey Bay
- Dr. Jose Amaro, California State University of Monterey Bay
- Sergio Santos, Organizer, United Farm Workers, Monterey County
- Carlos Ortiz, Station Manager, Radio Campesina 107.9

In defense, the Fire Chiefs cited instances where nationally produced public education campaigns were translated into Spanish and distributed to the Spanish speaking community of the county. The meeting ended amicably, but without conclusion. The 2000 U.S. Federal Census reflects that of the 47 % Countywide Hispanic population, just under 62% of the Hispanic population is under the age of 18 . “The 2000 U.S. Federal Census counted 48,389 Salinas residents under the age of 18, enough to become the second largest city in the County if the children formed their own town”, reported *The Salinas Californian*.

Most recent reports, 1990 U.S. Federal Census reflect an annual median income in Monterey County for a family of 4 to be \$50,000, leaving 11 % of Monterey Counties Population to fall below the Poverty level. The 2000 U.S. Federal Census numbers are not yet available, but believed to be significantly higher.

According to the FEMA report *Socioeconomic Factors And The Incidents Of Fire* “Socioeconomic factors are among the best predictors of fire rates at the neighborhood level”. “Virtually every study of Socioeconomic Characteristics has shown that lower levels of income are either directly or indirectly tied to an increased risk of fire”.

The relationship between low income status and the presence of operational smoke detectors has not been firmly established. “At this point, it is known that neighborhoods with proportions of low income households also have proportionately more fires than neighborhoods with more middle and high income residents. Households without operational detectors are almost two and one half times more likely to have reported fires than those with operational detectors. Taken together these facts suggest that low income households may have fewer operational smoke detectors and thus face higher fire risk”
1994 NFIRS, smoke detector status in households reporting fires

Of critical note, the community leaders reporting the communications failure represented every economic strata of Monterey County’s Spanish speaking community, 47% of the county’s’ total 450,000 population. Noting this the MCFCA has posed the following question:

“In Monterey County, is the failure to provide for a fire safe environment in the Spanish speaking community based on language and cultural barriers instead of economic status?”

Objectives

“Lo Que Tenemos es aLa Problemo Para Comunicar!”

“What we have here is a failure to communicate!”

In the 1970’s GM Corporation attempted to sell the Nova Chevrolet coupe in Mexico. In spite of climbing sales within the U.S., sales for the Nova were dismal there. The reason cited was that in Spanish the word Nova literally means, “Won’t go.” Who would purchase a vehicle that “does not go?”

The goal of this program is to develop a fire safe public education program based on the cultural expectations and the language familiar to the Hispanic community.

- A) Identify the cultural and language barriers that prevent the Spanish-speaking members of the Monterey County population from active participation in providing for a fire safe community.
- B) Train Monterey County firefighters in the cultural diversity of Spanish speaking residents, which potentially prevents the accurate exchange of information.
- C) Partner with local Spanish language media agencies to develop a television, radio and elementary school campaign which explains the role of the fire department in the Spanish speaking community and educates Spanish speaking children in safe preventative actions for self protection.

Methods

Year One

- Recruit Hispanic Community Leaders and members of the following organizations to endorse program:
 - League of United Latin American Citizens, LULAC
 - Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Monterey County
 - United Farm Workers of Monterey County
 - Monterey County Department of Migrant Education
- Hire consultant to identify and address the communication deficiencies in the relationship between the Fire Departments and the Spanish speaking population of Monterey County.
- Consultant to develop a Bi-lingual Public Education program for the MCFCA, which addresses the Fire & Life safety needs specific to the Spanish speaking community.

- Monterey County Fire Agencies will establish a baseline through National Fire Information Reporting System (NFIRS) for fire deaths, injuries and property loss in Monterey County prior to start of Grant Funding or implementation.

Year Two

- Implement training for local fire department personnel on the delivery of the developed Bi-lingual Public Education program.
- Fire Agencies begin delivery of Bi-Lingual Public education to the Monterey County community.

Evaluation

Monthly status reviews from fire agencies participating in the proposed program will be submitted to Monterey County Fire Chiefs Association (MCFCA), enabling the Association and Program Manager to monitor program status and results of the program. During the two-year implementation of the program, 7 quarterly reviews will be conducted. A final report will be generated at the end of the two- year program period.

Final results will be measured as follows:

- A comprehensive report will be completed by the consultant and distributed to MCFCA and local fire agencies
- Train 50 Monterey County firefighters in the cultural diversity of Spanish speaking residents and direct these firefighters to train an additional 250 firefighters within the County
- Produce 5 public service announcements and run them throughout the two- year implementation period
- Evaluate effectiveness of program through NFIRS and CFIRS statistics for the two- year program
- Evaluate response from target groups by conducting a survey

Future Funding

Maintain the program through existing Monterey County Fire Agencies, Training & Prevention Officers. These Staff positions should not need additional funds, as they would only change the language of delivery not the number of deliveries. Evaluation of the program will continue through an annual check of NFIRS & CFIRS for fire deaths, injuries & property loss in Monterey County. Expectations that the need for English printed materials in these existing programs would be reduced & allow a corresponding increase in printed material in Spanish.

Budget

FIRST YEAR

Budget Items	In Kind Match	Hewlett Packard	Fire Act
Staff	\$40,000	\$24,000	\$56,000
	Existing Staff Positions within Monterey County Fire Agencies	Consultant Fees	Consultant Fees
Facilities (Offices)	\$6,000	\$5,000	\$0.00
Printed Materials	\$0.00	\$5,000	\$0.00
Total	\$46,000	\$34,000	\$56,000

SECOND YEAR

Budget Items	In Kind Match	Hewlett Packard	Fire Act
Staff	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0.00
	Existing Staff Positions within Monterey County Fire Agencies	Consultant Fees	Consultant Fees
Facilities (Offices)	\$6,000	\$2,000	\$0.00
Printed Materials	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$0.00
Total	\$18,500	\$14,000	\$0.00

PROGRAM TOTALS

Budget Items	In Kind Match	Hewlett Packard	Fire Act
Staff	Existing Staff Positions within Monterey County Fire Agencies	Consultant Fees	Consultant Fees
Facilities (Offices)			
Printed Materials			
Total	\$64,500	\$48,500	\$56,000

Appendix

The Monterey County Department of Migrant Education and the United Farm Workers of Monterey County have endorsed this project. They are committed to the concept that if non-English speaking residents receive fire safe information in their primary language, and with sensitivity to cultural norms, there will be greater participation in community wide efforts to reduce injury and death from fire related incidents. Most studies of fire deaths in the U.S. suggest that they are associated with low-income status. No studies are tied to language and cultural differences, therefore the fire service does not know how, or if, the fire safe message is correctly received by the non-English speaking residents of a community. Because we do not understand a non-English speaking culture our efforts at communicating may be ineffective. The fire agencies in Monterey County could be incorrectly and inappropriately sending the message resulting in a failure to communicate.

Grant Proposal Committee

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