

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

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ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
Administration on Children, Youth and Families  
1250 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20024

September 30, 2008

Jay Mendell  
Development Director  
El Verdadero Amor Espera, Inc.  
P O Box 8981  
Ponce, PR 732

In reference to grant application FY08-CBAE-193.

Dear Dr. Mendell:

Thank you for submitting an application in response to the June 21 2008, *Grants.gov* publication of the Community-Based Abstinence Education Programs Discretionary Grants program announcement (HHS-2008-ACF-ACYF-AE-0099).

A panel of non-federal experts who have broad experience in the subject areas covered by the announcement carefully reviewed all of the applications received in response to the Community-Based Abstinence Education Programs Discretionary Grants program announcement. The reviewers evaluated the applications against the published criteria, and their assessments were the principal basis for the final funding decision on each application.

Funding decisions have been made, and I regret to inform you that your application was not selected for funding. The amount of funds available permitted us to select only a limited number of applications for funding. I hope the enclosed summary of your application's strengths and weaknesses will be of assistance to you in preparing future applications.

Please note that some high ranking applications were not awarded in accordance with Part V.2 (Review and Selection Process) of the program announcement, which states, "Highly ranked applications are not guaranteed funding because of other factors are taken into consideration. These include, but are not limited to geographic distribution, previous program performance of applicants, compliance with grant terms under previous HHS grants, audit reports, an applicant's progress in resolving any final audit disallowance on previous FYSB or other Federal agency grants.

We appreciate the effort that went into the preparation of your application and look forward to your participation in future competitions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Curtis O. Porter".

Curtis O. Porter  
Acting Associate Commissioner  
Family and Youth Services Bureau

Enclosure

**Criterion 2: Approach (36 points)***Strengths:*

- + The applicant plans to utilize curriculum that is consistent with the 13 themes. For example, the applicant states that they plan to use the Free Teens USA/HASTA Student Workbook that covers relationship skills, the power of goal-setting, and decision making skills. These areas cover themes D1, F1, G1, and G2. (Page 34)
- + The applicant describes how all other aspects of the project have a direct connection with the 13 themes. For example, the applicant states that they will hold club meetings and activities, provide community service opportunities, and facilitate field trips. These activities address Theme G2. (Page 36)
- + The applicant provides in the project narrative and supporting documents a reasonable plans for operation. For example, the applicant provides logic model that describes goals, inputs, activities, outputs, attitudinal outcomes, behavioral outcomes, and measurable outcomes. (Page 27)
- + The applicant describes barriers from project implementation and possible resolutions to these difficulties. For example, the applicant states that some areas may involve sensitive information making it difficult to provide services. The applicant states that they will communicate with counselors to obtain access. (Pages 9-11)
- + The applicant describes how the program and program staff integrate cultural competency in serving youth from diverse ethnic, cultural, and economic backgrounds. For example, the applicant states that they will have a bilingual and bi-national staff team similar to the ethnic make-up of the target population. The applicant states that they will hire Spanish speaking counselors to help the address the need to serve youth who only speak Spanish. (Pages 5-17)

*Weaknesses:*

- The applicant did not describe planned activities to include relationship skills training and give participants a greater capacity to develop both healthy relationships in the short-term and healthy marriages in the long-term. This information was not found. (No page to address)
- The applicant did not describe which activities would address creating a supportive peer environment for young people choosing abstinence until marriage. This information was not found. (No page to address)

**Criterion 3: Evaluation (25 points)***Strengths:*

- + None noted

*Weaknesses:*

- The applicant did not describe previous evaluation projects conducted by the organization or by a third-party evaluator, including processes and summaries of the reported findings. This information was not provided. (No page to address)
- The applicant did not provide a detailed evaluation plan. The applicant also did not describe how they will contract with an independent, third-party evaluator to form and implement the evaluation plan. This information was not provided. (No page to address)
- The applicant did not provide a program evaluation plan that includes a comparison/control group. This information was not provided. (No page to address)
- The applicant did not describe an evaluation plan that provides quantified projections and reasonable methods to collect data for the following required outputs. This information was not provided. (No page to address)
- The applicant did not identify or describe additional outputs. This information was not provided. (No page to address)
- The applicant did not provide quantified projections for additional outputs. This information was not provided. (No page to address)
- The applicant did not demonstrate that they have reasonable methods to collect data. This information was not provided. (No page to address)
- The applicant did not describe reasonable methods to collect data by implementing the 10 item core measure instrument. (No page to address)
- The applicant did not provide additional outcomes. The applicant also did not describe reasonable methods to collect data are described.

**Criterion 4: Organizational Profiles (15 points)***Strengths:*

- + The applicant demonstrates the capabilities and experiences of key administrative person appointed, as well as providing job descriptions for each administrative staff vacancy. For example, the applicant has worked with incarcerated youth with multiple issues. The

applicant also provides resumes that show how staff members have experience with abstinence education and has experience working in the medical field. (Pages 9-12) The applicant also has included 10 signed letters of support from various external entities. For example, the applicant received a letter of support from the principal of *Colegio Ponceno*. (Page 72)

- + The applicant provides a biographical sketch for key program staff. For example, the applicant provides a curriculum vitae for one of the physician counselors and show the individual's educational background, certifications, and experience working with Faith-Based Organizations. (Page 60 and 61)
- + The applicant provides a detailed plan for securing resources and continuing project activities after Federal assistance has ended. For example, the applicant states that they will contract with a professor in non-profit management who will assist the organization with resource development, managing multiple sources and types of funding. (Page 12)

*Weaknesses:*

- The applicant did not demonstrate a policy governing standards of conduct to include conflicts of interest. This information was not found. (No page to address)
- The applicant did not describe in the project narrative and supporting documents the roles of any partner organizations. This information was not found. (No page to address)

**Criterion 5: Budget and Budget Justification (15 points)**

*Strengths:*

- + The applicant demonstrates program efficiency as shown in the project abstract and narrative and is reasonable in view of the activities to be conducted and the number of participants to be served. For example, the applicant states that out of 800 incarcerated adolescents, 600 will receive a dose of 8 hours of lectures and workbook activities. (Page 4)
- + The applicant has designated at least 15 percent of the total requested funds for the purposes of evaluation. For example, the applicant states that they have allocated \$52,500 to the Institute of Research and Evaluation, and has allocated \$17,000 for Free Teens USA who will conduct assessments. (Page 26)
- + The applicant has provided a detailed budget and justification that clearly explains and justifies the budget information presented on SF-424 and SF-424A. For example, the applicant provides a budget narrative that presents costs for supplies, evaluation, curriculum materials, and travel. These items are aligned with the SF-424A form and the proposal narrative. (Page 23-26)

*Weaknesses:*

- The applicant did not describe a financial management system that provides for accounting records. This information was not provided. (No page to address)
  
- The applicant did not demonstrate that financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the organization's by-laws. This information was not provided. (No page to address)

