Project Grant Proposal

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We thank you, our esteemed reader, for the opportunity to consider us for partnership in making our community a better one. This grant application will begin with our mission statement. We will then discuss the current state of our community’s needs and our foundation’s vision for addressing those needs. We will then continue by comparing past methods and future improvements, and outline to you the specifics of implementation of our plan. We will specifically demonstrate how your funding will be put to use and end with our long-term goals and conclusions.

# A. Mission Statement

The goal of this initiative is to provide troubled youth with the guidance to the four most critical needs they face in today’s society:

1. *a lack of positive role models with whom they can identify with,*
2. *a lack of positive life skills and ability to set worthy goals,*
3. *a lack of confidence in the ability to attain those goals.*
4. *a lack of concern for the mental health of troubled youth*

We will use the teaching, training and involvement in competitive boxing and martial arts as a medium to involve youth and provide them with the environment to master the answers to the four critical needs they face in society. The youth will be incorporated into a nurturing environment, at the hands of mentors from their same community who have used boxing and martial arts as a means of stabilizing and bettering their lives morally, spiritually and financially, and by extension becoming productive members of society.

Young Tigers Foundation (YTF) is open to all individuals who are interested in participating, but is geared towards the true redline cases, the most difficult of youths which have slipped through the fingers of society’s existing safety nets. For many, we are their last hope.

# B. Community Problem Statement

*Assessment of the Community’s Need*

Youth today are being raised in a society increasingly hostile to their own well-being. Local, state and federal resources cannot be relied on exclusively to fulfill the overwhelming needs of the community. Despite heroic efforts to stretch ever decreasing resources to deal with an ever-increasing problem, the vast majority of youths are left on the wayside. Our belief is that it is every person’s civic and moral responsibility to contribute to their community. We understand that those in need must be helped in the way that *reaches them*, not in the way that *pleases the helper*.

We identified the following points, as stated in the mission statement, as the four most challenging needs troubled youth face in society:

1. *a lack of positive role models with whom they can identify with,*

*2. a lack of positive life skills and ability to set worthy goals,*

*3. a lack of confidence in the ability to attain those goals.*

*4. a lack of concern for the mental health of troubled youth*

Troubled youths are a drain on society. Directly, they spend resources and dollars at schools, courts, and detention and rehabilitation facilities. Indirectly, troubled youth cause harm to others, cause harm to families, cause harm to their peers by the propagation of negative ant-social values and modes of conduct, cause harm to society, and finally to themselves. Most importantly, troubled youth are a drain on society because of their unrealized potential. As a group, they represent a whole sector of society who because of many factors, some beyond their own control, are not realizing their potential to be productive members of society, and contributing the wonderful pool of talents, abilities, intellects and personality they intrinsically have.

Young Tigers Foundation deals with a unique brand of youth. We deal with the most downtrodden, the most maligned, and what some would refer to as the true redline cases. What makes our value unique is that we can and do deal with the cases which the rest of the system is simply incapable of handling. As these youth grow, they become part of the negative feedback cycle where society’s benefits are not available to them, and thus they stray farther away from any connection to society. We are fortunate to live in a society that designs programs to help them. Those youths who slip through all of a community’s other safety nets, still stand a final chance with us. We represent the last and final opportunity for many of these promising yet troubled youth, and offer a proven effective program to turn lives around.

In this section we have included basic data on relevant factors concerning youth in the United States as well as Miami Dade County. First, youths who remain on the streets are at risk for drug use, criminal activity, stagnation in academic areas, and further alienation from society. According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP), “Between 1999 and 2001, past month illicit drug use for persons age 12 and older increased from 6.3% to 7.1%.” Approximately 32% of adults aged 18-25 used illicit drugs in the past month (2001). The ONDCP report goes on to state that about 25% of military personnel and over 30% of prison inmates test positive for illicit drugs. (

Miami-Dade County paints a more severe picture. Crime statistics for Miami-Dade County highlight because it is critical something be done to help local juveniles. According to statistics compiled by CityRating.com, incidences of violent crime are 3.14 times higher in Miami-Dade then national averages. Robberies are a dreadful 3.5 times higher in Miami-Dade then the national average. Aggravated assault follows the trend at 2.93 times the national average, and the most serious of all, murders, are a stunning 2.53 times the national average. Non-violent property crimes such as arson, burglary, car theft, larceny, etc. don’t fare much better, having a local incidence rating of 1.57 times the national average.

The importance of breaking the cycle for at-risk youth is paramount in importance. Young at risk males who become fathers were far more likely to fail to obtain employment, to stop using illicit drugs, to complete their education and to abstain from street violence (Young Fathers: An Analysis of Risk Behaviors and Service Needs; **Authors:** Weinman M.L.[1](http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/klu/casw/2002/00000019/00000006/00454252?crawler=true#aff_1); Smith P.B.[2](http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/klu/casw/2002/00000019/00000006/00454252?crawler=true#aff_2); Buzzi R.S. **Source:** Volume 19, Number 6, December 2002, pp. 437-453(17)). This damage transcends and is magnified in the generation they raise, perpetuating the cycle.

The financial picture of Miami Dade County is important to consider for many reasons. 633,435 county residents had no health insurance, including Medicaid. The poor do not have access to health insurance and often do not seek health care. Parents do not seek health services for their children as they grow, meaning both physical and mental problems go unidentified and untreated (http://www.aidsnet.org/main/hamiami/epiprofile2004.pdf). Most mental problems start in adolescence (Harvard Epidemiological report, 2005), highlighting the importance of early intervention.

# C. Community Problem Resolution

*The Four Main Needs, How to Solve Them, and Our Plan*

As referenced in the mission statement, YTF sees four main needs, or gaps in our society’s treatment of its youth, which we aim to solve.

*Problem 1.* *A lack of positive role models with whom they can identify with.* Youth today are constantly and relentlessly bombarded with increasingly violent, anti-social and irresponsible messages and role models. Youth culture today is dominated by music videos, film, sports entertainment industry etc. that typically does not provide a positive, productive message.

Other issues aggravate this. For instance, the breakdown of families leaves an estimated 40% of minors in homes without fathers. Those fortunate to have two parents are not much better off, statistically. In these homes, they must deal with parents so heavily burdened by the grind of supporting their families’ material needs that they have little interpersonal time for their kids. According to decades of research, the lack of interpersonal attention to children at the different stages of their development has severe consequences. These consequences are cumulative in children, and the ability of a parent to be effective when the child reaches late adolescence is based on years of experience with the individual; anything less seriously compromises the ability of the parent to encourage the development of a mature, responsible adult.

The lack of the right amount of interpersonal attention to growing individuals has led to a generation increasingly influenced by the media and the lawless street life they’re surrounded by, without the positive counter-balance of involved parents.

In the late teenage years, youth begin to draw their own identity based on the associations they keep. It is critical to provide them with friends who will influence positive behavior. Youth need to be able to interact on a personal level with people who share a common background, yet have been able to improve themselves and step away from the negative surroundings they were born into. More than anything, they need to see and be surrounded by individuals like them who have been able to better themselves.

*Solution:* Club activity as an alternative to gang activity. Many troubles youth have had problem with authority, and thus are automatically skeptical, even fearful and hostile towards it. They need someone they can trust, someone who shares their story and interests. Mentoring has been proven to be a powerful impetus on improving lives. Studies have reported such dramatic results as:

* 61% improvement in responsibility
* 61% improvement in respect
* 74% improvement in optimism and self-confidence
* 52% less likely to skip school
* 46% drop in drug use
* 27% drop in alcohol use

At Young Tigers Foundation, we take this even further. Mentors don’t just talk to kids, they are actively engaged, physically and mentally. The coaches and staff who will conduct training, teaching, and handling of all participants are from the same places as the kids involved. This means that their emotional commitment to the kids is deep and their insight relevant. The only real difference between the “students” and the “mentors,” is that the mentors have taken action to improve their lives, better themselves, and become productive members of society. The point is not to preach to the youth, who are typically cynical of authority. We aim to teach not by empty words but by flesh-and-blood examples. We teach by example. The bonds they form are real and thoroughly solid, because they stand shoulder-to-shoulder working together in something they love and respect. Young Tigers Foundation is more than a gym, it is a family. And for some, it is the only family they have to turn to.

*Problem 2. A lack of positive life skills and ability to set worthy goals.* In a world where parents and schools are overly burdened, many youths go without ever learning the proper life skills they need. For instance, there is an abundance of evidence demonstrating the role the media plays in advocating criminal behavior. Certainly, there are very few positive messages/positive role models available through the media today. In addition, there are many families that lack capable adults to teach life skills and goal setting. The circumstance comes about often through divorce; but equally through economic or other factors forcing families to struggle simply to exist. Thus, there is a scarcity of role models or strong positive figures to provide the guidance young men and women want and need.

Respect, hard-work, responsibility, sobriety, caring: who will teach youths that these concepts are the foundation for a good and honest life? Who will teach youths that violence is not a way to solve problems; that selling drugs is not an acceptable means of profit; and those laws exist for the benefit of all?

Most critically, if youths have no one to teach them, how will they learn that the first step in making something better of themselves is in setting the sorts of worthy goals which can raise an individual from the current circumstances that surrounds them? To summarize, without the ability to set goals, individuals tend to flounder and drift through life.

*Solution:* Martial Arts and boxing are a metaphor for life. They run parallel in so many ways; the skills and discipline required to be successful in one, is identical to the skills and discipline required to be successful in the other. Similar to life, without rigorous discipline, no amount of talent will get you anywhere in boxing or martial arts. Additionally, without setting a goal you will not attain any measure of success. Just as in life one must have respect for and cooperate with others in order to move ahead, boxing and martial arts teach an individual to respect and cooperate with coaches and training partners in order to improve. Without caring for one’s body, and living a sober lifestyle, you’ll never be able to train in a manner to excel. Alcohol and drugs, which damage the body, mind and soul, also damage your ability to focus on training and compete physically.

Most importantly, boxing and martial arts teach individuals to set worthy goals and strive to accomplish them. The reason most people fail is because of a lack of ability to plan for success. Sports like boxing and martial arts teach that as in life, only hard work will let you attain those goals. These sports also teach an individual that rigorous self-discipline is needed to complete that hard work. Training gives youth something to look forward to, a powerful impetus to keep kids off the street and away from lawlessness.

It is the responsibility of our mentors and coaches to guide students to learn these vital lessons. These role models mould youth to set goals, train to reach those goals, and instill the concepts of solid work ethic and respect for others. Further, mentors teach youth valuable skills not just for athletics, but for life.

*Problem 3. A lack of confidence in the ability to attain those goals.* One of the five basic needs of human beings is the need for power over one’s own situation. Youth today need to know they have the ability to change their situation for better. They must know that whatever difficulties they encounter in life, or whatever skills they are lacking--this is not all life can be. They are not destined to sink, but in fact can find the confidence and teachers to guide them. Most troubled youth have no one telling them they have the power to change, and no one to believe in them. Having no one to believe in you, no one to tell you that you can be a better person, and no one to encourage you on your path has the effect of crushing a person’s motivation.

Having no one to confide in is, in fact, considered an epidemic in the U.S., with a recent research article finding most Americans do not feel close to others, do not have good friends with whom they can have fun with and learn from. Learning does not happen by technology alone. It is imperative that disadvantaged youth become socially competent, become more able to be comfortable around others, so that they can take advantage of true learning situations.

*Solution:* Our solution at Young Tigers Foundation is teaching by example. YTF has become home to athletes who have been able to overcome the many obstacles life has thrown at them, and have through sport been able to make themselves successful, productive members of society. There are also many others who have used the skills of discipline, respect, goal-setting acquired at the Foundation to launch them into success in their personal lives. Troubled youths are insecure as to whether they can indeed attain the goal of a successful life. A powerful tool to overcome this is to interact with others like them who have already been able to do it. The aim of Young Tigers Foundation is to aid every person who walks into the Foundation to find the courage, tenacity, confidence and positivism needed to achieve their goals they set for themselves. Additionally, our coaches and mentors aim to be that positive voice to encourage them and help them believe in their own power to succeed.

*Problem 4. A lack of concern for the mental health of troubled youth.* It is impossible to isolate all the factors, both of nature and nurture, which contribute to the process that drives a young person from the state of excelling to the state of causing damage. What is undeniable though is that psychological issues plague our trouble youth, and often times represents the barrier which prevents them from beating their negative state. The health care and rehabilitation system, despite truly noble and heroic efforts, is not provided with the resources to deal with all cases. As a result, under diagnosis of truly significant ailments which effect youth is prevalent, and the on-going state of non-treatment only serves to aggravate it. Our failure to action is what can result in a marginal case spiraling quickly to a redline case. These youth need our help to deal with their psychological and mental health issues, and more often than not, don’t know how badly they need it. Inattention, inability to cope with stress, inability to focus, inability to hold steady employment, delinquency, trouble in school, depression, anxiety, stunted emotional and cognitive development, social immaturity; all these issues can be traced to the brain. Without resorted to the wholesale propagation of drugs, how can we deal with these issues?

*Solution:* Exercise. It seems like such a simple answer, but it works! The importance of exercise cannot be overstated. Dr John Ratey, and associate professor of psychology at Harvard Medical, has written both numerous articles and books on the benefits of this very simple solution. Exercise places heavy demands on the whole nervous system, causing it to pump out volumes of essential neurotransmitters such as dopamine, serotonin, and norepinephrine, the so-called “feel-good” chemicals of the brain. Additionally, research shows exercise, the increased flow of oxygen throws neural systems, and the increased left-right coordinated use of the brain in training elevates levels of production of brain-derived neurotrophic factor, a chemical which assists in reconstruction, maintenance, and even generation of new brain cells. The net result of this is a healthier and more stable brain which focuses better, has sharper thinking, elevated mood, slowed aging, increased resistance to stress, greater resistance to addiction, boosted memory, reduced anxiety, reduced depression, with an improved outlook and clearer and calmer decision making. It should be noted all these research-proven effects are attained without the use of a single drug, but rather through the body’s own natural mechanisms.

# D. Past Methods and Future Projects

Through its life, Young Tigers Foundation has been incredibly successful in harnessing the good hidden inside even the worst of troubled youth and being the catalyst to bring it to the surface and give new direction to their lives. The labor has always been one of love and dedication; big on heart, not necessarily on sophistication. And, that is one of the major points in which your partnership will help. Our methods have brought profound change already, and the proof is in the countless stories of success we have been blessed with. But there are ways to improve.

With your help we can bring a change to our foundation which will allow us to touch and guide the lives of countless more of those that need it.

We aim to combine the passion, sincerity, commitment and heart with which we have tackled these issues in the past with something new, an expanded sense of professionalism and detail-oriented follow-up of each student’s progress.

Following we’ll invite you to understand precisely how we plan, with your partnership and contributions, to do this.

# E. Implementation

There comes a point where the “rubber hits the road”. The critical question becomes: how will we accomplish all these lofty goals? The answer is rigorous methods and evaluation, going hand-in-hand with rigorous discipline and commitment.

Currently our formula which has worked is structured as follows:

* Organized classes are held daily at 5:00pm, 6:30pm and 8pm.
* The gym is open all-day, providing a home away from home for all program participants to get them off the streets and to provide a sanctuary when pressures become unbearable. There is always at least one trainer or mentor present
* Students are paired to instructors and mentors who take a direct interest in the well-being and adherence to the ethics and discipline required of students
* All participants are encouraged to set goals for themselves compete in some form or another, but only when they are truly ready to do so. They are then nurtured along the path of preparing to reach those goals and encouraged to proceed ultimately to attain them, all the while learning vital life lessons from this journey.
* Respect is encouraged and demanded of every person towards every other person in the gym, and by extension the outside
* Mentors’ follow-up with students, encouraging attendance, identifying progress and then working on areas requiring improvement, taking interest in personal lives, and while training the youths in martial arts, also slowly instilling in them the core values they need while turning them away from negative behaviors

Although we have had success, we realize a more systematic method and evaluation was needed in order for us to accomplish our goals. Further, as we have expanded our foundation, and have actively begun to seek assistance, we know a formal methods and evaluation need to be in place. Just like in boxing and martial arts, you can teach a student many things but you cannot teach them heart. In community outreach, you cannot instill the goodwill and love in people, but you can instill in them superior methods of helping the community. Our foundation has the heart, and has a proven track record- now we are standardizing our methods and evaluation in order to become a more efficient and effective foundation.

*Methods and Evaluation.* The Young Tigers Foundation will provide a Ph.D. level psychologist with experience in research design and implementation. She will identify self-report questionnaires that measure our progress in the four areas we have focused on. The psychologist will train a psychology major as a research associate to administer and score the questionnaires, and will set up a database to store and analyze the data. She is familiar with research ethics, and will ensure that all participants have complete knowledge of the purpose(s) of the foundation, how their participation and progress will be measured; where the hard data will be stored (under lock and key); and what will be done with the questionnaires, computer data and results (i.e., informed consent will be obtained). The psychologist is a member of the board of directors and will donate her time and expertise to this part of the foundation’s activities. Please find below a description of the assessments to be used:

(1) At this point, we will be using an **open-ended demographic questionnaire** to assess basic information (birthday/age, address, schools attended and grades, reason for joining the gym, goals for the future, family members and addresses, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, how the individual views himself, and the number and description of any positive role models currently in the individual’s life, and how the role model(s) affected the individual). This questionnaire will give us the background information on our youths, as well as a ‘baseline’ of their view of their positive role models and goals. All individuals who join the gym will complete a demographic questionnaire at the time they begin training. Portions of this questionnaire will be administered in six-month intervals to assess any changes (i.e., role models and goals).

(2) Secondly, we will be administering a **brief, modified scale to measure our participants’ life skills and abilities to set goals**. Our scale is modified from the one used to measure the life skills learned in a 4-H Youth program, and is titled “Brief Life Skills and Goals Questionnaire” (see), therefore it is appropriate for our group. Youth will use the scale to rate their experience at Young Tigers, and our research associate will rate the youth independently, using the same scale on six-month intervals. If we realize that more diverse observation is necessary, then specific trainers/teachers will also rate youths on this scale at the same time intervals. The BLSGQ measures the following items on a 5-point scale:

1 = *Not Influential at All*, 2 = *Mildly Influential*, 3 = *Moderately Influential*, 4 = *Highly Influential*, and 5 = *Essential*.

* Decision making
* Ability to relate to others
* Accepting responsibility
* Build positive self esteem
* Self-motivation
* Ability to problem solve
* Develop oral communication skills
* Setting goals
* Develop self-discipline
* Work in groups

(3) In the field of psychology, having confidence in one’s ability is termed “self-efficacy” and was developed by Albert Bandura. Bandura (1977) described self-efficacy as follows: There are many pathways through life . . . people vary substantially in how successfully they manage their lives . . . The beliefs they hold about their capabilities to produce results by their actions are an influential personal resource as they negotiate their lives through the life cycle. (p. 162). Self-efficacy has been shown to be an important feature in developing healthy family ties and friendships, as well as in successfully negotiating academic environments, adolescence and becoming an adult (see for the YTF, we will use the **General Self-Efficacy Scale** (The GSES measures the following items on a 5-point scale:

1 = *Never*, 2 = *Rarely,* 3 = *Sometimes*, 4 = *Often*, and 5 = *Always*.

* I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.
* If someone opposes me, I can find means and ways to get what I want.
* It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.
* I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.
* Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.
* I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.
* I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.
* When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.
* If I am in trouble, I can usually think of something to do.
* No matter what comes my way, I'm usually able to handle it.

(4) To assess mental health, we will be administering the **SCL-90**, a very general symptom checklist. This rating scale helps measure 9 primary symptom dimensions and is designed to provide an overview of a patient's symptoms and their intensity at a specific point in time. The SCL-90 is reliable, valid and perfect for post testing as well.

(5) To assess the extent of participation in the physical training, we will be taking **attendance records** in detail. These will note time in physical training, socializing or in educational activities.

The evaluation of our program is built into our research design and methods. Measures will be given either before training (baseline), at the beginning of training, or at intervals during training. This will allow the assessment of progress in each of the areas identified, either on a continuous basis or a pre-post basis. The psychologist is familiar with the use of SPSS, a statistical software package used to analyze data for the social sciences. With the addition of these measures and evaluation, at any point YTF can produce a statistically-supported description of our progress. Finally, staff-conducted evaluation can be useful to determine whether the program's major objectives are being met. It is equally important, however, to have someone not affiliated with the project to evaluate it, too. That person can provide unbiased opinions about the strengths and weaknesses of the program. We have several professional individuals who have offered to fulfill this function for us.

# F. Budget Narrative

*How will your contributions be put to use?*

All grants are applied to on the authorization of the Board of Directors, and monies are dispersed and monitored according to the prescription of the Board for the maximum benefit of the Foundation.

*Facilities*. We exist on the generosity of our donors, and usually we’re short on rent payments and utilities, which often has come from the limited pockets of foundation members. Our facility is adequate, and we strive to keep costs bare-minimum by maintaining it ourselves and improving it through donations.

2007 rents amounted to $13,216.13. Utilities for our facility amounted to $2959.58, and misc. facility expenses $1,393.78. We estimate 2009 expenses to total $23,538.

*Equipment*. Unfortunately, because of limited funds, we cannot finance the purchase of any equipment for students. Most troubled youth come from impoverished backgrounds, and it is not uncommon we have to turn participants down due to insufficient equipment. The equipment we do have is usually extremely old and borderline obsolete. Nonetheless, we get by as best we can and we squeeze great utility out of what we have.

Improved training equipment will improve the capacity and abilities of individual participants, thus translating to greater success in competition and improved confidence and feelings of accomplishment. Improved equipment will also allow us to work with and help more troubled youth. Pictures of equipment and its condition can be found in appendix E, at the end of this packet.

A breakdown of specific investments is detailed in the line-item budget below.

*Travel*. Most of the young adults enrolled in our program define what it is to be at-risk; they are still in the process of maturation and as such are prone to dangerous behavior. Students from YTF who travel to compete will always be accompanied by a trainer and mentor. This is not solely to guide the participant as an athlete, but to provide a responsible and restraining oversight as well as taking the opportunity of new settings to further instill important values. Taking students to compete is expensive, yet competition is essential for the goal-setting and achievement concepts critical to the self-asserting of participants. We must turn down many opportunities to compete and grow participants because we do not have the resources, and they do not have the resources, to engage. Payment usually comes from the pockets of trainers and mentors.

With more funds we would be able to expand access to more students. At present, we are forced to restrict the number of participants who travel and partake in competition because we simply do not have the funds to oversee everyone. Although we make extraordinary efforts to maximize the use of every dollar, in the end we can only stretch it so far.

These costs include hotel stays, travel costs, food, membership dues and entry fees for both trainers and participants.

2007 expenses totaled $7,746.18, and did not allow us to attend the number our events optimal for students nor allowed us to take all students. We feel a budget of $10,600 will allow us to dramatically increase our reach.

*Trainer’s compensation*. Currently our trainers and staff are not paid. Each of our trainers dedicates an inordinate amount of hours to the program, along with a wealth of specialized knowledge and talent. The pool of knowledge, experience, and the love they dedicate to their craft can be proven in the success rate of the foundation; competitors win over 90% of their bouts. These individuals could easily earn considerable compensation for their experience at commercial schools; instead, they work for free, only their love of the kids involved as compensation. The board feels it would be fair to compensate them in accordance with their contributions. We suggest an annual salary of $60,000 to Eric Castanos, the head trainer and administrator; $40,000 to Manuel Lopez, who conducts three classes daily, 6 days a week; $20,000 to Orlando Fleites who maintains the premises, is on-site during daytime hours and provides exhaustive auxiliary assistance and training.

# G: Line-Item Budget

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **2009 Line-Item Budget** | | |
|  |  |  |
| **Travel** |  | **10600** |
| Travel Transportation | Airfare + Car Rental + Gas | 7200 |
| Travel Lodging | 1room x 20day x $80 | 1600 |
| Meals | 3 ppl x 20day x 3mealsx $10 | 1800 |
|  |  |  |
| **Facilities** |  | **23538** |
| Rent | $1269rent x 12 months | 15228 |
| Utilities | 12mo x $180 monthly ave. | 2160 |
| Maintenance/Cleaning | 12months x $250 | 3000 |
| Maintenance Supplies | 12months x $100 | 1200 |
| Insurance | Liability | 650 |
| Licenses | Certificate of Occupancy | 100 |
| Misc. Maintenance |  | 1200 |
|  |  |  |
| **Management** |  | **123760** |
| Salaries | Eric Castanos $60,000 | 60000 |
|  | Manolo Lopez $40,000 | 40000 |
|  | Orlando Fleites $20,000 | 20000 |
| Telephone | $210average x 12 months | 2520 |
| Legal & Accounting |  | 1100 |
| Coaching Licenses | $70license x 2coaches | 140 |
|  |  |  |
| **Training Equipment** |  | **9285** |
| Personal Protective Gear | Gloves $39.99 x 20sets | 800 |
|  | Shin Guards $49 x 20sets | 980 |
|  | HeadGear $49 x 20 sets | 980 |
|  | Mouthpiece $3.99 x 20 sets | 80 |
| Practice Equipment | Kick Pads $99 x 10 sets | 990 |
|  | Target Mitss $39 x 20 sets | 780 |
|  | Thai Pads $69 x 20 sets | 1380 |
| Fitness Equipment | Treadmill $900 | 900 |
|  | Punching Bag $199 x 4bags | 796 |
|  | Olympic Bar $50 x 1bar | 50 |
| Ring Maintenance | Corners $60 x 4 | 240 |
|  | Ring Rope $120 x 3 | 360 |
|  | Canvas $800 | 800 |
|  | Timer $150 | 150 |
|  |  |  |
| **2009 Total Needs** |  | **$167,183** |
|  |  |  |

# H. Long Term Goals

We have three main long-term objectives:

1. *To increase the reach of our organization, thus impacting the lives of more troubled youth directly*
2. *To influence others by example to establish their own community programs*
3. *To put to good use the data we have collected*

Your partnership via funding, along with all the aforementioned points, will allow us to accomplish the first point. Your funding will also allow us to implement our program of community outreach as detailed above, as well as increased attendance to competitions and events. These measures will allow us to impact more youth by being able to reach out to them directly. Our increased external presence will also be invaluable in accomplishing the second goal. We wish to be a model to the community. We wish to be a model others will observe, learn from, and ultimately be inspired to emulate in their own communities. We envision in the future a network of similar foundations operating together, contributing to each other, and feeding off each other in a manner that will have a real and invaluable positive impact over a broad range of communities. Other cities throughout the U.S. have such networks, and their workings in the inner-cities have changed countless lives and, in some cases, saved certain urban environments from ruin. We can and must do the same. Finally, we will have a solid data set that can be disseminated to the public in different forms, from academic publications to free access talks given at community centers. Again, we can and must share what we have learned with others.

# I. Conclusion.

*Why are we worth funding?*

It is known that humans have basic needs. We have selected the following five as being most relevant to the mission of our foundation. The five basic needs of humans are:1. *Belonging and love;* 2*. power;* 3*. freedom;* 4. *fun and* 5*. safety and survival.* A quote sums up nicely what we feel about bringing out the best in our at-risk youth population:

"What children can do with the assistance of others might be in some sense even more indicative of their mental development than what they can do alone" (Lev Vygotsky, *Mind in Society*, p. 85).

Young Tigers Foundation has a history of meeting these needs for any individual who belongs to the gym. We do not guide youth to depend on the words or ideas of others as a way of taking control of their own lives. “Power” to us is not control; it is reflective of the development of autonomy. Autonomy is more than independence, more than separating from others. When a person has autonomy, they only achieved it through learning about themselves in different situations—the end result being self –knowledge. A person with autonomy can work alone or in a group—the end result being a person who is comfortable with himself and others. Developing this type of “power”, as well as meeting the other needs requires a radically different approach than most programs offer. At YTF, we do not rely on verbal reframing to reach the youths (“It is not that you are socially rejected, it is that the group does not know you well”), nor do we teach our youth to reframe. Instead, we provide an environment where everyone involved learns what their limits are, how to adjust to reality, how to push themselves, how to see themselves as they are, and based on what they have learned, how to improve their station.

This type of change does not come easily, nor quickly. It cannot be taught in a classroom. Humans need to test what they are learning. We at YTF continuously pool our knowledge, talents, skills, dedication and real caring for our trainees so that they can grow up and/or become more mature, with new skills, abilities, confidence and both mental and physical stability, regardless of their age. As a community, we at Young Tigers Foundation feel we cannot afford not to continue to offer our help. There are countless philanthropic causes, the vast majority of which are worthwhile and some even essential to our communities and to us as moral obligations to society. But in a world of scarce economic resources, we must be careful to analyze every project—not just on its “feel-good” merits, but also on the basis of how efficiently the dollars we invest into it will impact our community. A business must analyze the return of *profit* per dollar invested; we must consider the return of *good* per dollar invested. The youth provide the biggest return on investment because they hold a monopoly on control of our future. For the well-being of our society, of our world, of our legacy, we want to be sure that those granted the stewardship of it are fit to do so.

To offer the most troubled of our youth a safe environment from the depredations they inhabit; an environment staffed with individuals who will mould them into responsible, productive members of society; and whose goal is to integrate at-risk youth into autonomous individuals who can put to good use their unique characteristics and talents, to become people who will make our society better beyond themselves—this is the highest and best use of our time and money. For the above reasons, we request and look forward to your partnership.

# Appendix A. Board of Directors

**Dr. Kelly Laurence, Ph.D.**

She currently holds the position of Visiting Instructor in the Department of Psychology at Barry University, emphasizing the promotion of human development.

She holds a PH.D in Developmental Psychology from Florida International University

She has experience with research, specializing in topics such as stress and anxiety disorders, mental health counseling and life span development. Additionally, Kelly also held a private practice.

She currently is applying the experience she has gained working with young people as a therapist and a teacher to first create a minimal, non-invasive, standardized research protocol at Young Tigers Foundation. Kelly will be offering valuable assistance with selecting, acquiring and employing reliable measures to better monitor participants at the Foundation. Additionally, she will be teaching on-site classes to improve life skills, confidence and psychological well-being for everyone involved at Young Tigers Foundation as well as those who attend our community outreach activities.

**Ricky Sanchez**

Ricky serves as a field training officer for the Miami-Dade Police Department

He has 15 years’ experience with the police department, molding the young men and women enter the police force into exemplary citizens. Additional, Ricky is trained for crisis-intervention, a specialty which has taught him to deal with redline cases of the psychologically unstable and violent.

Ricky’s experience molding upstanding young men and women has proven ever useful in the design, layout and improvement of programs geared at instilling participants at YTF with a firm ethical backbone and sense of civic responsibility. Additionally, he serves as a familiar and friendly representative of the legal establishment to a group naturally skeptical and sometimes even hostile to it.

**Lenoric Vaccaro**

Lenoric is studying to attain his degree in Exercise Physiology with a Masters in Athletic Training.

He is a competitor, and his presence provides a powerful message to students at YTF as to the accessibility and importance of education. Lenoric works with students at YTF by designing tailored training programs and helping athletes adhere with discipline to these. He also assists in measuring their progress, providing vital feedback to participants as to their goal-setting and attainment. Leonoric’s programs have helped the students stay structured, motivated, focused, and driving their competitiveness.

**Martin Gonzalez.**

Martin is a successful small-business owner of a medical equipment supplier.

Martin’s ambition that led to launching and maintaining a successful small business is a source of inspiration and optimism to many of the youths involved in the foundation. His young age, contemporary to many participants, provides a clear message to students that even at an early age, one is capable of great responsibility and contribution to society.

**Richard Bertrand**

Richard is an internationally certified and professional judge for MMA and Boxing events. His connections to professional sporting events and his institutional knowledge as to the workings of these provide participants with invaluable input as to how to break in to professional competition when they finally seek that path.

**Alberto Trujillo**

To be completed

**Kathryn Lowe**

Kathryn holds a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from Barry University

Kathryn worked in the Department of Human Services of Oklahoma where she assisted social workers and child-welfare investigators. She currently is a research associate at the University of Miami.

Her unique perspective as a psychology student and former assistant to social workers and child-welfare case handlers gives her the ability to understand readily many of the issues faced by participants and provide the sort of guidance they require. Her input has proven invaluable in structuring and implementing programs catering to the mental health needs of participants.

**Ivan Enriquez**

Ivan holds a Bachelor of Science in Psychology from The Citadel

Ivan currently works as an executive project manager for Bunnel Corp, a builder of marine docks and seawalls.

Ivan utilizes his experience in accounting and financial management assists the Foundation as treasurer of the Board. His military school education allows him to assist participants at YTF with implementation of discipline in their own lives, assisted by his background in psychology.

# Appendix B: Officers of the Foundation

**Eric Castanos-Torres, President**

Eric holds a Bachelors in Physical Education from *Instituto Superior de Manuel Fajardo*

Karate Cuban National Champion 1991

Pan-American Games Karate Champion 1991

Cuban National Kickboxing Champion 1991, 1992, 1993

South American Professional Kickboxing Champion 1994

Latin American Professional Kickboxing Champion 1995

Intercontinental Professional Kickboxing Champion 1996

World Professional Kickboxing Champion 1997

World Professional Savate Champion 1998

World Muay Thai K-1 Champion 2003

Professional fight record at retirement: 45-1

Eric is the founder and head of the Young Tigers Foundation. It is his boundless love for the sport and the participants at YTF that has propelled the Foundation this far. His impressive record and commitment to his students earns him the respect, admiration and trust of the troubled youth at Young Tigers, but his real passion at YTF boils down to his sincere love for the kids who come to join him. The participants, recognizing this, open themselves to his instruction and more importantly mentorship.

**Manuel Lopez, Jr, Vice-President**

Manolo holds a Bachelors in Physical Education and a Bachelors in Agricultural and Biological Engineering from *Instituto Superior de Manuel Fajardo*

Karate Cuban National Champion 1983,1984,1985, 1986, 1987, 1988, 1989, 1990

Central American Karate Champion 1985

Tae-Kwon-Do Cuban National Team 1987

Opened first Kickboxing school in Cuba in 1989

Manuel, once an outstanding competitor, found his second passion in teaching, which he has done ever since founding Cuba’s first kickboxing academy in 1989. Manuel’s talents as a teacher cannot be denied, and not solely for his encompassing understanding of the mechanics of combat sports and their technique acquired over years of study and successful competition. His greatest gift comes in his ability to channel the positive skills, abilities and characteristics of all those who take instruction from him and allowing them to proceed and grow not just as athletes but as people, ever more confident in their own abilities. His approach to teaching is one that never separates the importance of the body from that of the mind and emotion of the participant.

**Hansel Calderon, co-founder**

Hansel is a certified and license personal trainer.

Hansel serves this country as a petty officer 3rd class in the U.S. Navy and has served multiple tours of duty.

**Appendix B: Participant Success Stories**

Many faces have passed through Young Tigers, and countless many have found success and personal betterment there. Following are a few examples:

*Alexis V.* Alexis is an outstanding example of the merits of our Foundation. Alexis was a world-class wrestler in Cuba, having won 3 world titles. He defected, eventually coming to the U.S. Alexis was diagnosed with bipolar disorder. Alexis spent many years unbalanced, without guidance, and self-destructive; he joined and became a high-ranking member of a notorious national-level gang. This downward cycle terminated with a felony conviction and his incarceration for 3 years; a situation in which he was devoid of treatment and caused him further damage. Upon release, he found his way to Young Tigers Foundation. At YTF he was able to resume his training, and the nurturing environment he found allowed him to focus and re-center himself. Today, Alexis has launched a successful Mixed Martial Arts career where he is 4-0. He trains daily, and exhibits tireless dedication to help those around him, his enthusiasm and positivism is infectious. Alexis’ case is one where a troubled and potentially dangerous individual acquired the necessary skills to become a model citizen to the youth around him. An expecting father, Alexis’ new lifestyle has integrated life skills which allow him to support himself, his family, and contribute positively to society.

*Yasi C*. Yasi suffered a history of infractions against authority both in school and in the streets. He was a redline case, seemingly headed for worse until he found Young Tigers Foundation (YTF). It was here his life took a radical turn. As he became serious about his training, he became serious about other aspects of his life. He was able to turn his back on his history of street offenses, and become a model citizen. Yasi’s successes in life modeled his successes in the ring, where over the course of four years he went on to win three championship belts in three separate categories. He also competed in the Olympic trials. Currently he fights professionally, allowing him to help support himself and his family, and lead a responsible and productive life.

*Jessy G.* Jessy had a troubled adolescence. He was a redline case, having been expelled from multiple schools for undisciplined, destructive and dangerous behavior. Jessy seemed on the path to danger until he began training at the Foundation. Training and participation provided a vehicle for him to find balance in his life, allowing him to channel his energy towards a productive means. The skills and discipline he learned at YTF allowed him to find stability and success. In boxing, he was able to excel and become Golden Gloves Champion, a great distinction.

*Joey H.* Joey had a rap sheet with a history of multiple serious offenses including multiple felonies. He was a danger to society until he found YTF. At YTF he acquired positive life skills that have led him to where he is today. Currently, Joey now is a successful professional boxer with a 15-0 record, and a rising star. He is able to support himself through his endeavors, and more importantly, the need for personal growth and rigorous discipline in training has kept him away from trouble. Today he is a model for aspiring youths, showing them what changes life can bring them through setting worthy goals and committing to the clean life and discipline required to attain those goals.

*George M.* Like many, George had a troublesome early adolescence. He was known for coming from a history of street-related troubles, even gaining some internet popularity as a street-brawler in illicit and dangerous illegal underground fights. At the age of 16 he found YTF, and through the tutelage of mentors decided to change his direction in life. He became keenly committed to his pursuit of legitimate Mixed Martial Arts success. Presently, at 23 years of age, George is a world-recognized fighter, typically considered a contender. He is very successful and a highly paid participant in MMA. His main value is that he is a model to younger students, showing how hard work, responsibility and clean living can change one’s life. George came from the bottom, and is now a top-regarded contender making a successful living, which younger students can aspire to and likewise tangibly see as a daily reminder.

*Pablo.* Pablo has been diagnosed with a multitude of psychological and emotional imbalances. He has spent years under institutional attention, which did little to alleviate his issues. When Pablo discovered Young Tigers Foundation, he found an entirely new method of coping with the issues he faced. He continues training today, and attributes his involvement at YTF with his finding balance in other aspects of his life. Pablo has successfully held employment for a number of years and is leading a stable life.

*Alex C.* Alex was a problem child throughout high school, and was expelled from the school system before graduation. He wafted about for some time, unsure of what direction to take, until he discovered YTF. Alex began a rigorous training program to which he adheres to religiously. He recently launched his professional MMA career, and is no 2-0. He used the proceeds of these fights to pay off debts he had accumulated in his transition period, and he is now dedicated to training as a lifestyle, while simultaneously pursuing his GED to further his education. Alex has acquired positive life skills enabling him to support himself, as well as a means of being a responsible and trouble-free member of society.

*Samuel A.* Sam also experienced troubles at school, eventually leading him to drop out in tenth grade. Currently, Sam is a promising kick boxer who is launching a successful amateur career. The discipline he has learned in the gym, as well as the life skills he has been taught, has helped him considerably in his life. Sam has acquired skills to become a successful small-business owner, managing and partially owning a retail liquor store. He is also pursuing his GED under the tutelage of mentors from YTF.

*Alexi O.* Alex came to Miami after multiple felony convictions in New York and accumulating an extremely long rap sheet. He came seeking a new life but unsure of how to attain it. On a friend’s recommendation, he found his way to Young Tiger’s Foundation and has been a committed trainee since. Because of his training and commitment to succeed, he has abstained from the vices which used to cause him so much harm. Currently, Alexi is undefeated in amateur kickboxing competitions and aspires to become a professional fighter. The discipline of training has spilled over to other facets of his life, he has achieved stable employment.

*Manny C.* Manny began running into trouble at an alarming early age. By 13, he was already committing misdemeanors and drawing the attention of the legal system. By 14 his transgressions became more serious and he was taken into the juvenile detention system. Paroled at 17, he found his way to YTF. Manny has been able at YTF to find an outlet for much of the negative emotional energy and angst which had originally pulled him into lawlessness. Additionally, being surrounded by mentors and friends of a positive disposition has allowed him to find camaraderie and belonging in a group which nurtures the qualities most constructive and positive in him. He currently engaged in his first amateur boxing match and won in outstanding fashion, giving further credence to his new direction and raising his self-esteem. He has managed to stay away from trouble and his old risky acquaintances since, and manifests a very positive future.

The students here mentioned are only a sample of the many that have passed through, and continue to benefit from the contributions of the Young Tigers Foundation. We are proud to have had such a positive impact in so many lives, and we only hope to be able to make you a partner in this grand contribution to society.