

Program Summary

The El Campo Little League (ECLL) has a rich history of serving the youth in our community. Since its inception, thousands of Wharton County boys and girls have participated in the programs of the ECLL, with dreams of one day making it to the “big leagues”. While most only play until the end of high school, they have however, learned the life lessons of good sportsmanship, leadership skills and the ability to effectively work as a team.

Little League baseball and softball is a vital part of the El Campo community. Last year, with the support of the entire El Campo community, the ECLL broke ground on a multi-use sports complex, scheduled to open this spring (2014). The anticipation of the new complex and its close proximity to the “heart” of El Campo, has increased the number of children interested in participating in little league baseball and softball.

In 2013, the ECLL served 680 children in Wharton County ranging in age from five to eighteen years old. Of those 680 children, the ECLL provided 15 children the opportunity to play baseball or softball on scholarship. With the near completion of our new sports complex, the number of baseball and softball registration is expected to increase by 30%. Of this number, an estimated 25% will need financial assistance to pay the registration fee. The ECLL does not turn any child away due to their inability to pay. However, our current scholarship fund cannot keep up with the increasing demand for assistance. In order to provide adequate financial assistance for every child wanting to play, we are forced to seek outside funding.

The ECLL respectfully requests a **recognition grant** in the amount of **\$5,000** from Texas Rural Communities, Inc. to provide scholarships to low-income children who would otherwise be unable to participate. If funded, the ECLL will be able to provide approximately 55 children the chance to “play ball”.

Section I: Contact Information

- a. Mr. Brent Bubela, President of the Board of Directors, 832-455-5936, PO Box 586, El Campo, TX 77437, brent.bubela@yahoo.com
- b. El Campo Little League, PO Box 586, El Campo, Texas 77437

Section II: Organizational Description

- a. Give a brief overview of your organization, including its mission, purpose, a short history and any major accomplishments.

Mission Statement

El Campo Little League is an educational-athletic organization in which every male and female athlete:

- Is coached using the principles of the Little League Double-Goal Coach;
- Has fun playing the game;
- Feels like an important part of the team regardless of performance;
- Learns "life lessons" that have value beyond the playing field; and
- Learns the skills, tactics and strategies of the game and improves as a player.

The ECLL is committed to creating a culture in which coaches, parents, fans, umpires and athletes work together to achieve our mission.

Brief History

The El Campo Little League (ECLL) was originally chartered with Little League International as the El Campo Youth Baseball, Inc. (ECYB) in 1956. By 1961, ECYB was making their place in history when the eleven and twelve year old boys' team advanced to the Little League World Series. To help financially support the efforts of the ECYB, a fundraising entity, the El Campo Little League Foundation was created. Articles of Incorporation were filed with the State of Texas on May 22, 1962 and approved on May 30, 1962. In 1965, the same boys from the 1961 team played in the Senior Division, and once again advanced to the Senior Little League World Series.

The 1980's and 90's represented a period of expansion for the ECYB. In 1983, the new high school field was constructed, the old junior/senior field was removed and additional fields were built. In 1986, tee ball was introduced and a small field was built.

By 1996, there were a total of seven fields in the ECYB, tee ball had been expanded and the girls-only league began. The playing surface, including the pitching mound, baselines and home plate of the girls' field, was skinned and an all-clay infield was installed. In January 1997, the El

Campo Little League (ECLL) was established in El Campo, Texas as a nonprofit and received its 501c3 status.

In 2002, the Girls Junior League advanced to Southwest Regional and in 2003, placed third in the Senior World Series. In 2006, the Boys Junior League Team advanced and won the Junior League World Series, becoming only 1 of 5 teams from Texas to win a Baseball Little League World Series.

Since its inception, thousands of Wharton County boys and girls have participated in the ECLL, learning good sportsmanship, leadership skills, and how to effectively work as a team, taking these skills with them as they've grown.

Section III: Program Description

- A. What community and/or constituency needs will your program meet? How did you identify the need?

Last year, the ECLL currently served 680 children in Wharton County. The children ranged in age from five to eighteen years old. If a child cannot afford the registration fee and is in need of a scholarship, the parent is asked submit an application to the ECLL Scholarship Committee. All requests must include financial information (e.g., income, number of member of household, etc.) to be carefully reviewed by the Scholarship Committee. Currently, if scholarship opportunities are unavailable, the Board of Directors will set up a payment plan or allow the parents to work in the concession stand to help offset the cost of participation.

- B. Give a brief description of your program. What are its primary goals? How will you accomplish them?

Every child deserves the chance to play Little League baseball or softball, and the ECLL has provided that opportunity to the children of Wharton County since 1956. The ECLL's primary goal is to afford a safe place for children to play Little League baseball or softball and will not turn a child away due to the lack of financial resources. This goal will be accomplished by soliciting outside funding for scholarships, assisting children in the acquisition of appropriate playing equipment, and providing leadership and training to the volunteer coaches.

- C. Describe the program participants or beneficiaries. Are you planning to serve people of a particular age group, ethnic background or income level? How many people will your program serve?

Little League baseball and softball is open to all children age 5-18. Race, religion, or income level is not considered when someone registers. The ECLL welcomes diversity and does not discriminate under any circumstance. Of the 680 program participants in 2013, 45% were Caucasian, 35% were Hispanic and 20% were African American. Currently, about 5% of our

registered players are unable to pay registration fees. Of those on scholarship, 95% are minority children. In 2013, the ECLL awarded 15 scholarships to low-income children.

- D. If you are requesting an impact grant, please describe aspects of your program that are unique or innovative. Is your program a model for other communities? How will you communicate your program's success to other communities?

N/A

- E. Include a proposed budget for your program, including the total budget for each line item and how TRC funds would be used. Are you requesting a recognition grant or an impact grant? If TRC were unable to fund the total amount you have requested, would you accept a smaller grant?

Please see attached pro forma budget.

The ECLL is in the process of building a new multi-use sports complex scheduled to open in the spring of 2014. Many minority children in our community have parents or legal guardians who are unable to take them to and from games or practices due to work schedules outside of the typical 9-5 work day. Most do not have reliable transportation to and from the current fields, which are located four miles outside the city limits. Because the new complex will be located inside the city limits, we anticipate an increase our overall participation with minority children. We are working with the City of El Campo to utilize the city transit system to shuttle children to and from practices and games. By moving the complex into the city limits and using the City's transit system, we can ensure all players have an easy, safe way to get to and from the ballpark, thereby fulfilling our goal of providing more opportunities for minority children to participate in Little League baseball and softball.

In the 2013 season, the ECLL provided 15 children the opportunity to play baseball or softball on scholarship. With the opening of the new complex in 2014, the ECLL anticipates a 30% increase in the total number of registrations. Of this percentage, an estimated 25% will need scholarship assistance.

The ECLL respectfully requests a **recognition grant** from Texas Rural Communities, Inc. to low-income children who would otherwise be unable to participate. If funded, the ECLL will be able to provide approximately 55 children the chance to "play ball" (the registration fee for 2014 is \$90). If TRC is unable to fund the total amount requested, the ECLL would appreciate any amount of funding to help our low-income children.

- F. Describe the expected outcomes or accomplishments for your program. How will you measure these outcomes?

The ECLL does not have the resources to implement a longitudinal study of children's participation in sports, however, studies have shown that participation in Little League Baseball and Softball programs strengthens leadership skills and problem-solving abilities, builds character and self-esteem, and teaches children the importance of teamwork and determination. Through the El Campo Little League program, we strive to instill these very same qualities and lessons in our youth.

G. Give a timeline for your project or program and expenditure of proposed grant funds.

Registration to play baseball and softball for the ECLL in 2014 is currently open and closes January 19, 2014.

H. If the organization has received a grant award from TRC in the two preceding years, report the timeline, outcomes and financial expenditures related to the award.

N/A