



APPLICATION WORKSHEET

1) Project Summary*

The Martial Arts Compassion Project is about helping people who do not have the same advantages in life that more privileged people do by giving them an opportunity to earn the tools to succeed. Our goal is to help youth through martial arts and life skills training to learn and better themselves in order to succeed in their goals.

As a lifelong martial artist, I know how much martial arts has boosted my self-confidence, focus, discipline, and compassion and respect for others. Unfortunately, many people do not have the luxury to take classes due to financial restraints.

Through the grant funding of the pollination project, we plan to multiply the funding through an endowment fund and continue to use it in perpetuity. Then martial arts schools across the nation will cover the wholesale cost of equipment for a new student. With the cost of the equipment covered for the martial arts school, the schools will then donate six months' worth of martial arts classes for an under privileged student.

2) Compassion*

My name is Craig Nichols, I am the head instructor at Stillwater Martial Arts in Stillwater Oklahoma. (www.StillwaterMartialArts.com) I have learned, over my years of martial arts training, that martial arts is so much more than kicking and punching. Is it great physical exercise? Yes, but we use the excitement from training to facilitate learning valuable life skills.

Every day in our classes, I sit down with kids age 4-14 and talk about how to address important topics such as, Bullying, Respect, Honesty, Self-Discipline, Health, Excellence, and Safety. We talk about how to combat peer pressure, what to do if someone is not just physically bullying us, but abusing us verbally or mentally. For many kids, being social can be extremely difficult. For example, we have many students who are homeschooled, who

have limited opportunities to make friends, and this is the exact reason why their parents sign them up for our classes. We create an exciting environment that nurtures relationships.

As martial artists, we are working towards a better world for the future. I imagine a world where everyone treats each other with respect and kindness, like we treat each other at the dojo. This is what we strive for.

If I can bring this thinking and training to kids who otherwise wouldn't have this opportunity it will make a significant impact in their lives. Our goal is not only to have great martial artists, but great people too. We will be using a work book that the students must complete which will make sure they pay it forward to others. With a grant from the Pollination Project, we will be able to help break the cycle, and improve the lives of those around us.

3) What does your project involve?*

If we receive this grant, we will use the money as a base for our plan. We will be working with businesses and individuals in our community to raise additional funds through matching and fundraising events. At this point, we have three donors lined up to match percentages of the \$1000 grant. After these donors have contributed we will have a total of \$2000.

We will also be running a Kick-A-Thon at our school. This is a fundraising event where we have our students ask their friends and family to sponsor them for a certain amount of money per kick. Then, at the Kick-A-Thon, we have all the kids come in and do 100 kicks. We have run this event twice in the past and raised \$9,000 for the local humane society, and \$4,500 for our local school district. To run this Kick-A-Thon we will use the Pollination Project funds for fliers, promotional materials, and yard signs, to make sure that our event is successful as in years past.

We are confident that with the grant of \$1000 we will be able to match, fundraise, and crowdfund at least a total of \$5,000.

Once we secure the \$5000 we will then create an endowment fund. This is a type of fund in which you cannot withdraw the principle amount; however, the interest received from the fund is distributed monthly. The money in this fund will never run out, it will continue producing these interest payments in perpetuity.

With \$5000 in the fund we can expect around \$225 worth of interest annually. Again, although this sum of money is minimal compared to \$5000, the \$225 will be distributed annually, forever. Along with the annual payment, the lump sum in the fund will actually

continue to grow, as all the interest will not be taken out each month; thus, the payment of \$225 will grow each year.

As additional funds are raised for this program, they will also be added into the fund, giving additional monies in interest each month.

Martial arts schools with social compassion will apply to become a school that we support. This money will then be distributed to approved martial arts schools around the nation to ONLY be used for the wholesale cost of a new student's martial arts equipment (i.e. Uniform). Although these uniforms are pricey at retail, the wholesale cost of a new uniform can be anywhere from \$16-80.

For instance, the uniforms at our school cost us \$30 to produce. As a result, the fund could pay for 7.5 uniforms a year, in the first year. The fund will be in charge of paying the wholesale cost of the uniforms; however, participating martial arts schools will be in charge of donating six months of martial arts classes.

In a martial arts school similar to ours, with 195 students, donating martial arts classes for one additional student does not increase our overhead. In most cases, it costs us nearly nothing for a single student, besides the cost of their uniform.

Each school will be able to take in one or two students by waiving the tuition for the students while our fund will cover the cost of their uniforms. This fund will create interest in perpetuity. The fund will continue to grow, and we will be able to continue helping students with financial need year after year. Eventually we will increase the number of students we fund each year as we continue this project.

As soon as our grant is approved we will work quickly to set up our fund and contact martial arts schools that we feel would like to be a part of the project. From this point we will need to wait a month to receive our first interest payment. During this time, the schools interested in participating will be contacting the public school system, Wings of Hope, and the like to see if they can get a queue of people in need.

Once the fund produces its first distribution of interest, funds will be sent to the school to cover the wholesale cost of a uniform, and the students can begin, building confidence and skills in their martial arts classes.

So far I have met with a financial advisor about the details of our endowment fund to confirm that this is a realistic investment. I have also spoken with individuals and businesses about matching/donating to help people from our community and other similar communities around the nation. Finally, I will contact socially conscious martial arts schools in my circle of influence to ask for donations or encourage them to apply to the project.

A Pollination Project ambassador, Tom Callos, will be assisting me with promotion of this project to martial artists, as he runs a group called THE 100 Method. This is a group of

martial arts activists (generally school owners), who work to improve our industry through environmentalism, humanitarianism, and social consciousness.

4) Why is your project needed?*

Our aim is to serve the community by providing support for students in the following areas: physical exercise, character building, and relationship building skills. Every day I have students signing up for our classes for these reasons.

Unfortunately, there are times I have to turn people away who cannot afford our classes, and I know other schools around the nation are forced to do the same. We can tackle this problem together, one student at a time, one school at a time, starting with this grant.

5) Who else is directly working with you on this project*

Besides myself (Craig Nichols), Alex Evers, the owner of Stillwater Martial Arts is cofounding this project with me. We have volunteers from our martial arts school to help raise funds and support this project. These volunteers range from parents of our current students, who want to make a difference in other people's lives the way we made a difference in their child's life, to our group of 18 Black Belts who have seen firsthand how martial arts has changed their life for the better.

Since our opening in 2004, we have secured partnerships with the Stillwater Chamber of Commerce, and numerous local businesses. We will be working with Stillwater Cares, a nonprofit organization in our community; this helps facilitate change in our community.

We are also working with THE 100 Method, which is Tom Callos' organization of Martial Arts Activists. This group will provide incredible support to our cause as well as making it widely known throughout the martial arts industry.

6) Target audience*

The people served by this project are members of our community and we value service to everyone regardless of financial status. We all need help, at some point, so the foundation of our business is to create genuine community by building relationships that work together for the greater good. Our project will be helping those that need physical exercise, character development, and relationship building.

Often I find the people who might benefit most from martial arts training, are the people who cannot afford it. This project is unique because it prompts students to cultivate useful skills that

will improve other aspects of their life: education, family life, and community building. We work together to create a mutually respectful community environment inside and outside the school. After a student has gone through the training, and another person in need is chosen to take their spot, they will continue to use the skills they learned in their martial arts classes, in everyday life, for the rest of their lives. We will recruit students with financial need by communicating with local schools and martial arts studios in the area. Additionally, we will collaborate with other organizations like Wings of Hope and Big Brothers Big Sisters.

7) What do you hope to accomplish within the next 12 months?*

Within the next three months, we will raise enough money to create our endowment fund. During this three month period, we will also reach out to Martial Arts school owners who would be a good fit for our program. We will have an application process consisting of questions like “What are the startup costs for a new student?”, “Throughout a six month period, would students be required to purchase any additional items?” We will also have a page on our website which will serve as the platform for application. This page will also provide interested parties with additional information about the project.

We will compile a list of people in need in our community, who would be a good fit in our program. We will collaborate on the method for building a list of students that might fit the program’s goals with our partner schools.

Starting in months four and five we will begin receiving our first interest payments. We will begin disbursing funds to our approved martial arts schools so they can begin the program.

Within the twelve month period we hope to have four or five people in the program who are receiving martial arts training. Within a five year period more than 50 lives will be impacted and most likely more depending on our fundraising opportunities.

8) How will you know if your project is successful?*

We will be monitoring attendance for all selected students. As long as students are attending classes regularly, we will consider our program successful. As I say in our school “You cannot become worse by showing up to practice, you can only become better.”

Selected students will also receive a journal they are required to complete during their journey. They will record a required number of acts of kindness, hours of community service, and opportunities to serve others. These books will be turned into us so we can see what they have learned, and then we will return them as a keepsake of their experience.

9) Funds*

Our grant money will be used to generate buzz and aid our fundraising efforts. Even if we stop don't meet our goal of \$5000, we will still have money to build the project, though, we will not be able to impact as many people as initially planned.. However, we can always fundraise more and build the endowment to impact more lives.

Without this grant, we cannot find donors to match our fundraising efforts. Furthermore, without an initial capital investment from this grant we will not have the funds to start any other fundraising opportunities to execute our project.

No matter what, our project will be able to run, in perpetuity, off of the initial grant amount, making this a low risk grant, with an extremely high reward.