



## **McKinney Community Development Corporation Grant Application for**

### **ESPECIALLY NEEDED's 4th Annual Fall Carnival at The Ballfields at Craig Ranch**

1. The mission of Especially Needed is to build a strong community where individuals with special needs are valued, respected and included. This corporation is organized exclusively for charitable purposes as specified in Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

The purpose of this corporation is:

- Host several events and activities throughout the year in a fun, loving and stress free environment where individuals with developmental and intellectual disabilities and their families are included and treated equally.
- Provide quality educational programs and services at a minimum or no cost to the individual or family with a disability.
- Offer community events, workshops and literature to better educate people in the community on the types of disabilities as well as proper communication and how to eliminate prejudices and discrimination against the special needs population.
- Provide an outlet of resources and information for families and individuals to ensure that people with special needs are aware of all the services that are being offered to them and their families.

Families come from all over North Dallas and the Collin County to the City of McKinney to attend the special events. The organization was formed a little over 3 years ago and we put a great amount of time and effort into these events and are constantly spreading the word to as many families as possible.

The event for which our organization is requesting funds:

#### **4th Annual Fall Carnival (for individuals with special needs and their families)**

#### **II. Event outline and details:**

This event will be held on October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2013 at The Ballfields at Craig Ranch. The target audience will be families in McKinney and surrounding cities that have children or relatives with special needs. Last year was our third consecutive year to host the event and we had approximately 275 families (750-900 people) attend. There were families from several neighboring cities (see exhibit A at the end of this document for specific geographic breakdown)

We will offer this event to families at no charge as long as an adequate amount of funds are raised. If we discover we are short on funding as the event date nears we may need to charge an admission price. This price would be no more than \$5.00 per family.

Some of the planned activities are:

At least 10 carnival booths/games (sand dig, ring toss, fishing game, can knock down, bean bag toss and more). We will also have a train and attendant to take the children around the field.

We will be hiring a face painter, balloon artist, and will have a petting zoo, cake walk, pumpkin painting, bounce houses, fire engine from McKinney Fire Dept. and representative from the McKinney Police Department that will

hand out safety items. Cinderella and a real horse and carriage will attend to provide a great photo opportunity. Several volunteers will be dressed in kid friendly costumes.

Trick or Treat Street was an activity enjoyed by all of the children. To make this event even more exciting than before last year Home Depot donated large pieces of ply board to which we cut out doors, added hinges made them look like house fronts. A local girl scout group picked themes for each house and painted them. We placed a large banner and light posts to mark the entrance of street and we lined the street with rope lights on both sides to replicate the looks of an actual street. Volunteers were posted behind the pretend houses with buckets of candy. By allowing the children to actually walk up to a door and knock, the entire experience became even more real.

We served Quizno's sandwiches (who gave us 400 sandwiches and chips at half the regular cost and we also served pizza, nachos, pickles, popcorn, cotton candy and drinks.

Below are some comments I received from families and volunteers that have attended our carnival in the past:

Heather, I brought my daughter Stephanie, to the carnival, along with family and friends. My daughter is 40 years old, of course, her mental age is very much younger, as she is unable to read or write. I have been in McKinney for nine years, praying something would be available in McKinney for young adults. In the past, we have gone to both Allen and Plano for her to enjoy socializing with other young adults. I know of nothing in McKinney. A good time was enjoyed by all. Have a blessed evening, Jackie

Heather,

Our family had a wonderful time Saturday evening at the carnival. Thank you for organizing this wonderful event! It was so nice to go somewhere where we knew we could relax and not worry about people staring if our son had a meltdown.

Thank you again,

**Jennifer Johnson**

Resource Reading

Staley Middle School

Heather

Please let me know when you plan next event, also I'm handy with drawing and calligraphy if any of those needs arise, Jordan had a great time, as did !!

Drew Miner

Thanks for all the planning you and all the other people involved did for the carnival. Our family had a great time.  
Laurie Wainscott

Hi Heather,

We were able to attend the event on Saturday. What a great time! It was really a treat! Everything was great and well planned. Lucas had a great time!

Becky Chretien-Caillier

We had a wonderful time at the carnival. Thank you so much for all your hard work! My kids loved it!  
Hallie Winters

Heather,

This message is to let you know how much the children enjoyed the carnival. Thank you and all the members of Especially Needed for carrying out such a great event. We are very grateful to all the sponsors and volunteers present that made the event so special!

Sincerely,

Maricela Reyes

*"Heather, just went to your Fall Carnival last night and had the best time of our lives! It was a beautifully put together event filled with wonderful people - can't wait to take the whole family to your next event!"*  
Ryan Herzog - Parent

"You went above and beyond!!! Truly did a wonderful, incredible job with the carnival!!! Everyone I spoke with there had a wonderful time and the children were all so happy, and that's what it was all about. All of the children had such bright happy smiles. Over the past several days I have also heard from many parents in the community and others..... word is spreading! I just wanted you to know how much your efforts are appreciated. Thank you so much for all the time you have devoted. And I have to tell you, my husband was so impressed and a little bit speechless."  
~Jamie Penlin - Parent

John Snell (volunteer) on Facebook

"Awesome event last night, Heather! It was such a blessing to see all the smiles and laughter on the kids' faces!"

Carin Duclos (Parent) on Facebook

"Had a wonderful time at the Especially Needed Fall carnival Saturday night. Thank you!"

Just wanted to tell you THANK YOU so much!! We all had a wonderful time and was great to see other families we knew and to meet some new ones.  
With many, many Blessings,  
Kim and Family

Heather, we discovered your carnival from the Dallas Child website. We are going to be in the area & thought it sounded like a great event for our family! We have a 9-yr-old daughter with cerebral palsy. We are wondering if any of the food or carnival games will cost so we can come prepared!

Thank you so much! This sounds like a fantastic community event!  
Shelley

### **How this event will advance the mission and strategic goals of MCDC and how it will impact the community.**

I am fortunate to have the opportunity to visit with many of these families and I tend to hear similar comments. They simply don't get out much in the community or go to a lot of the public events because it can be difficult for them. Location or parking can be a problem or the children may have an episode or issue dealing with their disability and other families/kids will stare or comment. They enjoy being able to meet families with similar experiences. Many of these families have never been to McKinney before. By holding events like these it is just another way we make McKinney unique.

Our organization has been contacted by several businesses that are interested in helping with future events or becoming sponsors. I am not aware of any other organization in the North Dallas area that focuses on events specifically for the special needs community.

### III. Financial

Last year the total cost for this event was approximately \$20,000.

Items that were purchased with MCDC grant money last year were:

- Ad in the McKinney Magazine for \$1200.00
- Carnival Ad and Flyer Design \$158.00
- Signs with MCDC logo \$121.90
- Web Design with KPL Communications to add the MCDC logo \$300.00
- T-Shirts, Stadium Cups, Led Clappers, Stuffed Monkey, Tote Bags \$6905.

## Event Budget:

### Items expected to be donated:

Venue – Donated by Ballfields at Craig Ranch

Food – purchased with donations

Games and prizes (several will be used from prior years) – Donated by friends and family

250 medium pumpkins – Donated by VMC Landscaping Company

Bounce Houses - purchased with donations and one provided by State Farm – Josh Ragsdale’s office/  
McKinney

Local band and stage

Expenses that could be covered by grant (marketing items). All items will have the MCDC logo

Cups with logo	600.00
Signage at event	200.00
Webpage assistance	300.00
Local magazine ads	1500.00
Balloons with logo	150.00
½ cost of Light show (instead of fireworks)	
MCDC logo presented throughout show	2000.00
T-shirts	2150.00
Flyers	300.00
Misting light up fans with MCDC logo	400.00
Balloon marker (large helium balloon to help people locate ballfields)	300.00
Stuffed Animals for the carnival booth prizes	400.00
Photo frames with MCDC logo and carnival date	200.00

Total event cost (including expected donations)	\$15,000
Total requested from MCDC	\$8500.00

## IV. Marketing and outreach

Our organization has contacts with all of the surrounding ISD’s Special Education Departments and we are able to distribute flyers home to parents that way. We plan to place event information in the local community magazines and websites. If possible we would like to have a few radio announcements. Currently our email list consists of over 675 families with special needs. Every event we host our database grows larger and larger.

Metrics to evaluate success - We require families to RSVP for the event to ensure that we are adequately prepared with enough food, activities and volunteers for the event. We will have a check in area at the event to help maintain an accurate head-count.

This concludes this grant application.

Thank you for your time,  
Heather Astuto  
Founder of Especially Needed



**“Celebrating our differences. Celebrating life.”**

EXHIBIT A

**2012 Geographic Breakdown**

273 families attended in 2012 but we only obtained location from 253 families. There were approximately 20 walk in families and did not get location. The weather contributed to the slightly lower turn out. The weather that evening was in upper 30's.

Allen	28
Anna	3
Aubrey	1
Balch Springs	1
Blue Ridge	1
Carrollton	3
Celeste	1
Celina	1
Coppell	1
Dallas	5
Denton	1
Farmersville	1
Ft. Worth	1
Frisco	46
Garland	4
Greenville	3
Glenn Heights	1
Grand Prairie	1
Greenville	1
Irving	1
Keller	2
Lewisville	2
Little Elm	7
McKinney	87
Melissa	4
Plano	30
Princeton	4
Prosper	2
Richardson	2
Rockwall	3
Rowlett	3
The Colony	1
Tom Bean	1
Trenton	1
Waco	1