NORMA DeLONG EDUCATION AWARD

CHAPTER NAME: Junior Auxiliary of Abbeville, LA

CHAPTER ADDRESS: Shelly Libersat
President
PO Box 1404
Street or P.O. Box
Abbeville, LA 70511
City State Zip

EDUCATION CHAIRMAN: Dr. Anita Carrere

POPULATION CATEGORY: Under 15,000

COST OF PROJECT: $617.47

NUMBER OF ACTIVE MEMBERS INVOLVED: 7

NUMBER OF ACTIVE CHAPTER MEMBERS: 19

NUMBER OF PEOPLE SERVED: 149 2nd graders/158 counting teacher participation

Follow outline exactly in making award presentation.

I. How was the need for the project/program determined? (100 words or less, DOUBLE SPACED; WRITTEN IN THE SEQUENCE AS LISTED BELOW) Send one digital photo per entry either email or on disc.

II. Summarize Project — 1000 words or less
Include the following:
1. Complete description of project and how it was carried out.
2. Population of area
3. Number of Active members in Chapter
4. Number of members planning and hours spent in planning
5. Length of actual program/seminar, etc.
6. Number of Chapter members attending
7. Age range of participants
8. Utilization of NAJA Resource Center (if applicable)
9. Number of people served.
10. Public Relations information for project.

III. Project Evaluation — (300 words or less, DOUBLE SPACED; WRITTEN IN THE SEQUENCE AS LISTED BELOW)
1. Feed back from participants
2. Impact on community
3. Applicability of program to other communities
4. Worthiness to present to other Chapters
5. Plans to expand into the community and/or presentation by other organization(s)
6. Plans to repeat program/project

IT IS UNNECESSARY TO SUBMIT ANY SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL.
THE AWARD WILL BE JUDGED ON THE NARRATIVE ONLY.
I. PROJECT DETERMINATION

The increase in child obesity coupled with continuous school budget cuts resulted in the Junior Auxiliary of Abbeville deciding to take action to help our students! After examining the elementary schools in our Parish, it became evident that children from a lower socioeconomic status’ have minimal exposure at home to healthy nutrition and physical fitness. Consequently, JA Members committed to developing a nutritional and physical fitness program that would target these students that maximizes fun, knowledge, physical activities, and positivity. The program is identified as, “Get H.A.P.P.Y. with JA!” an acronym for Healthy, Active, Positive, Physically Fit, Youth!
II. SUMMARY OF PROJECT

March is observed as Health and Wellness Month; what better way to celebrate this observance than with a fun, interactive service project! The goal of “Get H.A.P.P.Y. with JA!” is to expose our youth to simple activities that can be done at home or school as well as teach them healthy eating habits, teamwork and positivity. This Project has been performed at our local Head Start Programs for the past 4 years. The activities consisted of basketball toss, potato sack races, stretching exercises as well as nutrition instruction. Initially, we felt that the age group we were teaching was not grasping the importance of our project but due to our strong desire to impact our community’s youth, we decided to modify our Project and tailor it to a grade-school demographic.

The Project Chairmen met with the Administration of Eaton Park Elementary whose performance metrics within the Parish are recognized as high-risk in the parish and the state. Upon their excitement to welcome us into their school, we chose to “Get H.A.P.P.Y.” with the second graders which totaled roughly 160 pupils. After being wide-eyed at this vast number of students, the Project Chairmen knew that creating community partners would assist us in accommodating this large number of students and provide them an array of effective outdoor interaction. The Project consisted of nine round-robin segments with nine classrooms being color coded to maintain organization and easy transitions. The Project Committee provided an assortment of nutrition education, physical fitness, positive reinforcement and lots of teamwork. The Chapter and our community partners provided outdoor segments consisting of soccer ball drills, potato sack races, 3 legged races, strength relay and coordination with Anytime Fitness, Yoga with a local Personal Trainer, and a hula hoop relay race. These activities were performed in 12-minute increments and encouraged teamwork and friendly competitions between the classmates in the school yard. As they completed the segments the students were encouraged to
high-five their classmates as well as their teachers and the JA Members leading the activity for positive reinforcement. Simultaneously, the nutrition portion of the project provided the children with additional interaction with our JA Members as they instructed on the food pyramid and conducted a My Plate Relay. They also helped to assemble appetizing and healthy plate options as well as form discussion of healthy portions vice unhealthy options.

Each pupil and their teacher were able to participate in all stations. At the close of the day, each student left with a JA bag filled with an activity booklet of exercises, yoga positions, nutrition instruction, coloring pages and parental information on all the students had learned that day, sidewalk chalk, a jump rope, fruit, goldfish crackers, fruit snack pouches and water bottles donated by Anytime Fitness. More exciting our local Planet Nutrition provided smoothies for the children and staff to refresh concluding the fun-filled afternoon. The children walked away with a sense of accomplishment from completing the activities and were empowered to make healthier decisions and better relationships with their classmates. The Elementary school was overjoyed as well because they were able to keep all of the equipment provided for the event to enrich the students’ outdoor opportunities. Lastly, being it was Dr. Seuss’s birthday week at school, the Project Chairmen donated a Dr. Seuss book titled “Oh, the Things you can Do that are Good for You!” to help continue the healthy education brought to this great campus.

The “Get H.A.P.P.Y. with JA!” Project was conducted in Abbeville, Louisiana with the city’s population being 12,257. It is located within Vermilion Parish with a population of approximately 59,875, with most of this considered to be in rural areas. The Junior Auxiliary of Abbeville Chapter currently has 19 Active Members, 5 Provisional Members, 8 Associate Members and 10 Life Members. This particular Project Committee consisted of 2 Chairmen who spent who spent 12 hours planning the event. It lasted 3 hours and involved 7 Chapter Members.
The Project served 149 children enrolled at Eaton Park Elementary School ranging in ages from 7 to 9 and their teachers. The budget for this Project was set at $1,000.00 and the total cost expended was $617.47.

In order to promote attendance the day of the event, members created flyers that were distributed to the students to take home and school administration emailed all of the 2nd Grader Educators to remind the students of the activity date the week of. Our Public Relations Chairman posted information on our social media sites that was shared by parents of the students, educators of Eaton Park, our members and our community partners. Following the event, our local newspaper featured the Project with a favorable article which included quotes from the Project Chairman, children and staff and interactive photos. Due to the positive promotion in the paper and on social media, additional elementary schools within our Parish have reached out to our Chapter to schedule dates for participation in future “Get H.A.P.P.Y. with JA!” dates.
III. EVALUATION

"Get H.A.P.P.Y. with JA" was immensely successful as evidenced by the cheers and smiles the students demonstrated during the outdoor activities and the active participation from both students and teachers when answering questions and offering personal ideas during the health lessons. At the project’s conclusion, as the children were provided their smoothies and goodie bags, they took the time to hug our members and partners and express gratitude and high-fives. Our members experienced heartfelt joy from participation in this Project in addition to watching the children learn something new and enjoyed it! Our members and Eaton Park Elementary eagerly await the scheduling of next year’s Project. The various activities kept the attention of the participants and gave them tools to take home and share with their families to help spread a more active, healthy lifestyle. This new found knowledge will help our growing youth make better choices with their nutrition, as well as provide a positive role model for those around them in the future. Our goals of increasing their knowledge, teamwork with their classmates and positive responses was successful. With our donation of the new play equipment to the school we are excited for the continuation of teamwork building, as well as simple demonstrations of yoga stretches and breathing for relaxation and healthy eating instruction will build better daily routines. As mentioned in the previous section, the positive highlight of our Project in the local paper as well as the excitement and gratitude of the school administration and our attending members gives the Project Chairman the vigor needed to keep this Project moving forward annually. We look forward to continuing to provide this much needed, positive project to our youth each year and persistently meeting the deficit of the community where our children are involved.