

Frontier Fiesta Association  
FY 2010 – 2011 Program Questionnaire





- 1. Please provide a one-page executive summary of your questionnaire responses. This summary should include, in brief terms: your unit's mission, how you accomplish your unit's mission, and a justification of your unit's student fee allocation in terms of benefits for students.**

The Frontier Fiesta Association (FFA) plans Frontier Fiesta; the three-day event unites University of Houston students, faculty, staff and alumni in addition to the Houston community. The FFA is committed to providing low-cost or no-cost family-friendly entertainment and programming events that encourage school spirit with the purpose of raising funds for scholarship money.

The primary mission of Frontier Fiesta 2010 is to capitalize off the success of Frontier Fiesta 2009's increase in student and community participation, as well as working to increase participation from alumni through giving in an attempt to offset ever-increasing operational expenses like security and insurance. Also, as Frontier Fiesta 2009 was not able to generate enough profit to initiate a Frontier Fiesta scholarship endowment to ensure that the scholarship aspect of the event will continue even if the event ceases to exist, Frontier Fiesta 2010 will continue the efforts and institute a plan to meet the requirements by a specific date in the future. Frontier Fiesta 2010 will also continue to maintain the three fundamentals instilled by the 2009 Board of Directors: scholarship, community participation (with special emphasis placed on Family Fun Day), and providing meaningful entertainment to students in a safe, secure environment. This commitment to our fundamental ideals will allow Frontier Fiesta 2010 to continue reaffirming Frontier Fiesta's position as the oldest and greatest University tradition, while maintaining its heritage and properly reflecting the Universities diverse population and interests. . A progressive approach to continually reshape Frontier Fiesta, while maintaining time-honored values, will sustain the organization and event.

To facilitate Frontier Fiesta, the FFA utilizes an Executive Board (compensated/non-compensated student leaders), student volunteers, Campus Activities staff, FFA alumni and a Steering Committee. The Executive Board is appointed through an interview process every April and there are no stipulations to who is eligible to apply. The Steering Committee typically consists of staff with invested interest and/or direct involvement (Advancement, UHPD, DOS, Student Affairs and Plant Operations), dedicated University alumni and former Board members.

The event includes student conducted Broadway-style Variety Shows, Carnival Booths, Multicultural Performances, Student Organization Showcases and musical performances. Educational exhibits include historical and roving setups (Inter-Tribal Council, American Cowboy Museum, ROTC), Mad Science, petting zoo, a magician and storyteller. Family Fun Day is the highlight of this year's event and includes exhibits, carnival rides and inflatables. Family Fun Day is marketed to surrounding high school, middle school and elementary school students in addition to organizations/programs focused on youth development (YMCA, Big Brother and Sisters, Girl and Boy Scouts). To promote scholarship, the FFA annually awards \$11,000 to incoming freshman, current UH students, and graduate students.

Frontier Fiesta relies predominately on SFAC funding to continue a tradition that remains the cornerstone of University of Houston history. The students, faculty and staff participate in and contribute to Frontier Fiesta as a declaration of pride- for the University, the community and the City



of Houston. The name and theme is recognition of the region's western heritage, but the event is a source of spirited competition and celebration of the University's non-academic talent.

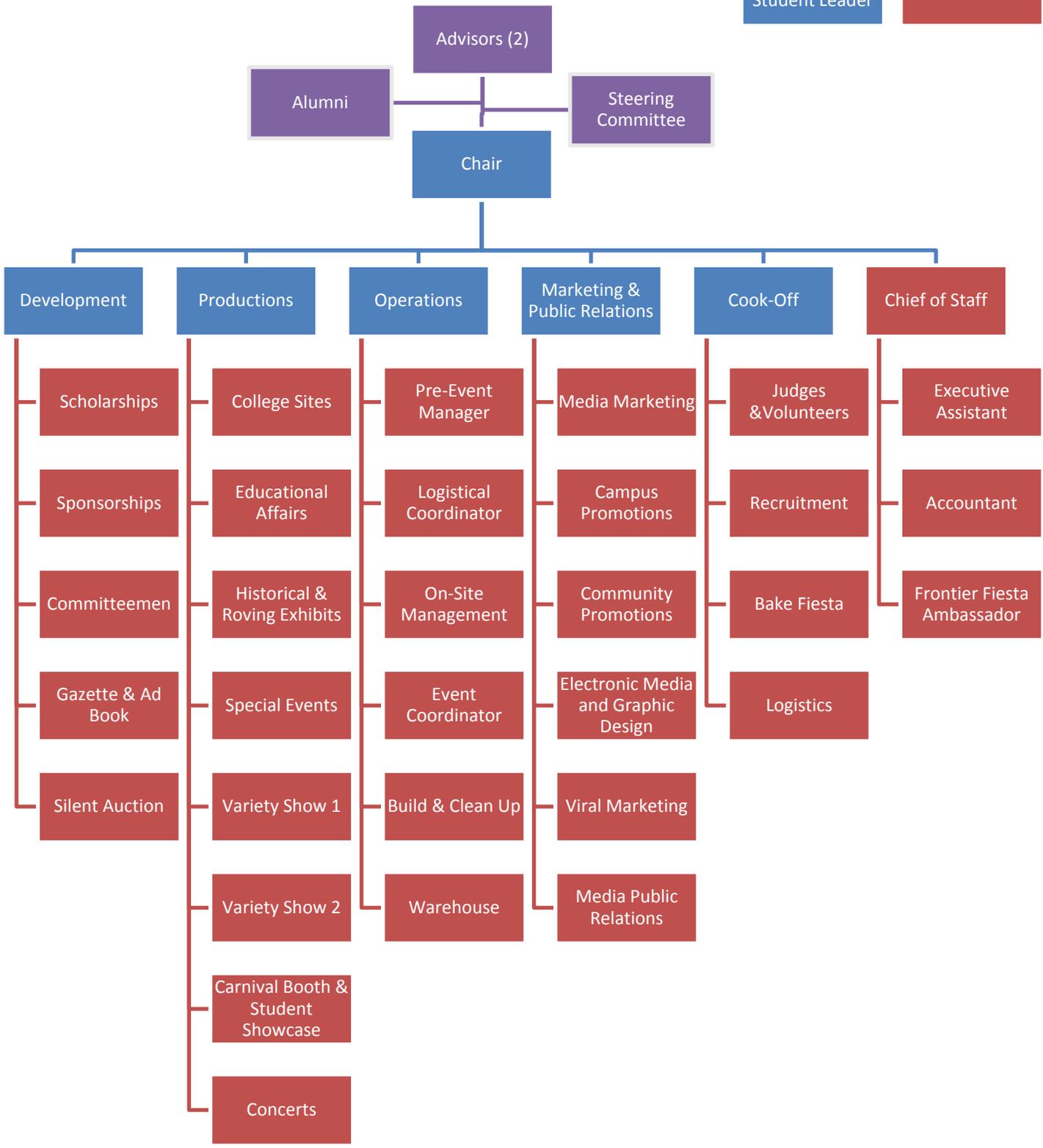


- 2. Provide an organization chart of your unit. Large units may need to have an overview chart and then more specific charts for each program. Where you have multiple staff in the same position (e.g. counselor, custodian, etc), note this on your chart. Student employees should be cited on the chart and identified as students.**

(Please see next page)



Compensated Student Leader	Student
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- 3. List the objectives that you provided with your 2009-2010 SFAC request. Please comment on your success in achieving these objectives. If an objective changed during the year, please note this and explain. Also, list any new objectives, the rationale for the addition, and comment on your success in achieving these objectives.**

Frontier Fiesta 2009 chose three fundamentals to commit the organization to for a term of more than just one year, which were: scholarship, an appropriate reflection of the entire University through participation and programming, and to provide a Family Fun Day that exhibits cultural, social, and campus wide diversity. Fiesta 2009 also chose to carry forward the 2008 goals of increasing scholarship, alleviating the financial burden for student organization participation, and implementing a more effective marketing campaign.

### **2009 Fundamentals:**

#### **Fundamental #1: Scholarship**

In 2009, the Frontier Fiesta Association awarded \$11,000 in scholarships by allocating money raised from Committeemen donations directly to the scholarship fund. This increase allowed the FFA to award four incoming freshman students \$500 each, 10 current University undergraduates with \$500 each, and to create a new category for graduate students that awarded 4 current graduate students \$1,000 each. This emphasis on scholarships, combined with an increase in marketing of the scholarships, accrued over 200 applications from across the state of Texas, including many international University students.

#### **Fundamental #2: Appropriate reflection of the entire University**

The Frontier Fiesta Association felt that an attempt to more properly reflect the diversity of the entire University of Houston campus would not only help to increase participation, but also to help abate some of the negative stigmas that are associated with the event. The FFA sought out student groups that previously did not participate in the event, and especially groups associated with areas around campus that did not usually participate or attend Frontier Fiesta. While this effort was somewhat successful in enticing new groups to participate, or at least discuss the possibilities of participation, only two non-traditional student groups participated in the actual event. These groups were the Houston Students of Ethiopia and Eretria and the Cougar Computer Science club. The National Pan-Hellenic Council did participate for the first time as an organization, but only as an alumni organization in the Cook-Off area. However, the groundwork laid last year has created an atmosphere around Frontier Fiesta exemplifying to many student groups who previously felt left out that the event is changing and willing to work with any group that desires to participate, whether they have 10 members or 100.

#### **Fundamental #3: A Family Fun Day that exhibits cultural, social, and campus wide diversity**

For Fiesta 2009, the FFA sought to return Family Fun Day (FFD) to its previous level of prestige by expanding not only the activities offered, but also the time allotted to the event. Previously, FFD was



only open for five hours, from Noon to 5pm. For 2009, Family Fun Day and the city opened at 11am so as to allow families more opportunity to attend the event and take part in the activities offered. The Frontier Fiesta Association also collaborated with the Student Programming Board (SPB) to expand the events offered while keeping with the family friendly theme. Many other organizations also participated in Family Fun Day with SPB, including the Metropolitan Volunteer Program, the Buffalo Soldiers, and the American Cowboy Museum. There was also a small, trackless train available for families to ride around the event on, and a petting zoo. Altogether, all these organizations help to provide a Family Fun Day that was as entertaining as it was culturally diverse.

**The Following are the goals stated in the FY2010 SFAC report:**

**Objective #1: Restructure the scholarship aspect of Frontier Fiesta.**

As stated previously in the Fundamentals section on scholarships, the scholarship aspect of Fiesta was restructured to allocate at least \$11,000 annually to provide 18 or more scholarships, including the newly implemented graduate scholarships.

**Objective #2: Increase campus wide participation in Frontier Fiesta.**

Frontier Fiesta 2009 was successful in attracting not only increased participation, but increased attendance as well. For 2008, only 21 organizations participated in the event, while 2009 boasted an increase of 5 student organizations participating, for a total of 26 organizations in 2009. Attendance also rose from 18,000 patrons in 2008, to 19,400 patrons in 2009, which is an increase of 11%. These increases were due to an increased awareness of the event through marketing, and a lowering of costs for student organizations. Also, close attention was paid to providing a vibrant event that was attractive to the local Houston community and marketed through radio stations so as to attract more patrons.

**Objective #3: Provide more food options at lower cost.**

The Frontier Fiesta Association was not successful in soliciting new food vendors to participate in the event so as to provide more options at a lower cost. This was due in part to the fact that there were no previous relationships with any outside vendors and therefore groundwork had to be laid with these contractors to attract them to the event. Instead, the FFA chose to contract Aramark again to provide food at the event for patrons. This option is being explored again for Fiesta 2010, hopefully with a more successful outcome.



- 4. Please discuss the means that you are utilizing to evaluate both your success in achieving the aforementioned objectives and their importance as compared to other objectives that you might pursue. Where data exist, discuss the number of persons served by each of your programs and the satisfaction level of those served. Please provide the method for collecting these data.**

As an organization, the Frontier Fiesta Association conducts numerous post-event meetings with participants, the Steering Committee and Campus Activities staff. The summaries of the meetings provide an objective evaluation in order to create a comprehensive event overview. The use of several focused discussion groups with non-participating and participating students is compiled in a report.

The inclusion of the Dean of Students office and the Division of Student Affairs has been critical in gaining a historical and objective perspective to “in and out” of Frontier Fiesta. Additionally, contact with numerous former FFA Chairmen and Campus Activities advisors has filled many gray areas in question that are not answered with the present resources.

### **Participation**

Participation from University organizations and groups is an excellent method for the FFA to evaluate success. The following chart highlights organizational participation in past years:

<b>Year</b>	<b># of Organizations</b>
2002	23
2003	30
2004	33
2005	33
2006	34
2007	22
2008	21
2009	26



## Scholarship

Scholarship is a fundamental element of the FFA. Scholarships are typically provided in the \$1,000 amount; however two categories include \$500 scholarships (Mr. and Ms. Fiesta). Incoming freshman, current and graduate students at the University of Houston are eligible to apply. The following chart illustrates the amount of scholarship dollar given in past years:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Scholarship Amount</b>
2003	\$6,000
2004	\$8,000
2005	\$8,000
2006	\$9,000
2007	\$10,000
2008	\$4,500
2009	\$11,000

## Attendance

Frontier Fiesta utilizes a daily attendance count, conducted by the security and University staff posted at the entrance to Fiesta City in order to evaluate the effectiveness of marketing and appeal of events/services offered. The following chart illustrates attendance in past years:

<b>Year</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
2003	15,000
2004	19,500
2005	30,000
2006	25,000
2007	21,000
2008	18,000
2009	19,400



## **Income**

Any profits generated throughout the three-day event serve as insight to the success of the programming and Production aspect of Frontier Fiesta. The use of Fiesta Bucks in lieu of U.S. dollars is tracked by the FFA and Campus Activities staff. As this is not a revenue generating event, most proceeds that come in directly go back to scholarships, student organizations, deposit check refunds, and to pay bills.



- 5. Please discuss any budget changes from your last (FY2010) SFAC request, their impact on your programs, and your reason for implementing them. SFAC recognizes that some programs did not receive the funds that they requested, that some programs were impacted by additional expenses after the conclusion of the budget cycle, and that some programs may be ahead of or behind their self-generated income projections. In addition, if your unit concluded FY2009 with a Ledger 3 Fund Equity balance, please describe the conditions which caused the fund balance.**

**Base Budget:**

For FY2009, Frontier Fiesta's base was converted to a one-time allocation in response to questions raised about the event's attendance and support from the University community. For FY2010, the base augmentation was denied in favor of another one-time allotment, but an additional one-time allotment of \$26,225 was approved for increased operational expenses outside of the Frontier Fiesta Association's (FFA) control. As such, Frontier Fiesta does not currently have a base budget, and therefore no money will be allotted for FY2011 under the current structure. This has forced us to request the base budget for FY2011 as a one-time allotment in FY2010.

Fiesta 2009 took great care in trying to meet or exceed the recommendations that Campus Activities, SFAC, and the Dean of Student's Office generated to counteract dropping attendance and participation numbers. Broad student input was sought from throughout the campus on how to better entice the University community to participate as well. This information allowed last year's Frontier Fiesta Association to produce an event with greatly increased student participation and attendance. Some of these initiatives included lowering costs for student groups to compete, increasing the number of alumni organizations competing in Cook-Off, and increasing the marketing pressure on campus through word of mouth and organizational booths around campus. In total, Frontier Fiesta 2009 boasted 6 variety shows, 6 carnival booths, 2 student showcases, Family Fun Day, and numerous volunteers representing 26 student organizations total, not including multiple others participating in Frontier Fiesta Cook-off with their alumni counterparts. Fiesta 2009 also had an attendance of over 19,400 patrons. Both the participation and attendance surpassed not only Fiesta 2008's numbers, but also Fiesta 2007's, and was approaching Fiesta 2006's benchmark year of 34 student organizations and 25,000 patrons.

Currently, Frontier Fiesta 2010 has matched the number of student organizations from 2009 and has generated a large amount of interest with students who have never attended the event previously. Fiesta 2010 has also maintained the benchmark that \$11,000 of scholarships will be awarded, thus reflecting our mission to give back to students and the University. This and many other factors indicate that Frontier Fiesta 2010 will be another record breaking year for the event.

However, because of the situation that has arisen with budget student fees for the 2011 fiscal year, Frontier Fiesta does not have a base budget to approve and therefore will receive no fees for FY2011. This is why Frontier Fiesta must request a base budget of \$100,714 for FY2011. Without this allocation, Frontier Fiesta 2011 will begin the year unable to pay basic bills to function as an



organization, let alone the operational expenses necessary to produce the event. This seriously jeopardizes the possibility of producing Fiesta 2011, thereby either forcing the Frontier Fiesta Association to cancel the event or produce an extremely substandard event. Both of these options can create an extremely negative opinion of one of the University's oldest and greatest traditions.

### **Operational Expenses:**

Operational expenses (raw materials, lighting, infrastructures, gas and electricity) have substantially increased over the previous years, while the base budget has not been adjusted since FY2006. Many of these increases have arisen from circumstances outside of FFA's direct control such as increasing fuel costs for generators, lumber and hardware costs, event insurance (\$14,163), and external services required by the University or others. Cost for external services includes security (\$26,979), lease equipment (\$40,000), and the warehouse rental (\$24,000). The total of basic operational expenses is \$105,142 which does not include production costs.

A one-time allotment of \$26,225.00 was approved for FY2010 and will help to offset some of these increased costs. This allotment has allowed Frontier Fiesta to continue seeking improvement on or initiate certain programs with money that was previously used to fund the increasing operational expenses. These programs include eliminating student fees required for participation, increasing and expanding scholarships, and offering more cost efficient options to student groups through vendor leveraging via bulk purchasing of production equipment, which was initiated for Fiesta 2010.

As mentioned above, the Frontier Fiesta Association eliminated the required fees for student organizations to participate in an attempt to decrease costs and therefore increase participation from smaller student groups which were previously underrepresented at the event. This effort resulted in an increase in student organizations, as described previously, but also resulted in some lost revenue that was previously used to offset operational expenses necessary to produce the event for these organizations to participate in. Also in 2009, scholarship levels were increased to \$11,000.00, including \$4,000.00 being awarded to graduate students, a new award that help to forward Fiesta's commitment to providing the University and it's students with opportunities for advancement and excellence. This was made possible by allowing all Committeemen donations to fund scholarships instead of operational expenses. For Fiesta 2010, the FFA has decided to expand our efforts to lower student organizational costs by providing packages to all organizations competing in Variety Shows at a lower cost than previous years. This is accomplished by the FFA negotiating all tent, staging, and production costs with the vendors and then purchasing the products together allowing for bulk purchases discount. Currently, the packages are priced as to allow the student organizations participating to recover the production costs from AFB funding since they are all below the \$2,000.00 cap.

Therefore the operational expense allotment of \$26,225.00 will allow the Frontier Fiesta Association to continue its commitments to lowering student organization costs, increasing participation, and increasing scholarship awards.

**Tandem Axle Trailer:**

Currently, the FFA relies on either the kindness of individuals associated with the event or University Plant Ops to provide a trailer for the Association to transport all equipment and fronts for both the event and student organizations to and from the warehouse. This presents a long-term problem as the FFA is forced to either pay for Plant Ops services to haul all necessary items, or hope that someone will be kind enough to lend the Association a trailer, which itself creates an opportunity as it is borrowed equipment and liability questions can arise. By purchasing a tandem-axle trailer, the Frontier Fiesta Association can forego the long-term opportunity of liability and increased costs of trailer usage by maintaining its own equipment. This will allow the Association to be able to transport items whenever the necessity arises, such as a sale on lumber or equipment necessary for the event, or assisting student organizations who desire to build their fronts early or solely need to use pieces that they store in the warehouse. Overall, a tandem-axle trailer would greatly expand the functionality of the Association and the event as well as saving money in the long-term by eliminating the cost of paying University Plant Ops to transport equipment.

The trailer is a 2009 tandem axle, bumper pull trailer that is 20' long by 83" wide and has safety chains, electric brakes, treated floor, pipe rails, and a carrying capacity of 7,716 pounds. It can be purchased for \$3,242.09 from Midway Trailer and Equipment, located in Madisonville, Texas.

**Curtain Hardware:**

As stated previously, the Frontier Fiesta Association has instituted a program to lower costs by providing packages to all student organizations competing in Variety Shows at a substantially lower cost than previous years. This is done by providing 40x80 tents, instead of the 40x60 previously used, and requiring the organizations to share spaces, thus performing two shows in one tent and sharing the overhead costs of tent, staging, chairs, and sound/lighting. This will also enhance the professional appearance of all shows by creating a consistency in the way the interior setup of all shows. However, because of the system and tents being used, the FFA will incur some initial costs of purchasing and producing the curtain systems for all the tents as the previously used systems will not be able to be used in the new areas.

After researching numerous different systems the Association decided on a simple system whose parts are available from many different hardware retailers, thus allowing for lower prices and an enhanced ability to replace parts, which consists of barn door trolley rails and hangers in 12' sections. The initial costs for 4 systems (3 necessary for Fiesta 2010, with 1 spare in case of failures) is \$1,770.67 and is available at Ace Hardware. The system is simple in design and requires the fewest number of parts while still allowing for ease of teardown and storage after the event.

The funding for this project will allow the FFA to continue its commitment to lowering the costs of participation to student organization's while preventing the Association from incurring additional expenses while producing a high-quality event for all patrons.

**UHPD/HPD:**

An event the size of Frontier Fiesta, which boasts 20,000 visitors a year, is required by the University and the City of Houston to have a certain amount of Police personnel on site to maintain order and allow for a quick response to handle situations before they escalate. The amount and cost of the personnel are beyond the control of the Frontier Fiesta Association. The FFA maintains a great relationship with the UHPD and HPD offices assigned to work with Frontier Fiesta and, as such, are able to acquire services at the lowest cost possible because these departments understand the budgetary constraints of the festival. However, the \$15,738 cost creates a burden on the event and requires resources that could be used to provide more services to all patrons be used to provide for the police force. Over the past few years, the Frontier Fiesta Association has worked closely with UHPD and HPD to better prevent unnecessary incidents and drastically lower the number of tickets and incidents at the event. While security should never, and will never, be neglected at the event, a one-time allotment of \$14,902.53 will fund the necessary law enforcement personnel while allowing the FFA to use the money previously allotted for this cost to fund other initiatives like additional open access sites for all patrons and additional scholarships for the University community.

**Security:**

As stated previously, in the UHPD/HPD section, security is a necessary and important priority of the Frontier Fiesta Association. Instances of violence and criminal actions have occurred at numerous festivals on college campuses across the United States. It is for this reason that the FFA works closely with University, police, and insurance administrators to ensure that Fiesta is the safest and securest event possible. Currently, Frontier Fiesta has been using 5 Star Event Services as they provide the best services available for the cost. Unfortunately, this cost is still \$11,000 on average per year. These services include the checking of bags and ids at all entrances, maintaining security at all entrance gates and in the concert areas, and overnight security of all areas and equipment. Many of these services are necessary to comply with either state laws (checking of ids to identify underage patrons and prevent the sale of alcohol) or with rider requirements of vendors (lighting and sound vendors require 24 hour security on all equipment). Security is also necessary to provide a show of force from personnel to prevent/deter would-be law breakers from attempting any unwanted actions. The use of security personnel over the years has resulted in assisting the police in producing a very safe event with a minimum number of incidents. As discussed in the section above, the use of security personnel should never, and will never, be overlooked, but a one-time allotment of \$11,519.15 will allow the FFA to use the previously allotted security funds to provide other services, such as additional open access areas for all patrons and additional scholarship opportunities for University students.



- 6. Please list your 2010-2011 objectives in priority order. Larger units may wish to group your response by subprogram. Under each objective, state the specific programs, activities, and/or services that you plan to implement to meet your objectives.**

**Goals for 2010:**

The Frontier Fiesta Association has maintained the three fundamentals adopted in 2009 for Fiesta 2010. Scholarships will be awarded at the \$11,000 level, SPB and many of the other organizations will return for Family Fun Day, as well as new organizations, and a greater on campus marketing initiative is being followed to increase University awareness and attendance of the University's oldest and greatest tradition. We are also implementing new procedures to help increase fiscal responsibility and new safety initiatives being implemented to exhibit the organization's desire to produce a safe and effective event.



**7. What are the other possible sources of funding available to your unit and what efforts are being made to access them (e.g. grants, donations, etc.)?**

The Frontier Fiesta Association actively seeks other sources of funding and systematically approaches these avenues. This is accomplished through four primary areas. The most consistent area is the Frontier Fiesta Committeemen program. This program encourages prominent alumni and community members to sponsor the event through small donations. This can be done on a yearly basis or for a larger donation; committeemen may become “lifetime” members. Lifetime Committeemen are highly regarded for their outstanding financial contributions to the FFA. For Frontier Fiesta 2010 the FFA has a goal to increase Committeemen sponsorship amounts for both Yearly and Lifetime levels under the premise that the donors are contributing to the creation of the Frontier Fiesta Endowment.

Frontier Fiesta also pursues corporate sponsorships in exchange for naming rights and advertising at the event. Some of our past sponsors include Five Star, Target, HEB, Silver Eagle Distributors, AT&T, and American Campus Communities. Confirmed corporate sponsors for Frontier Fiesta 2010 include Silver Eagle Distributors, American Campus Communities, and Cambridge Oaks.

For Frontier Fiesta 2010 t-shirts are being sold to companies to sponsor as a way to promote both Frontier Fiesta and the sponsoring companies. The front of the t-shirts display the Frontier Fiesta badge and dates of Frontier Fiesta 2010 and the back of the shirts is reserved for the logo of the sponsor.

Finally, the Frontier Fiesta Association sells advertising space in our Frontier Fiesta Gazette. In order to do this, Frontier Fiesta solicits companies interested in advertising to the University of Houston and surrounding community. The gazette is available throughout Fiesta City and contains a complete listing of all events during Frontier Fiesta as well as a map, artist information and history of Frontier Fiesta.



**8. Please describe any overlap between your unit and any other unit(s) providing services to students and the rationale for the overlap.**

Although there is no overlap between the Frontier Fiesta Association and any other University unit, we feel it is important to note the campus partnerships that occur before, during and after the event. FFA provides a unique event for the University of Houston and surrounding Houston community. The FFA has maintained long-standing relationships with various fee-funded organizations to provide collaborative programming and support for diverse interests. The fee-funded groups that participate in Frontier Fiesta in some way are: Activities Funding Board, Student Program Board, Student Video Network, Homecoming, Council of Ethnic Organizations, Student Government Association, and the Metropolitan Volunteer Program. Some of the campus partners are Bauer College of Business, Program for Excellence in Selling, Hilton, Campus Recreation and Wellness Center, Residential Life and Housing, Athletics, Student Affairs, and departments within the School of Technology, Frontier Fiesta remains an event that has no comparison at the University of Houston.