

FY 20 One-Time Allocation Request – University Bands/Spirit

The Spirit of Houston has been grateful for the additional travel funding provided for FY 19. The addition of \$75,000 permitted the Spirit of Houston to send the full Spirit of Houston to Rice and SMU, a large pep squad of band, cheer, dance, and mascots to Texas Tech, a small pep squad of band, cheer, and mascot to Navy, cheer to ECU and Memphis, as well as sending the entire Marching Band and all components (including color guard and twirlers) to the Bands of America Houston Regional. In regard to football, the Spirit of Houston will be represented at every football game this season home and away. For the Bands of America performance, the marching band performed in exhibition after the preliminary competition which is one of the largest high school competitions in the state. In addition, the band performed the National Anthem before finals and the drumline performed at the full band retreat ceremony before the awards announcement. Woodforest Bank Stadium in Conroe ISD was completely full on both sides for the Spirit of Houston performance, allowing more high school students to see the group in one day than in some entire years before. The outcome of being able to travel and perform at this event should result in significant growth of the Spirit of Houston for the 2019-2020 school year.

Our goal is to provide Spirit of Houston support at all games, home and away, as well as engage more in the community and in performances around the state. To this end, we request a one-time allocation of \$100,000 for additional travel related expenses during FY 2020. As we work to become more nationally visible at the University of Houston, a one-time amount of \$100,000 for travel will allow us to provide transportation for Spirit of Houston students to support our team at away games, as well as support for our fans and alumni across the country. The purpose of this request would be to send the full organization to the games at Oklahoma and the University of North Texas with stops the night before to perform at high school football games, pep bands/squads to Tulsa, Tulane, and UCF, and cheer/mascots to all remaining games. In addition, we would like to take the entire organization to perform in exhibition at either the Texas State Marching Contest or the Bands of America San Antonio Regional (both events are in San Antonio), as well as a full organization performance at a local high school football game and/or marching contest depending on remaining funds.

For FY 20, we are requesting a one-time allocation of \$50,000 to support the University of Houston Cheerleaders and Cougar Dolls Dance Team. The Spirit Squads at the University of Houston are two organizations that are visible at a wide range of events. In the past year, in addition to all home football, men's and women's basketball, and select volleyball, softball, and baseball games, our Spirit Squads appeared at a high number of on-campus events for many campus organizations, multiple appearances for both the City of Houston and HISD (as well as other surrounding school districts), and a high volume of public appearance requests around the state. The University of Houston Cheerleaders have grown in size and quality over the past year, maintaining over forty members into this year and with almost 100 students trying out for the team this season. The Cougar Dolls have not only maintained their size and audition pool, but have increased the quality of their performances to the point of gaining national attention. Over the summer, members of the Cougar Dolls were invited to work with the BIG3 Basketball Association to provide in-game cheer and dance support at tournaments all over the country, creating positive coverage for the Cougar Dolls and our school nation-wide.

These groups need training and development to perform at a high level while representing the University of Houston as well as supplementary support for uniforms, supplies, and student care. In the past school year, the University of Houston Cheerleaders attended the NCA Cheer at SMU, while a portion Cougar Dolls attended the Pro-Action National Dance Camp. For both of

these trips, which prepare both teams for the up-coming year in regard to training and choreography, the costs were paid for directly by the students and supplemented with money from the general Spirit of Houston budget. In addition, all uniform costs and new equipment for both groups were funded the same way. With a one-time allocation for the FY 2020, the Spirit of Houston could continue to grow the Spirit Squads to better serve more students within the organization and university. The allocation would be used to help cover summer training costs for both groups, would allow for the purchase of additional uniforms and equipment to support a growing cheer squad, and would also allow for the funding of a physical trainer to work with both groups to improve their performance and protect their health and safety. Any help to grow these two organizations so that they can continue to improve and serve our community better would be a huge boost going into the 2019-2020 school year.