

FY 22 One-Time Allocation Request – University Bands/Spirit Travel

The Spirit of Houston has been grateful for the travel funding provided by SFAC over recent years. This funding has permitted the Spirit of Houston to send the full Spirit of Houston to multiple football games as a full unit (full band, cheer, dance, and mascots), football games as pep groups (small mixtures of band, cheer, dance and mascots) including all away games in the 2019 season, two performances (2018 and 2019) at the Bands of America Houston Regional, and multiple other smaller performances, parades, and community events.

The ability to attend these events has been a major factor for the Spirit of Houston, particularly in the last two years. The visibility of our ensembles and groups has been on par with programs in conferences such as the SEC and Big XII, setting us apart from other groups in the American Athletic Conference. While the support of our athletic programs is the driving point for travel to football games and other athletic events, the visibility at both these events and other performances such as marching contests, cheer competitions, and other community events is one of the most valuable recruiting tools for both our organization and the University of Houston. Our organization has seen incredible growth due to our travel in both our student numbers and talent in all groups, as well as in our presence and visibility on social media platforms.

As we are hopefully able to move into the 2021-2022 school year with a sense of normalcy not present currently, the ability to travel and represent both our organization and university will be more important than ever. Even with our extended efforts to perform through online and social media platforms, we will lose over a year of performances and connections with audiences due to the current pandemic.

To this end, we request a one-time allocation of \$125,000 for travel related expenses during FY 2022. This allocation will help to both grow our presence across the state and nationally as well as making up for lost experiences over the last year. The ability to do this will no doubt show great results in our recruiting for our own group, the University of Houston, and for the presence of our school in normally unseen areas and venues. The plan would be to cover the costs for two games in the Houston area that will require bus travel for full band and spirit groups (Texas Tech at NRG Arena and the “away” game at Rice), a combination of as many away games as possible with small pep bands and spirit squads (versus Tulane, Temple, USF, and Tulsa), back to back performances in November at the two largest high school marching competitions in the state (the UIL State Marching Contest and the Bands of America San Antonio Super Regional), as well as bus travel for two local exhibitions area marching contests and high school football games in the Houston area. This amount would provide support for the organization in a way that we believe would pay great dividends for

our students, their potential audiences, and for the University of Houston for which we are ambassadors.