

## FY 23 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 away games in the 2021 season, exhibitions at multiple marching contests around the city and state, and multiple other 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 four 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 part from other groups in the American Athletic Conference. With the current transition to the Big XII, we are coming in on level with other programs as far as the expectations for our groups in regard to travel. 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 move through a more normal 2021-2022 school year that hopefully continues into the next cycle, 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 lost over a year of performances and connections with audiences due to the pandemic. It will be a multi-year quest to move through the loss of appearances and exposure, and we aim to continue building these experiences for our students and audiences.

To this end, we request a one-time allocation of \$125,000 for travel related expenses during FY 2023. 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 two years. 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 current plan for this would be to cover away game trips to begin the year (versus UT-San Antonio and Texas Tech), a full band trip to the SMU game once the schedule is announced, fund pep band travel to conference games once the schedule is released, and to perform at exhibitions locally and statewide again. 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.

## FY 23 One-Time Allocation Request – Instrument Purchase for Marching Band

Throughout recent history, the Spirit of Houston has received considerable support from the Student Fees Committee that has allowed for the purchase of equipment for the programs in the organization. This has included uniforms for all groups (band, spirit, mascots), performance equipment for all groups, and select musical instruments for the marching band. This support has been a large part of the success our students have had and in turn has greatly aided in our recruitment and retention efforts.

Regarding instruments for the marching band, there are instruments that are area specific to marching band. This includes marching percussion (drumline), sousaphones (tubas), mellophones (marching french horns), and baritones (marching euphoniums). These are instruments that are provided by high schools as well, as they are not used in concert band setting but only for marching band. We have recently purchased a new set of sousaphones and drumline thanks to the committee, and the current mellophones and baritones are still functional and were purchased with the support of the committee as well.

While these instruments necessary to field a marching band, the other instruments utilized offer different challenges. These include all woodwinds (flute, clarinet, saxophone) and two brass instruments (trumpets and trombones). All these instruments can more commonly be used in a marching band (fall) and concert or jazz band (spring) for secondary schools in public and private education. They are also the most cost efficient for individuals to purchase, while still not cheap for most families. We have in our history depended on students in these sections to provide their instruments. The inherent challenges include the fact that not all students can provide their own due to financial hardship, and for some that can they have a need to not utilize these instruments outdoors. For music majors, the instrument may be required to get them through four to five years of college and the added risks of playing the instrument in an outdoor setting (even if properly maintained and cared for) are too high for them to want to risk on the field.

In relation to these instruments, we would like to request a one-time allocation of \$150,000 for FY 2023. This allocation would be used to purchase full instrument sets of flutes, clarinets, saxophones, trumpets, and trombones, completing the instrumentation of the Spirit of Houston Marching Band. These instruments, when properly maintained, would have a shelf life of 10+ years and the purchase would have a lasting effect on the band. We would provide every student in the program an instrument, meaning that no one would ever not be able to participate due to not being able to afford a personal instrument and no student would ever sacrifice an instrument needed to complete their degree to outdoor concerns such as weather or general wear and tear. This would serve as another major recruiting tool for incoming

students and place us within a limited but prominent group of marching bands that offer this for their students.