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AN EVALUATION  
OF THE  
MANCHESTER YWCA  
"Female Intervention Project"

GRANT NUMBER

78-II-JJ 2085 D01

NCJRS

JAN 5 1979

ASSIGNMENTS

PROJECT PERIOD

February 3, 1978 - February 28, 1979

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NEW HAMPSHIRE GOVERNOR'S COMMISSION ON CRIME AND DELINQUENCY

December 20, 1978

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## BACKGROUND

The Female Intervention Project was supported in 1975 by LEAA funds through the National YWCA Organization. Initially, the project served as a pilot geared towards providing services to both juvenile and adult female offenders.

In December, 1976, the New Hampshire Governor's Commission on Crime and Delinquency awarded funds to the Manchester YWCA to continue the Female Intervention Program.

A staff evaluation completed in December, 1977 concluded that the project had successfully addressed its objectives. Therefore, second year funding was recommended.

In February, 1978, the Crime Commission approved second year funding to the Manchester YWCA in the amount of \$15,143 federal dollars. A local match of \$15,143 was provided by the Manchester YWCA. The project period has been established as February 3, 1978 through February 28, 1979.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Manchester Female Intervention Project is a community-based program designed to offer crisis services to approximately fifty adolescent females from the Manchester area during a one year period. The crisis services provided were to include crisis housing and intervention in runaway, suicide, school drop-out and family crisis situations. This project was to provide support, counseling, work, and recreational opportunities for young female offenders and potential offenders by meeting the following objectives:

1. To provide a community-based program that would expand the opportunities of girls from low-income high crime areas, keep them off the streets during off school hours, and divert them from involvement with the criminal justice system.

2. To provide services that will work with participants and their families to strengthen and improve home atmospheres and keep the young women in their homes.
3. To provide supportive services designed to encourage female youth to remain in school or seek alternative learning situations.
4. To help troubled adolescent girls develop positive self images.
5. To provide experiences that will give young women an opportunity to better understand themselves with opportunities to practice skills and behaviors necessary from competent participation in society.

Two staff positions, those of Project Director and Assistant Director were to be funded through this grant.

The Project Director was to coordinate, supervise and administer all phases of the program. She was to be directly involved in counseling, training volunteers, organizing field trips, tutoring, and making referrals, when necessary. In addition, the Director was to coordinate this project with other community agencies and attend community and other organizational meetings, when appropriate.

The established qualifications for the Project Director include the possession of a Masters Degree in the Human Services or equivalent experience. In addition, it was required that the Director be creative in program development and be tuned in to specialized needs of troubled girls.

The Assistant Project Director was to help the Project Director with recruitment and training of volunteers and coordination with community agencies. In addition, the Assistant Director was to be directly involved in counseling, organizing field trips, tutoring and making referrals, when necessary.

The Assistant Director was to possess a Bachelor's Degree in Human Services Education or Liberal Arts. In addition, she was to have experience in working with teenage women as well as skills in leisure time activities.

#### PROJECT OPERATION

The position of Project Director is currently filled by Ms. Connie Butterfield. Ms. Butterfield was hired as Director on September 19, 1977. She is a recent graduate of Florida State University and holds a Masters Degree in Social Work.

Ms. Beth Ferrant was hired as the Assistant Project Director in November, 1977. Ms. Ferrant possesses a Bachelors Degree in Human and Behavioral Sciences from Colby-Sawyer College. Prior to her employment as Assistant Project Director, Ms. Ferrant served as a volunteer and intern with the Manchester Female Intervention Program.

The Female Intervention Project is designed to provide troubled females with the needed services and positive learning experiences which will enhance their growth as young women. It was proposed that during the grant period the project would serve a minimum of fifty females between the ages of ten and eighteen from the greater Manchester area. Participants are classified into three categories: status offenders, delinquent offenders, and potential offenders.

Status offenders and potential offenders are referred to the Manchester Female Intervention Project from criminal justice, social service agencies and parents in the Manchester community. In the prior grant period, self referrals were accepted into the program. This practice resulted in girls referring themselves solely for the use of the YWCA facility and programs. Consequently, this practice was abolished.

Once a referral is made to the program, a meeting is set up between the young woman and her family, the referral agent and the Project Director. The program is explained and various problems of the potential participant are discussed. It should be emphasized that entrance into the Intervention Program is purely voluntary.

During the period January 1, 1978 through September 30, 1978, twenty-seven girls were referred to the program. Data for that period reflect the following sources of referral:

Friends	.....	9
Parents	.....	3
Division of Welfare	.....	3
Office of Youth Services	.....	2
Neighbor	.....	2
Child and Family Services	.....	2
Department of Probation	.....	2
Big Brother/Big Sister	.....	1
YDC	.....	1
Self	.....	1
Visiting Nurses Association	.....	1

An additional thirty-three participants, admitted in previous periods, remained active in the program during the report period.

The primary problems presented at the time of admission are as follows:

Poor home situation	8
Emotionally disturbed, loneliness	7
Involvement in court system	5
Family problems	4
Failing in school	2
Poverty	2
Unwed mother	1

(These figures are not mutually exclusive.)

The Intervention Project, as outlined in the proposal, is comprised of four components:

1. Vocational Planning
2. Life Enrichment
3. Crisis Services
4. Residence

Each component of the project and programmatic changes experienced during this grant period will be discussed below.

#### VOCATIONAL PLANNING

This component is intended to provide the skills and tools necessary for realistic vocational planning. Interviewing techniques, application writing, aptitude testing, and job development are among the services offered intervention participants. Field trips, utilized to provide first-hand experience and exposure to a variety of occupations were to be conducted six to ten times a year. Referrals were to be made to other community programs for training and job development. Among the referral agencies to be utilized were the Work Incentive Program, the Concentrated Employment Program, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, Neighborhood Youth Corps and the Department of Employment Security.

During this grant period, the Vocational Planning Component has been expanded to include participant employment in the YWCA. This service was to involve girls in actual short-term employment on a project basis within the confines of the YWCA. The goal was to provide on-the-job training and, at the same time, observe the interactions and behavioral problems of the girls. Because the girls were to be hired only until a certain project had been completed, the Intervention Project can make use of this program on a rotating basis and thereby can serve a much larger number of girls than a typical youth employment program would.

Data for the period January 1, 1978 through September 30, 1978 indicate the following participation in the Vocational Planning Component:

<u>FUNCTION</u>	<u>NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS</u>
Crafts and skills classes	14
Cooking and etiquette classes	14
Job-training sessions	12
Job placements	12
Preparation for spring dinner	12
Girls Club - typing class	4
Girls Club - sewing class	4
Project "training" at YWCA	3
Project "training" at YWCA	2
Volunteer training	2

#### LIFE ENRICHMENT COMPONENT

The Life Enrichment Component consists of outdoor activities, field trips, recreational afternoons and evenings, and other YWCA activities. This program is designed to furnish young women with stress coping and group problem solving skills as well as to provide them with a variety of cultural and educational experiences.

Field trips are used to introduce participants to many cultural and educational resources in the community and the New England area.

Recreational afternoons and evenings are designed to provide constructive leisure time activities and to integrate youthful offenders and potential offenders with people from various life styles. Recreational activities include swimming and gymnastics, supper and holiday parties, crafts and movies.

Female intervention participants are also encouraged to be involved in routine and special YWCA activities. Programs are scheduled so that the number of intervention participants never surpasses the number of regular YWCA girls in any joint program.

During the past year outdoor activities have consisted of the following:

- Polar caves expedition
- Hike and boat ride at Mt. Washington
- Hike and picnic at Lake Massabesic

Outing at Clough State Park  
Beach and kite flying day  
Visit to Walden Pond and Drumlin Farms  
Hike at Bear Brook and picnic  
Hike at Mt. Belknap  
Sleigh rides  
Dog-sled rides  
Winterfest parade

### CRISIS SERVICES

The crisis services component is designed to provide supplemental supportive services as needed to project participants. The services to be provided in this component include:

- a. personal education programs
- b. referrals to professional agencies
- c. tutoring
- d. one-to-one involvement with responsible adults
- e. informal counseling
- f. work with participants families

Informal counseling is the most frequently utilized service in the Crisis Service Component. A new aspect of the program provides a Drop-In Center available to the intervention participants four days a week from 2:30 - 4:30 in the afternoon.

During the period January 1, 1978 through September 30, 1978, the Drop-In Center has been used on seventy-nine occasions for the purpose of informal counseling.

Short-term therapeutic counseling, consisting of three to five sessions, is mandatory for all intervention participants. The parent or referral agent is required to attend at least one of these counseling sessions. During the grant period thirteen girls have participated in short-term therapeutic counseling. Also, during the grant period counseling services have been expanded to include assigning volunteers to girls on a one-to-one basis as "special friends". The Special Friends Program, which provides intervention girls with relationship counseling began one year ago



with assistance provided by Rich Maxium of the Concord Friends Program. Recruitment techniques used to acquire special friends include newspaper articles, radio spots, public presentations, and word of mouth. In order to qualify for the Special Friends Program, volunteers must meet the following criteria:

1. A commitment of a minimum of one year to the program including three hours per week with a special friend.
2. Three qualified references.
3. A personal interview with the Intervention Director and Assistant.
4. An understanding of reality therapy.
5. Must be nineteen years or older.

Once a volunteer is accepted into the program, she must attend a one day orientation meeting. The orientation consists of an overview of reality therapy, role playing, and learning to deal with various problems of adolescence. Training sessions are continued on a monthly basis, thereafter. In addition, special friends must participate in six out of twelve formal activities offered by intervention staff. Currently, thirty-seven volunteers are involved in the Special Friends Program.

Each special friend is required to evaluate her intervention girl every six months. The latest evaluations that were available for inspection by this writer indicated that all special friends maintained regular contact with the girl assigned to them by the Intervention Program. Sixty-three percent maintained contact on a weekly basis, twelve percent saw their special friend less than once a week and twenty-five percent maintained contact more than once a week. When asked how the special friend would rate her girl's behavior in public most indicated that their girl's public behavior was commendable. In most cases when behavioral problems did exist with the girls,

it was the result of peer pressure. The overall response of the evaluation was that the Intervention Program had an affirmative impact on the girls, with the majority of benefit stemming from the Special Friends Program and the provision of structured-time activities.

One very important aspect of the Crisis Services Component is the work conducted with the participants' families. During the course of a year, the Intervention Director attempts to see the families of each intervention participant at least once or as frequently as deemed necessary. Home visits are frequently conducted when transportation problems persist. In most other cases, contact is over the telephone. In addition, parents are requested to fill out evaluations on the behavior of their child at home and are requested to remark on any progress made by the child since participation in the Intervention Program. The evaluations are sought after the child has participated in the program for one year. Eleven responses have been received thus far this year. All indicated that the parent-daughter relationship has improved since involvement in the program. Eight of the parents also indicated improved relations with other members of the family and, friends and neighbors. In total, all of the parental responses were favorable and indicated such things as "seems to be trying to stay out of trouble", "seems to be avoiding undesirable companions", "helps around the house", and "tells me where she is going when she leaves the home".

Because the Intervention Program is a multi-facet, self-contained program, the number of referrals made to outside social service agencies is limited. Only two referrals were made during the grant period. The Intervention Director maintains regular contact with the Adolescent Center at the Manchester Mental Health Center for therapeutic consultation.

In addition to the Intervention Program evaluations completed by

special friends and parents, intervention participants are requested to complete a yearly evaluation indicating their progress in the program. The average age of the respondents was thirteen years with participation in the program averaging sixteen months. The evaluation asked the girls to indicate how the YWCA program has helped them get along with each of the following: parents, family members, teachers, employers and friends. Ninety-five percent indicated improvement in their relationship with their parents. Sixty-eight percent indicated improved relations with other family members and friends. Forty-seven percent reported improved relations with their teachers and eleven percent said the program had helped them improve relations with their employers.

#### RESIDENCE

This component is intended to provide intervention participants with temporary YWCA housing. Intervention participants in need of housing would be integrated into the regular YWCA Residence Program, when feasible. Eligibility was to be determined by need, referral, and space available.

Funds through this grant were allocated to provide rent and food for approximately three young women for up to ten weeks each.

The Residence Program provides for informal counseling and support for young women learning to live with one another. The women are responsible for themselves, their rooms, meals, shopping, respecting rights of others and learning to accept and abide by rules and regulations of Residence.

Thus far during the project period two girls have been served by the Residence Component. According to the Intervention Director, the administration of the YWCA is uncomfortable with integrating intervention girls with the regular YWCA female population. Consequently, housing of intervention girls is solely on an emergency basis.

The Female Intervention Project is advised by a seven member steering committee. The committee meets once a month and serves in an advisory capacity to the Intervention Director and Assistant. Among the responsibilities of the steering committee are fund raising, policy making, statistical review and suggesting methods of up-grading the program.

#### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

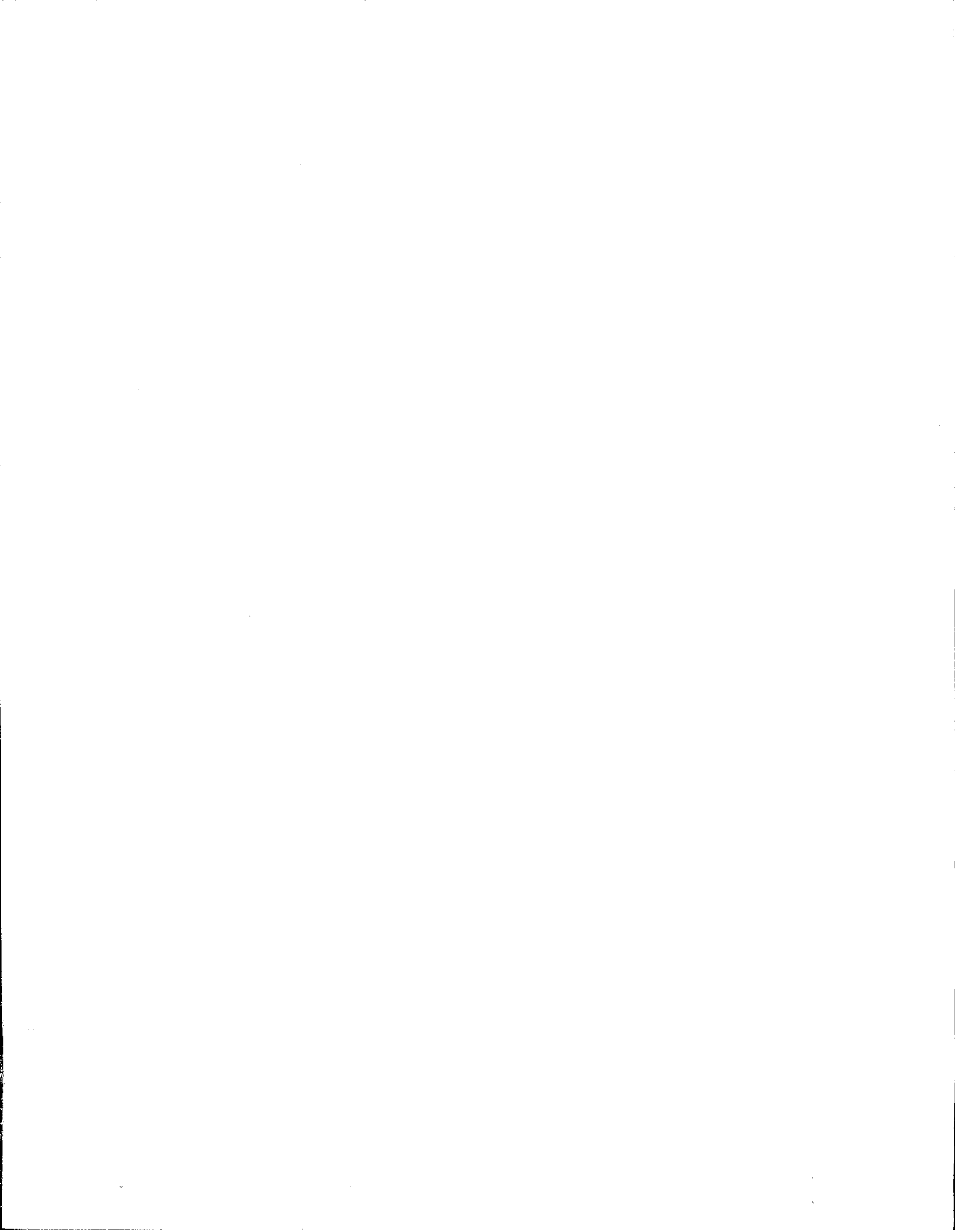
The Manchester YWCA Female Intervention Program is presently in its second year of funding through this Commission. The project is currently serving sixty girls from the Greater Manchester area, twenty-seven of whom have been referred during the current grant period. Of the twenty-seven girls referred this year, five (19%) were referred from the juvenile justice system. The remaining twenty-two (81%) are classified as potential offenders.

As indicated by the results of internal program evaluations the program is successfully addressing the needs of the delinquent-type offender by offering family, short-term and relationship counseling, as well as by providing time-structured activities to keep the youths off the street during off school hours.

The intervention staff has also successfully addressed each of the proposed objectives. In addition, as a result of continuous program assessment the program has been expanded to include a Special Friends Program, a Drop-In Center and a Participant Employment Program. Success is evident in each area as indicated by good participation as well as favorable evaluation from special friends, parents, and program participants.

Certainly, the project staff has demonstrated extreme dedication and foresight in revising the program to best fit the needs of the population served. Throughout the period of program revision, the intervention staff has received support both from their steering committee and other YWCA staff members.

No programmatic difficulties have been identified with respect to this project. Therefore, considering the demonstrated success of this project, third year funding on a 75/25 basis, as consistent with Commission policy is recommended.



**END**