

APPLICATION FOR THE HERMAN GOLDSTEIN
EXCELLENCE IN PROBLEM-SOLVING AWARD

Chico Police Department
Alcoholic Beverage Control Grant

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PERF Award Application

PROBLEM STATEMENT AND BACKGROUND:

The Chico Police Department serves a city of approximately 48,000 residents (which includes an annual college student population of approximately 22,000), as well as an unincorporated urban population of approximately 45,000, for a total urban population of 93,000+. This includes more than 120 county pockets within the city. Additionally, the City of Chico, being the largest in Butte County, attracts people from many other cities in the five-county area. Chico has a significant "night life" which often revolves around the use and abuse of alcohol. Within the incorporated city, there are 177 active alcoholic beverage licensees. A large portion of these licensees are located in a concentrated downtown area adjacent to the university and much of the housing occupied by college students.

Additionally, a large number of high-school-age children from the Butte County area, as well as the surrounding counties, are attracted to Chico. These students are significantly and negatively affected by the atmosphere of alcohol use by college-age people.

In essence, literally thousands of young people live and recreate in a concentrated area with numerous liquor establishments in the same vicinity. The portion of the population which is under the age of twenty-one is exceptionally large, given the size of the community.

For many years, the use and abuse of alcohol have been issues which have required much attention and expenditure of law enforcement resources. In 1985 and for several years thereafter, Playboy Magazine and MTV (a music video television program) identified California State University, Chico, as the "Number 1 Party School" in the nation. As a result, the Chico Police Department and the community in general have been negatively impacted by this situation. Significant problems on any given Thursday, Friday, or Saturday night include party complaints (often with hundreds or even thousands in attendance), drunks; fights, DUIs, minors in possession, urinalators, and many other problems associated with large numbers of persons waiting in line to enter drinking establishments, such as vandalism and graffiti (50-100 persons waiting in line is common).

Chico citizens are routinely subjected to the activities generated by those persons who overindulge in the use of alcohol during annual "springtime activities" and during the warm months at the beginning of each school year. Two nights of rioting occurred in both 1987 and 1990, resulting in numerous arrests and injuries of citizens, police officers and property. While it should be noted that it is a small percentage of the population which causes a majority of the problems, alcohol use and abuse are enormous problems for the City of Chico. For example, we have discovered that the use of fake/counterfeit identification by underage persons is so prevalent that it is not unusual for a licensee to collect 30 to 40 fake ID's during a single month. This, of course, does not include those persons whom the doorstaff simply turn away because of insufficient or questionable identification.

In a survey conducted in 1994 by California State University, Chico and the Chico Unified School District, it was reported that 87% of university students under 21 drink alcohol, and 67% reported some form of public misconduct such as trouble with police, fighting, DUI and so on. The survey further revealed that 39% of Chico's eleventh graders had recently obtained alcohol by asking strangers to buy it for them. Essentially, there exists a "party mentality" within the student community, and due to the yearly turnover of students, it is difficult to reach every individual who attends school within this community. Consequently, any alcohol issues which are addressed require constant maintenance.

PAST HANDLING OF THE PROBLEMS:

The Department's past methods for handling problems associated with alcohol use and abuse in the Chico area have included the following:

1. Bar checks by downtown area officers.
2. Decoy door personnel "sting" operations.
3. Minor decoy "sting" operations.
4. Individual and group meetings with bar owners and staff to discuss issues.
5. Interaction with student and campus organizations in regard to alcohol issues.

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- 6. Interaction with the media to solicit a community-wide effort in dealing with alcohol-related problems.
- 7. Working with younger students in the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) Program.

A grant of \$100,000 was awarded by the State of California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control to the City of Chico Police Department for the calendar year of January 1, 1995 through December 31, 1995.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES UNDER THE GRANT :

The goals of the grant effort are varied, centered around the objective of reducing calls for police service in the downtown and westside areas. These goals are addressed primarily through education and awareness, with a heightened enforcement effort by both the grant officers and patrol personnel. There are two full-time peace officers and one full-time community service officer assigned to the grant.

Prior to submitting the grant proposal, the grant writer gathered information and statistics on alcohol-related problems and calls for police service. Information was collected from school district and university student surveys, in-house records, and a dispatch survey of reported incidents at "example" licensee locations. What follows is a statistical comparison of available base year (two years averaged) and grant year information for the period **January 1 through June 15**.

Violation:	Base Year: (1994 & 1995)	Grant Year (1995):
DUI	259	153
647(f) PC (Drunk in Public)	420	329
Fake ID	14	24
415 PC (Fight)	349	301
374.3(a) PC (Urinating in Public)	40	24
Minors In Possession	33	51
Noise & Party Complaints	1,334	1,279
DUI BOLO (Poss. Drunk Driver)	196	217
TOTAL:	2,645	2,378

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Directed enforcement by grant officers and patrol personnel has encouraged a 29% increase in calls for service in the categories of minors in possession, fake IDs, and DUI BOLOs. However, violations in all other alcohol-related categories showed an average decrease of 24%, resulting in a decrease in total alcohol-related calls for service by **10%**.

STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING THE OBJECTIVES:

Meeting with Judges and District Attorneys. ABC Grant Officers began the grant year by holding an informational meeting with local District Attorneys and Judges, offering them statistical and cost information about alcohol-related violations. This meeting proved to be beneficial for all who attended, assuring that everyone was aware of the grant goals and how we might all work together in order to achieve them.

Meeting with Licensees. ABC Officers held an informal meeting to outline the goals of the grant. An invitation was extended to each of the licensees within the City of Chico. Grant Officers gave the licensees an overview of the grant and general information on alcohol laws, including an extensive question and answer period.

Minor Decoy "Sting" Operations. These operations involve a minor, who appears well under the age of 21, entering a licensed establishment and attempting to purchase an alcoholic beverage. The minor is under constant supervision by a sworn peace officer. Success of this program is measured by the number of locations which refuse to sell to the decoy. To date, the decoy operation has been conducted at approximately 55 locations, with only nine establishments completing a sale.

If an establishment sells to the minor, both the individual clerk and the licensee suffer negative repercussions of the sale. The clerk is cited for the misdemeanor violation, and the licensee faces a possible accusation against the alcohol license.

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Fake ID "Sting" Operations. These operations are implemented using the "Cops in Shops" and "Citizen's Arrest" Programs. "Cops in Shops" involves an undercover police officer posing as a doorman or store clerk in order to catch those persons attempting to use a fraudulent or counterfeit ID. The "Citizen's Arrest" Program is a cooperative effort involving selected doorstaff of downtown licensees, who are trained by the ABC Grant Officers in the proper way to conduct a citizen's arrest. When the doorperson encounters what he believes to be a fake ID, he detains the subject under citizen's arrest. He then uses a personal pager to contact the ABC Officers who respond immediately. We have run this program four times since the inception of the grant, with a tremendous success rate. A local bar owner stated recently that, as a result of this program, in the last six week period, his door staff have seized only three fake ID's, as opposed to the prior average of 30 to 40 in a single month.

Reverse "Sting" Shoulder-Tap Operations. This program was developed to address the problem of underage drinkers who obtain alcohol by asking strangers to buy it for them. It involves the use of an undercover officer who is under 21 contacting patrons outside of off-sale establishments. The decoy states that he is under 21 and that the store personnel are checking IDs of persons purchasing alcohol. He then asks the subject to purchase alcohol for him. If the subject purchases the alcohol, the transaction is witnessed by at least one other sworn officer and the subject is arrested at that time.

Grant officers felt that the most effective way to educate the community about this problem was to invite local news media to accompany them on these operations. On two occasions, the operations were video taped and broadcast with the story on area television news programs.

This was an extremely effective tool in dealing with minors obtaining alcohol. When running this operation for the second time, the grant staff found that information had already reached many business owners and citizens. At one busy location, the decoy was refused 13 consecutive times and was told by management at two other locations to leave the premises immediately or the police would be called.

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Dedicating a Minimum of 25% of Grant Officers' Time to Enforcement. Officers' enforcement time is spent on alcohol-related violations, including minors in possession, furnishing alcohol to minors, fake IDs, urinating in public, public intoxication, and local ordinances pertaining to large parties and neighborhood disturbances involving alcohol.

Encouraging More Bar Checks By Patrol Officers. Grant officers have conducted roll-call training, instructing patrol officers in how to conduct more thorough bar checks and inspections of licensed premises. A procedural guidelines handbook, created by grant staff, will be in use by patrol staff prior to the end of the grant period.

Conducting Administrative Inspections (and Accusations, where applicable) on Downtown/Westside Licensees. This type of inspection, while a useful tool in working with reluctant licensees, is used sparingly with the majority of establishments in the city. We have an excellent rapport with the liquor licensees and feel that they eagerly strive to comply with all portions of the ABC Act. The few licensees who pose a problem to the enforcement efforts have, as a result of numerous contacts, been subject to enforcement inspections and accusations based on those individual situations.

Conducting IMPACT (Informed Merchants Preventing Alcohol-related Crimes and Tendencies) Programs at Each Licensee Location. Under this program, grant officers and a state ABC officer conduct educational inspections of licensed premises. At that time the licensees are provided with a written itemization of violations, if any, and information about current legislation. The establishments are then given ample time to bring the premises up to compliance. This has been an invaluable tool in our successful working relationship with the licensees, providing feedback for both the ABC officers and the licensees.

Education and Awareness for Each Downtown and Westside Licensee. At least once per quarter, grant officers meet with each of the downtown and westside licensees to provide information and training in regard to issues such as false identification, community orientation, special events such as Halloween, St. Patrick's Day, and college spring activities, the LEAD (Licensee Education on Alcohol & Drugs) Program, and other issues as they arise.

Presentations to Local High Schools and College Classes or Assemblies. Due to the high ratio of underage persons in the Chico area, providing education on alcohol laws is essential in combating alcohol use and abuse. We have responded to requests for presentations from the secondary public schools in the area, as well as the junior college and university. Additionally, we have created and distributed an informational pamphlet for minors addressing alcohol-related problems and laws. A copy of this pamphlet is attached.

Media Coverage. We have received excellent cooperation from the news media. As a result; information has been dispersed quickly through radio, television, newspaper and school publications, as well as by word of mouth. Grant officers produced a public awareness segment for RTV, a local cable television storyboard program, on alcohol laws and responsible alcohol use during St. Patrick's Day. This program aired 3 times per day for the week preceding St. Patrick's Day. A sample of newspaper coverage is attached.

Meetings and Presentations to Influential Campus Organizations. The grant officers' efforts in this area have met with a great response from the student and campus organizations in the Chico area. We have received positive feedback from fraternity and sorority members. Officers have also given presentations to and worked in conjunction with organizations such as CADEC (Campus Alcohol & Drug Education Center), the Intra-Fraternity Council and the Panhellenic Council (local Greek organizations), with very positive results.

Meetings and -Presentations to Community Groups. Grant officers have given numerous informational presentations on the grant and alcohol laws. A question and answer period facilitates the exchange of information and ideas. Groups addressed include the Noon Exchange Club, Chiefs Advisory Board, and Block Captain's Meetings (Neighborhood Watch).

Utilization of the Citizen Volunteer Program. Grant officers have enlisted the assistance of the in-place "Volunteers In Police Service". Volunteers have assisted us by compiling data, providing additional

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support during public presentations and enforcement activities, and working with patrol officers during special events.

Training Segment in the "Citizen's Police Academy". This is a three month academy where Chico citizens receive a variety of training in regard to police service. The segment provided by the ABC officers included an overview of the grant, information on alcohol laws, and information for minors.

Roll-call Training and Ongoing Standard ABC Operating Procedure for Patrol Officers. The grant officers have implemented a procedure in the computer dispatch system which documents bar checks and the handling of alcohol-related crimes, and expedites processing of ABC-related cases through the District Attorney's office. There is a "Unicode" which may be entered into the dispatching and reporting system which causes a copy of the report to be forwarded to the ABC officers. In addition, grant staff use a red stamp to show that the case was generated or handled by the grant officers. Alcohol-related training will continue to be a regular part of roll-call and in-service training for patrol officers.

ASSISTANCE FROM OTHER AGENCIES:

Multi-Agency Task Force. The task force was established to share information and problem-solving resources. Members of this task force meet once per month and include an ABC grant investigator, a DMV investigator, the City Fire Marshall, the City Code Enforcement Officer, a County Health Department Representative, a Sheriff's Deputy, and the three Chico Police Department officers working under the ABC grant. Some of the issues addressed by the task force are spring activities, special events (St. Patrick's Day, Graduation/Rancho Chico/Pioneer Days Celebrations, Taste of Chico Event, Halloween), alcohol sales establishments, and large parties.

The response and cooperation from outside agencies, including campus organizations, community groups, student organizations, and groups such as the Chico Hospitality Association, Alcohol & Drug Services, Chicoans Against Substance Abuse, and the State Alcoholic Beverage Control, has been overwhelming. The assistance, support, input, and community feedback received from these organizations has allowed us to further the grant objectives.

SUMMARY:

As indicated in the Problem Statement, a large portion of Chico's alcohol-related calls for service are caused by a high concentration of underage persons in the area, in combination with a high percentage of alcohol-sales establishments and perennial college-age residents. Chico has a "party town" reputation which contributes to the problem and attracts out-of-town people who do not use alcohol responsibly. As the base year/grant year comparison shows, we have made a significant impact on alcohol-related problems in this community, with calls for alcohol-related problems down by 10%. Thus far, we are ahead of schedule on the grant effort, having met a significant portion of the goals during the first half of the year. We will, of course, continue our education and enforcement efforts for the balance of the grant period and thereafter.

The community, the alcohol-selling establishments, and members of our agency have accepted and welcomed the additional resources directed toward alcohol problems. AH in all, we have seen an extremely positive impact as a result of the grant effort.