

SUMMARY OF ATLANTA'S YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES CAMPAIGN
AND SUMMER RECREATION PROGRAM FOR 1967

For the third straight year and at the suggestion of the President, the City of Atlanta has formed a Youth Opportunity Campaign Task Force, this year spearheaded by the new Atlanta Youth Council.

Rather than confine itself to summer job opportunities, as important as these are, Atlanta's Youth Opportunity Campaign for summer 1967 is intensely concerned with a number of areas that we consider of tremendous importance to our youth. Our overall program concerns itself with employment, education, recreation and health.

The summer opportunity campaign is already underway and will consist of:

1. Intensive recruitment through high school counselors for summer job applicants;
2. Recruitment for volunteers to work in Head Start Programs;
3. Dissemination of information on summer recreation opportunities of all types; and
4. Emphasis on the importance of summer school in a youngster's summer plans.

Of the foregoing four points of our local program, the two most important are summer job opportunities and summer recreation opportunities. We are planning a real thrust into the private sector to achieve a 10% - 20% increase in the number of summer job opportunities available and we are already receiving considerable local support for this effort.

The second important phase of our campaign is summer recreation opportunities and here we are acutely aware of deficiencies which exist in hard-core slum areas of our community.

During the summer of 1966, through funds made available through OEO, we were able to mount three major recreation programs:

1. The Neighborhood Playlot Program in which we cleared and put into operation seven neighborhood playlots, which served an average of 89 children per lot per day through the summer months at a total cost of \$41,422.

2. An intensive summer recreation program - "Operation Champ" - providing excursion and enrichment type recreation opportunities to 89,000 participants throughout the summer months at a total cost of \$89,340. Probably the most dramatic phase of Operation Champ was an intensive swimming program which was continued on into the schools for two weeks after the new school year began and which was made possible partially through an additional grant of \$25,000 which was made available to us. Under this program 3,329 children received swimming instruction from qualified teachers and some 600 were certified at various levels of proficiency.
3. Equally important was the recreation program for senior citizens which we conducted in three high rise public housing complexes for the elderly throughout the summer and which had a total attendance of 36,000 citizens at a total cost of \$14,509.

In recent months under the auspices of the City of Atlanta Community Improvement Program a survey has been made on recreation resources available to the blighted areas of Atlanta. The first draft of this survey has been made available to us and it pinpoints where our needs are. The foremost conclusion that we draw from these findings is the urgency of repeating and expanding those programs we had last summer and adding to them some new recreational programs which are badly needed.

Since last summer our Neighborhood Playlot Program has expanded from seven playlots to a potential twenty-one which we hope to have in operation for summer 1967. The estimated cost of operating our Neighborhood Playlot Program so that it offers a real "day camp" opportunity for 1,869 children each day throughout the summer will be \$106,680.

To repeat the Operation Champ Program with its wide range of enrichment opportunities for children from slum areas, we anticipate a cost of \$89,340.

In addition we feel that we cannot fail to meet the very real recreation and avocational needs of our senior citizens. It must be pointed out that these needs do not end with the close of summer, as senior citizens are not returning to school and other activities. Therefore, we feel that the senior citizen program must be on a year-round basis or it ends in disappointments at the end of the summer. We would like to operate this program on a year-round basis at an estimated cost of \$67,758.

For some time we have hoped to develop a conservation-recreation summer camp for the youth of Atlanta. The main object of this project would be to provide constructive athletic camping and vocational opportunity for young men ages 16 through 21. We feel that a golden opportunity is at hand for this project and that the project could be expanded to accomplish two other important purposes:

1. To provide a part-time employment opportunity in conjunction with the valuable outdoor experience as a part of our summer job opportunity program; and
2. To begin preliminary clearing and development of a 450 acre wooded site which the City of Atlanta leases 45 miles northwest of Atlanta and which we hope by summer 1968 to put into operation as a regular camping facility. We envision this project would be along similar lines to successful CCC programs of the past in both administration and philosophy, and that it would be under the direction of a trained professional in forestry or some similar field. We anticipate that we can accommodate 100 boys per week for a total of 800 boys for an eight week summer period. The estimated cost of operating this camp would be \$96,000 for 1967. We would like to point out that this figure does not include all of the equipment and material necessary, but we would hope to get wide-spread support from the private sector in the procurement of necessary equipment and consultant personnel.

Another very important phase of our overall recreation hopes for this summer hinges on continuation of our community schools as recreation resources. Our community school program has requested \$59,000 under Title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act for the operation of nineteen community schools this summer. While in no way duplicating programs offered through our regular City Parks and Recreation Department, but rather working closely in conjunction in order to achieve the maximum potential of both, the community schools would offer a wide range of athletic and enrichment type programs for both boys and girls of elementary and high school ages.

Total cost of recreation needs for 1967 - \$418,778.