



Project Proposal

Prepared for: ACM Lifting Lives

Prepared by: Paige Rasmussen, Chief Grant Writer

March 12, 2020

INSTITUTE FOR MUSIC AND NEUROLOGICAL FUNCTION

Institute for Music and Neurological Function
914-513-5292
One Wartburg Place, Mount Vernon, NY 10552
IMNF.org

Mar 12, 2020

Taylor Wolf
ACM Lifting Lives
5500 Balboa Blvd.

Dear Taylor Wolf,

It is proven that music is the only art that can reach all parts of the brain. Using this foundation, our founder Concetta Tomaino created the Institute for Music and Neurological Function in order to provide top of the line research and therapy to those in need. We have given inpatient and outpatient care to elderly citizens in need, as well as those of all ages needing rehabilitation and refuge. We want to do more. Rates of depression are rising drastically in our military, and our music therapy programs can help make an impact on the effects of PTSD in actively deployed soldiers.

We have created the “Healing Music” program in order to help veterans gain refuge from PTSD. Now, we want to use our advanced research and professionally trained therapists to transform the lives and minds of active soldiers, to take on PTSD while soldiers are still deployed instead of waiting until years after when the effects are much more serious. Our music therapy programs will help with stress relief and regulation, improved motor control, and socialization.

For this project, we seek \$20,000 in order to provide the highest level of training to our music therapists, purchase new instruments and equipment, and transport our team to the active military bases. With this grant, we would be able to give back to the men and women who do so much for the citizens like us. We are so indebted to you at ACM Lifting lives and all who donate to our projects, as without the generosity, we would not accomplish what we do.

Sincerely,

Paige Rasmussen
Chief Grant Writer
914-513-5292
paige@imnf.org

INSTITUTE FOR MUSIC AND NEUROLOGICAL FUNCTION

STATEMENT OF NEED:

As rates of depression in the military rise dramatically, we need to help active soldiers combat the effects of PTSD using music therapy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Objective

The military of the United States is a force of the bravest men and women in our country who risk their lives to protect the citizens. They leave their families behind for months, even years at a time during deployment. The mental health of these soldiers is often abandoned, and only the physical aspect is acknowledged, leaving these men and women to suffer silently while simultaneously protecting others. It is time we protect them. We will be using this music therapy to improve the mental health of active soldiers. We want to do this by gathering a group of music therapists trained through the Institute of Music and Neurological Function, and send the team to army bases of active soldiers. Once the team of music therapists arrive at the base, the soldiers will participate in group and individual sessions of musical therapy.

Goals

14% of deployed soldiers experience depression, so this music therapy would be beneficial in improving the mental health of these soldiers. This therapy could also decrease the occurrence of PTSD in veterans because their mental health could be more stable during their deployment due to the music therapy.

Solution

Research has shown that drumming is an effective form of music therapy for soldiers with combat stress. It allows them to express memories in a non traumatic way, as well as bringing a sense of togetherness among the soldiers. Because of these results, it can be assumed that providing music therapy to active soldiers would allow them to relieve a great amount of stress while they are still presently deployed. In more studies it is stated that music therapy is in high demand, especially in the military because increased research on the topic of neuro-rehabilitation has proven a significance in music therapy to the treatment of PTSD and depression in actively deployed men and women.

Project Outline

The team will consist of 10 trained music therapists. The therapy sessions would be no longer than 30 minutes at a time and each session would consist of different techniques in order to reach all personality types. We will also purchase a selection brand new instruments for the soldiers and

therapists to utilize during therapy sessions. Providing music therapy to active soldiers would allow them to relieve a great amount of stress while they are still presently deployed.

NARRATIVE

Music therapy has been often utilized upon patients who are nearing death due to severe illness. The treatment sessions during these times are extremely intimate and emotional, more so than any other point in one's life. The experiences in which the music therapists endure alongside their suffering patients are difficult yet important. The American Music Therapy Association's statement on the matter is that "with this experience, music therapists are sensitized to the extreme emotions surrounding death, and can empathize with these patients and their families." For this reason, music therapists create a new dynamic for groundbreaking treatments and therapy, that are refreshing as compared to sterile hospital rooms, painful medicines, and intimidating, stagnant therapy sessions.

The suffering of patients in their darkest hours, whether it be the time of dying, or the ongoing pain of an illness such as PTSD, music therapy brings about a sense of peace, allowing for a vessel to take a portion of the suffering away. Sharon Graham of the American Music Therapy Association worked as a music therapist with an elderly gentleman who was in much pain at the end of his life. She explained her experiences with him in an article she authored. Graham said, "music allowed Mr. Smith to die peacefully. Music therapy provided him the crucial opportunity or medium to express what he felt." This ability that music has to express feelings in forms other than words is essential to treating a list of conditions. It is namely important in the treatment of Combat Stress and PTSD.

"The Drumming through trauma: Music Therapy with Post-Traumatic Soldiers", an article excerpted from *The Arts of Psychotherapy*, a publication by Moshe Bensimon, Doritn Amir, and Yuval Wolf, presents research which presents the benefits of Music Therapy on PTSD in soldiers through different methods. It is explained that, "the rationale for using music therapy with PTSD victims is based on the nature of traumatic memories as presented in flashbacks and nightmares." This causes the mind to be unable to translate the feelings and emotions experienced by the person affected to be put into words. Music is an outlet for these feelings. This is because music and trauma are in the same area within the brain, and they are both "sensory mediated" (Bensimon, Amir, Wolf 2007). Therefore, music can act as a detour for traumatic experiences to be expressed in a more peaceful way.

Combat Stress Reaction (CSR) is similar to PTSD and it is characterized many of the same symptoms such as loneliness, anger, isolation, and dramatic memories (Bensimon). In another excerpt from *Arts of Psychotherapy*, titled "A Pendulum Between Trauma and Life: Group Music Therapy with Post-Traumatized Soldiers", written by Bensimon, he presents results from extensive brain research which concludes "that music can cause positive biochemical changes in brain areas that are connected to stress and anxiety."

Our goals with this project align perfectly with the results presented by research studies such as the “Drumming Through Trauma” study. Our goals are to create this outlet for traumatic feelings in order to keep active soldiers healthy and performing their best while deployed. We also hope to lessen the number of those affected by PTSD. We plan on doing this by treating the problem before it becomes bigger. Even soldiers not affected by combat stress will receive treatment in order to maintain a healthy mental state. In the publication, *Psychomusicology: A Journal of Research in Music Cognition*, by D.D. Coffman, she provides research that has shown that any type of music, whether it be listening or making music, impacts the quality of life and how people perceive their quality of life.

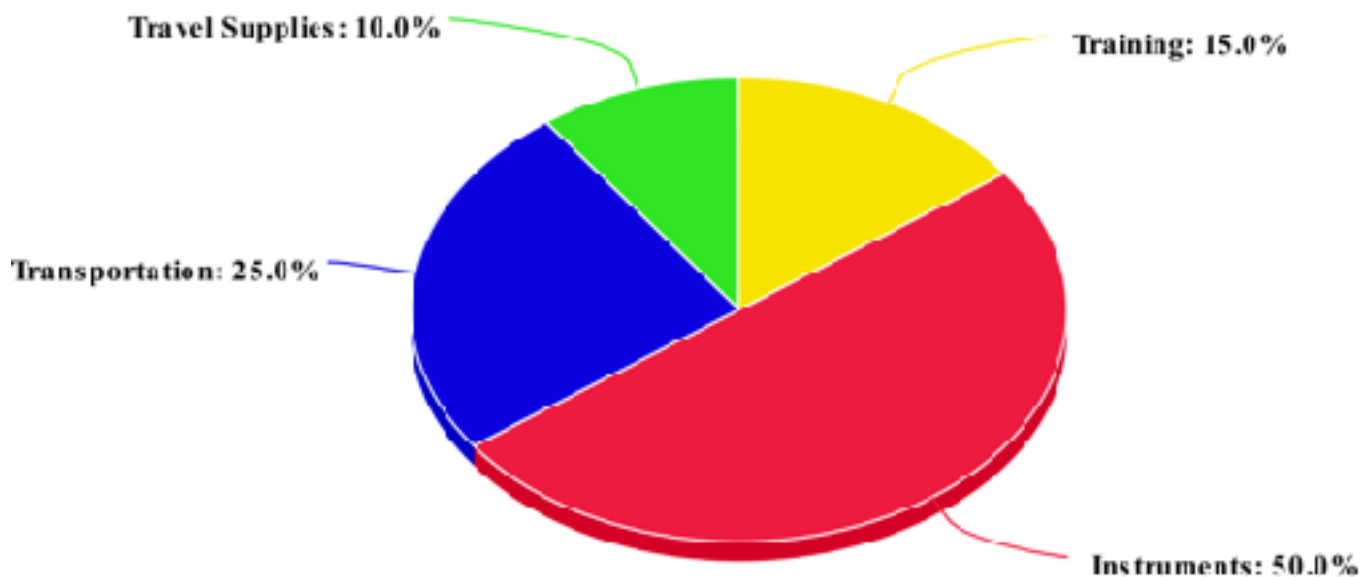
Because music making and listening affects how people view their own lives, this type of therapy will be very helpful in active soldiers because their mental health will improve as they continue to complete duties. If the soldiers are in a more positive mental state, they will perform better in their jobs. This is crucial because the jobs of soldiers are imperative to the protection and safety of their constituents as well as the citizens of the country.

Music Therapy will allow soldiers who are experiencing symptoms of Combat Stress to be more functional in their mental health. It also “may help foster resilience and engage individuals who struggle with stigma associated with seeking professional help” (Landis-Shack, Heinz, Bonn-Miller). This therapy will improve the overall status of the mental health and performance within our military, creating benefits for the soldiers and their families, as well as the citizens whom they work so hard to protect.

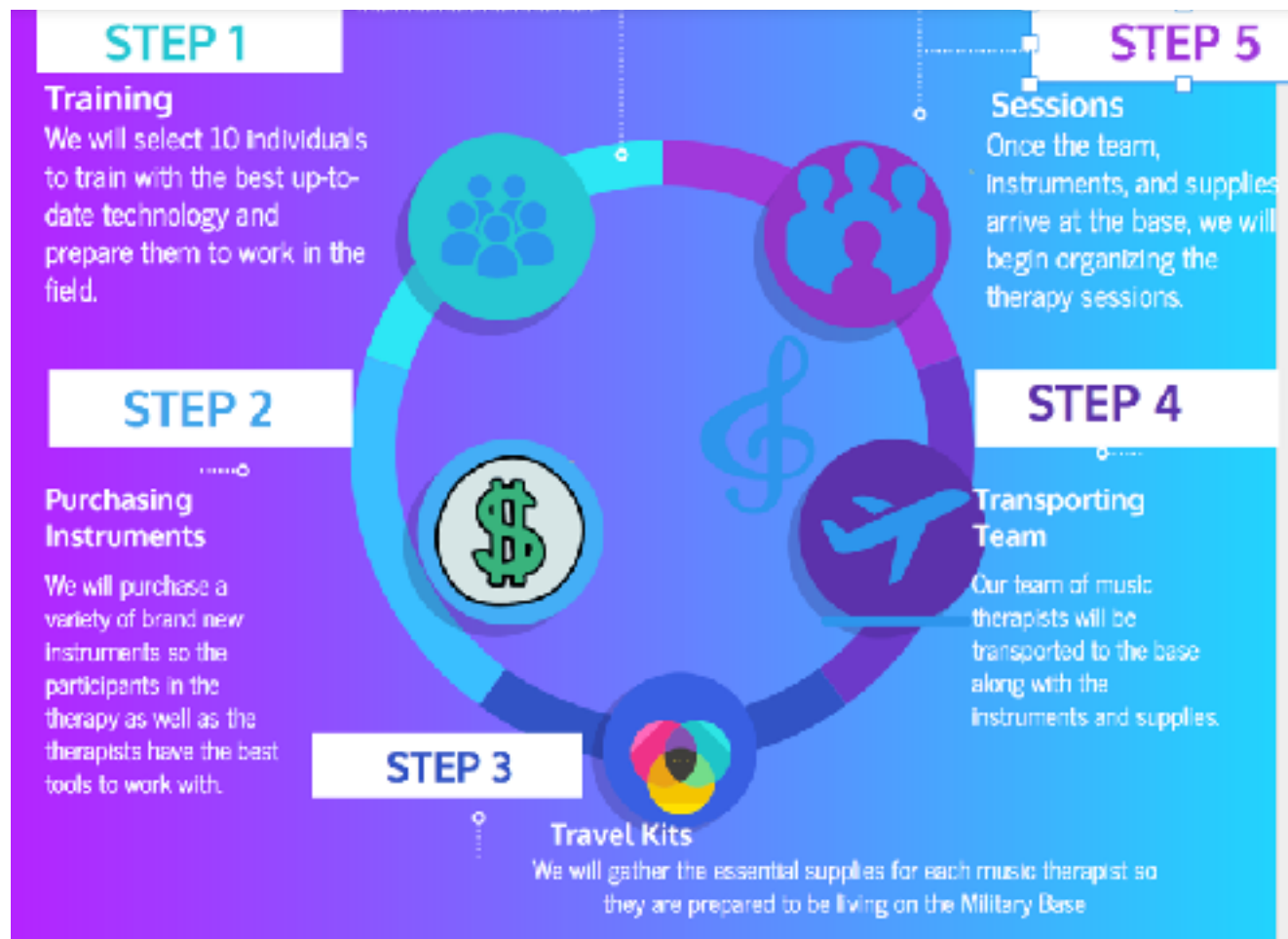
BUDGET

FISCAL YEAR 2020

Description	Quantity	Unit Price	Cost
Training for Therapists	10	\$ 300	\$ 3,000
Instruments	50	\$ 200	\$ 10,000
Transportation of Music Therapist Team	10	\$ 500	\$ 5,000
Travel Supplies	10	\$ 200	\$ 2,000
Total			\$ 20,000



Project Timeline



Literature Review: Improving PTSD in Active Duty Soldiers Through Music Therapy

The mental health of soldiers in our country has often been abandoned, and now we are seeing numbers of mental illness among soldiers rise. In order to restore our soldiers back to health as well as prevent further effects of PTSD, we have to intervene with the use of Music Therapy. The American Music Therapy Association provides a government document of the scope of music therapy and its purposes. “The Drumming through trauma: Music Therapy with Post-Traumatic Soldiers”, an article excerpted from *The Arts of Psychotherapy*, a publication by Moshe Bensimon, Doritn Amir, and Yuval Wolf, presents research which presents the benefits of Music Therapy on PTSD in soldiers through different methods.

The Americans Music Therapy Association provides an official document outlining music therapy in practice. This document defines Music therapy as the clinical use of music to “accomplish individualized goals for people of all ages and ability levels within a therapeutic relationship by a credentialed professional who has completed an approved music therapy program”(AMTA 2015). Music therapy is presented as a clinical process, which provides a significance in medicine and healing. According to the AMTA’s guidelines, music therapists design specific treatments for each patient's needs. This makes the practice extremely beneficial especially in the treatment of PTSD because the effects are not the same in every soldier experiencing this condition. The music therapist is to take comprehensive tests on the patient in order to determine the most effective path for that disorder with the most accuracy of treatment (AMTA 2015). Each treatment plan is also significant to the goals of the patient. In this case, this approach is the most strategic in treating active soldiers, because they are still deployed and still must maintain peak performance, so it is imperative that their goals are met. AMTA describes music therapy as anything but stagnant, which is what active soldiers need. They claim it is important to “[evaluate] the client's response to music therapy and the music therapy treatment plan, documenting change and progress, and suggesting modifications, as appropriate”(AMTA 2015).

“The Drumming Through Trauma: Music Therapy with Post-Traumatic Soldiers” is relevant to our project in presenting the evidence for the effectiveness of music therapy. The research in this article describes the importance for the soldiers to feel a sense of togetherness in order to allow the brain to achieve “motor synchronicity” (Bensimon, Amir, Wolf 2007). When the soldiers participate in the playing of music, the harmonies they hear and produce create a sense of tranquility, providing an adequate form of therapy. Research by Bensimon, Amir, and Wolf suggests that with PTSD, memories of dramatic events cannot be transferred into “sensory motor representations” (Bensimon, Amir, Wolf 2007), therefore, the emotions felt due to these memories often cannot be verbally expressed. Further, music therapy has been proven by the study of “The Drumming Through Trauma” to be an effective form of therapy to help soldiers express these emotions in a new way. Soldiers affected by combat stress are also able to gain self control through music. The drumming provides for a method of releasing anger or rage. It will be very effective for these soldiers if we also use other instruments and forms of music making in order to allow the soldiers to connect with a multitude of emotions.

Organization Information

Executive Director/Co-Founder : Dr. Concetta M. Tomaino

Chief Grant Writer: Paige Rasmussen

Volunteers: 10 Board Certified Music Therapists

References

- “American Music Therapy Association.” Scope of Music Therapy Practice | Scope of Music Therapy Practice | American Music Therapy Association (AMTA), www.musictherapy.org/about/scope_of_music_therapy_practice/.
- Bensimon, Moshe, et al. “Drumming through Trauma: Music Therapy with Post-Traumatic Soldiers.” *The Arts in Psychotherapy*, Pergamon, 25 Sept. 2007, www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0197455607000883.
- Landis-Shack, N., Heinz, A. J., & Bonn-Miller, M. O. (2017). Music therapy for posttraumatic stress in adults: A theoretical review. *Psychomusicology: Music, Mind, and Brain*, 27(4), 334–342. <https://doi.org/10.1037/pmu0000192>