



## Pumpkin Fest Youth Partnership Award

The Pumpkin Fest Youth Partnership Award was created to formally recognize a local business or organization that engages youth in their Pumpkin Fest float making process.

Fifty years ago, Mr. Pumpkin, Wally Thurow, started the pumpkin display to give children something constructive to do during Halloween. The Pumpkin Festival Committee has built on this theme to make the Pumpkin Festival a family event, involving not only children and young adults, but also the adults, families and organizations of DeKalb County.

In an effort to further Wally's dream, in 2009, the Pumpkin Festival and the DeKalb County KEYS Initiative created a new recognition for parade entries that involve youth in the construction of their float.

This started as a result of Ideal Industries involving youth from Sycamore School District Spartan REACH program in the design and construction of their 2008 float. According to Ideal employees, "not only was it a positive experience for the youth who participated, but also for the employees who worked with the youth group."



**2010 Pumpkin Fest Youth Partnership Award went to Ideal Industries and Spartan REACH.**



## Pumpkin Fest Youth Partnership Award

### How to get started:

Interested businesses/organizations are encouraged to solicit youth from community organizations. If you need assistance finding youth groups to partner with, please contact DeKalb County KEYS 815.756.9577, ext. 38

- Suggestions: Boy/Girl Scouts, After school programs, 4H Groups, School clubs, Community youth programs, Church youth groups

### Tips for involving youth:

*Involve youth from the beginning! Invite them to help plan the design of your float.*

- Being creative can be fun, and helps young people improve basic and advanced thinking skills. Performing and creating works of art helps young people develop cognition (intellectual comprehension), cultural understanding, communication, and creativity. Learning that's fun and worthwhile—what could be better?

*Provide youth with hands-on learning opportunities.*

- Research shows when young people have useful roles they feel good about themselves and their future, do better in school, and get into less trouble. Take time to show your youth partners how to use power tools and all of the other skills needed to build the float. Allow them to actively contribute to the construction of the float, from start to finish!

*Celebrate the success of your partnership; involve everyone in some way during the parade.*

- Chances are, at the end of this process, you'll have built much more than just a float. Hopefully, you will have built positive friendships, a sense of achievement, high regard for service to others, community pride, sense of purpose, feelings of belonging, and positive self esteem.
- We encourage you to take pictures of adults and youth working together and submit pictures your application.

### Judging:

- DeKalb County KEYS will award the winning organization with a plaque and will give the winner the award banner to proudly carry during the 2011 parade.
- Winners will be selected based on the degree to which youth were involved in creating their parade float. **In order to be eligible, applications must be received by 5 pm on Friday, October 28<sup>th</sup>.**



# Pumpkin Fest Youth Partnership Award

Please answer the following questions and return to  
DeKalb County KEYS by 5 pm - Friday, October 28<sup>rd</sup>.

EMAIL: [mhess@kishymca.org](mailto:mhess@kishymca.org)

FAX: 815-758-4549

Name of business/organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact person: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

---

How many adults participated in the float construction? \_\_\_\_\_

How many youth participated in the float construction? \_\_\_\_\_

Where did you recruit youth? \_\_\_\_\_

To what degree were youth involved in the design of your float? \_\_\_\_\_

What types of hands-on experiences did youth engage in? \_\_\_\_\_

Tell us about some of the unique interactions that took place between adults and youth, bonds that were formed, funny moments, learning experiences, etc. \_\_\_\_\_



Summarize what **youth** gained from this experience. \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Summarize what **adults** gained from this experience. \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Comments from youth that assisted with the 2009 Ideal Industries parade float:**

- “I liked spray painting. That was the most fun part. I liked using the staple gun too.”  
Julien, 13
- “I enjoyed working with Jason bending the PVC. I had never done that before, so I learned a new skill. I think the pizza was the most fun.”  
Jakob, 12
- “I felt that it was exciting to be part of this project. In my old school we didn’t have all the activities. At this school we have a lot of choices.”  
Talia, 13
- “It was a fun experience to hang out with friends and meet good people from Ideal.”  
Joe, 13
- “I think the float was a good turnout – it was safari. We got to dress up, we had music and we were able to get involved a lot. Every week when we went to Ideal we had something to do – we didn’t just sit there.”  
Heidi, 12