

**2007 Innovations Awards Program  
APPLICATION**

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ID # (assigned by CSG): 07 - S250KPAYATTENTION

**Please provide the following information, adding space as necessary:**

State: Oklahoma

Assign Program Category (applicant): Human Resources/Education (Use list at end of application)

1. **Program Name**

*Paying Attention Pays*

2. **Administering Agency**

Oklahoma Department of Labor (ODOL)

3. **Contact Person (Name and Title)**

Lester Claravall, Child Labor Specialist

4. **Address**

4001 North Lincoln Boulevard, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73105

5. **Telephone Number**

405-528-1500 extension 212

6. **FAX Number**

405-528-0954

7. **E-mail Address**

[lclaravall@oklaosf.state.ok.us](mailto:lclaravall@oklaosf.state.ok.us)

8. **Web site Address**

[www.labor.ok.gov](http://www.labor.ok.gov)

9. **Please provide a two-sentence description of the program.**

*Paying Attention Pays* is a fun, innovative, interactive, educational and rewarding game that teaches teens about Oklahoma's youth employment laws.

*Paying Attention Pays* highlights important workplace issues and provides insights to help prevent teen worker injuries, fatalities, abuse, exploitation, or endangerment.

10. **How long has this program been operational (month and year)? Note: the program must be between 9 months and 5 years old on April 2, 2007, to be considered.**

June 2002

11. **Why was the program created?**

The Oklahoma Department of Labor (ODOL) reviews over 1,000 youth employment work permits each year. ODOL provides information to students through their schools concerning workplace rights and safety issues; yet, many students enter their first jobs with limited knowledge about these topics. ODOL wanted to reach and teach more students about child labor laws.

Prior to the creation of *Paying Attention Pays*, ODOL had no lesson plan in place. When invited to do presentations, ODOL staff would provide a typical lecture, take a few questions and share some insights related to the youth employment laws. Students reacted with little interest because the presentation lacked experiential activity, class involvement, group interaction, or rewards to motivate them to pay attention. Furthermore, the program lacked marketing appeal to teachers, who could have just as easily read the laws themselves in 10 minutes (and saved ODOL the trip to the school). This made it difficult to get invited into additional schools. Finally, no evaluation system existed to measure the feedback of teachers or students to improve the process or make the program better.

ODOL established goals to develop an effective Child Labor presentation and to increase both the number of classroom visits and student participants. To accomplish these goals, ODOL would: Examine the current process to identify positives and negatives; interview educators to determine what content should be incorporated into the curriculum; brainstorm on ideas to make the learning format experiential so students internalize what they learn; and develop a written lesson plan to be reviewed periodically.

The program was developed to reach out to students at middle schools and high schools across Oklahoma.

**What problem(s) or issue(s) was it designed to address?**

In a nationwide study conducted by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, over 230,000 working minors under 18 years of age are injured on the job each year. Of this figure, an average of 70 cases were fatal and another 77,000 cases were serious enough to require treatment in the hospital emergency room. According to national studies conducted by the National Consumers League (NCL), a teen worker is injured on the job every 30 seconds. The NCL further stated that one teen dies due to workplace injury every five days.

Given the above-mentioned statistics, ODOL wanted to reach out and educate students on workplace issues to protect them on the job. *Paying Attention Pays* is very significant (at the regional and national level) because it was designed to protect minors against workplace injuries, fatalities, abuse, exploitation, or endangerment. One death is one too many when it comes to teen workers under the age of 18 years.

12. **Describe the specific activities and operation of the program in chronological order.**

June - August 2002

ODOL established goals to create a statewide Child Labor educational outreach program to reach and teach students about child labor laws.

A survey of State Labor Departments was administered to review what programs their respective states offered.

ODOL reviewed input from agency employees, teachers, students, and other State Labor Departments.

ODOL put together an experiential lesson plan with a catchy title.

ODOL created a slide show presentation, play money, a prize certificate, giant A B C flash cards, and handout material.

August 2002

The lesson plan for *Paying Attention Pays* was completed and ready to be facilitated at schools.

August - December 2002

*Paying Attention Pays* was facilitated at four schools.

December 2002

*Paying Attention Pays* was honored by the Central Oklahoma Chapter of the American Society for Training & Development with its highest honor, the Award of Excellence, for using a creative approach at schools to teach the labor laws and increase protection of Oklahoma's future workforce.

January 2003

The Interstate Labor Standards Association (ILSA) invited ODOL to present the award-winning *Paying Attention Pays* at the ILSA National Conference held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

August 2003

*Paying Attention Pays* set a national standard by becoming the FIRST Child Labor game presented at an ILSA national conference. The program was highlighted at the ILSA National Conference held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and was well received by Canada and several American states who received a copy of the program.

ODOL presented *Paying Attention Pays* to the Oklahoma State Department of Education. Two of Oklahoma's highest ranking government officials, the State Labor Commissioner and the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, praised the program's success.

January - December 2003

*Paying Attention Pays* was facilitated at six schools.

August 2004

*Paying Attention Pays* was highlighted at the ILSA National Conference held in Wilmington, North Carolina. Several American states received a copy of the program.

January - December 2004

*Paying Attention Pays* was facilitated at nine schools.

August 2005

*Paying Attention Pays* was highlighted at the ILSA National Conference held in Memphis, Tennessee. Several American states have started the process of designing a similar version of *Paying Attention Pays* in their respective school system to teach teens about the youth employment laws.

by October 2005

As a result of the past three ILSA national conferences, copies of the *Paying Attention Pays* lesson plan had been received by two Federal Labor Departments (USA and Canada), the District of Columbia Labor Department, 26 State Labor Departments, and six national organizations.

January - December 2005

*Paying Attention Pays* was facilitated at 14 schools.

January - March 2006

ODOL made improvements and created the final version of the *Paying Attention Pays* lesson

plan to include a new logo, a fact sheet, and more graphics incorporated into the power-point slide show.

#### May 2006

The final version of *Paying Attention Pays* was showcased to the public at the Oklahoma State Capitol during Quality Oklahoma Team Day. The program was honored with the prestigious Governor's Commendation for Excellence Award and was also named a Finalist in four performance excellence specialty areas (Employee Empowerment, Extra Mile, Motivating the Masses, and Best Booth).

#### June - July 2006

The United States Department of Labor (USDOL) shared information about *Paying Attention Pays* with a Canadian labor official in Nova Scotia, who was interested in learning about successful child labor educational outreach programs in the United States.

The USDOL also shared information about *Paying Attention Pays* at the Canadian Association of Administrators for Labor Legislation National Conference held in Canada.

#### January - December 2006

*Paying Attention Pays* was facilitated at 19 schools.

#### December 2006

The Canadian federal government had the opportunity to learn about the success of *Paying Attention Pays* and expressed an interest in receiving a copy of the program to perhaps model this program in Nova Scotia and in other provinces.

#### January 2007

ODOL sent a packet of *Paying Attention Pays* to the Canadian federal government for their review.

#### February 2007

ODOL and the Oklahoma State Department of Education met to discuss a partnership enabling the *Paying Attention Pays* program to be broadcasted to every school in Oklahoma through videoconferencing at 10 different sites across the state. This would enable teachers to be trained to facilitate *Paying Attention Pays* to their students. The combination of resources between two state government agencies would be the key to reaching out to every student in Oklahoma and helping them better understand work-related issues prior to entering their first job.

A follow up meeting took place at the Oklahoma State Department of Education to get an overview of videoconferencing.

PAX, a national cable channel out of Florida, flew into Oklahoma City to tape two shows on the success of *Paying Attention Pays* which will air in the upcoming months.

An initial partnership with Oklahoma Career Tech was established to provide additional resources that will help ODOL facilitate *Paying Attention Pays*.

ODOL contacted the Canadian federal government and learned that the lesson plan and game material of *Paying Attention Pays* was forwarded to the Nova Scotia Office and also to the country's Educational Programs Office for further review.

#### March 2007

ODOL is currently exploring corporate sponsorships to provide game prizes to students.

FOX television network taped a show on the success of *Paying Attention Pays*.

#### FUTURE ACTIVITIES SCHEDULED TO HAPPEN

April 26, 2007

*Paying Attention Pays* will be honored with the prestigious Gold Screen Award presented by the National Association of Government Communicators (NAGC) in Chicago, Illinois. *Paying Attention Pays* will be recognized as one of the best instructional training programs in America. The NAGC awards program is the only international awards program that recognizes the outstanding work of federal, state, and local government communicators.

May 16, 2007

*Paying Attention Pays* will be broadcasted to 10 videoconferencing sites across Oklahoma to reach out to every school in Oklahoma. The partnership, between ODOL and the Oklahoma State Department of Education, will enable students across the state to learn about their workplace rights.

Summer 2007

PAX cable network will televise two shows on *Paying Attention Pays*. The show will feature the game's principal creator (Lester Claravall) and will highlight the success of the *Paying Attention Pays* program in Oklahoma and beyond.

#### 13. **Why is the program a new and creative approach or method?**

*Paying Attention Pays* is a new and creative approach because it was developed with children in mind. Rather than teaching the labor laws using learner techniques that work for adults, the program was developed in a game format to relate more closely to the learning style of someone under 18 years of age. The program has been very successful because it uses competitive fun, play money, and prizes to increase the students' attention span. The catchy title was a great way to promote the program through the school system catching the attention of school officials.

ODOL researched effective learning techniques, surveyed programs in other states, and facilitated brainstorming sessions to generate ideas. This process led to the creation of a carefully designed lesson plan. ODOL staff created an interactive power-point slide show with graphics to increase the students' interest in the subject matter. ODOL staff also created colorful play money (in various denominations) and giant flash cards to enhance the game. To encourage group interaction, the class would be divided into teams to discuss and answer 20 frequently asked questions related to workplace rights. Teams would get paid play dollars for each question answered correctly. Teams would get paid more money based on the difficulty of the question. To add to the fun and excitement, the last two questions would be worth the most. Four tie breaker questions worth one hundred dollars each would break any ties. A prize certificate and 'Pay Day' candy bar would be awarded to the winning team.

At the conclusion of the presentation, students would receive a summary sheet so they can take the information home. Teachers and students would also receive agency information so they can contact ODOL with future questions and download publications related to *Paying Attention Pays* from the agency's website.

Below are a few comments from the teacher and student evaluations:

Teacher at Owasso High School wrote:

*"Great information for my beginning work students! Outstanding! The game and payday idea is perfect for my students. They loved it!"*

Teacher at Noble High School wrote:

*"Employment laws, wage & hour information was very important for my students and new to them."*

*This presentation helped to inform my high school students (that work) of laws that protect them. I spoke with several employed students who said they were not aware of any of the information they had just learned from Mr. Claravall's presentation."*

Teacher at Belle Isle Enterprise Middle School wrote:

*"The content was interesting and beneficial for the 8<sup>th</sup> graders. This is a timely program for 8<sup>th</sup> graders because they are preparing to enter the workplace."*

Teacher at Emerson High School wrote:

*"Many of our students are employed. The discussions were relevant and lively because students had experiences of their own to share. I enjoyed the presentation as given and our students did as well."*

Teacher from Star Spencer High School wrote:

*"The total area of information was very beneficial to myself and my students. We totally enjoyed the program. Using the different groups and having the students to get involved by playing the game was a lot of fun and good information. The information presented was new knowledge for the students. What the students didn't know they learned about child labor rights and laws that were interesting to them."*

Student at Monroney Junior High School wrote:

*"The information you gave us was real good and I took all of it in. Some of the stuff you told us my mother didn't even know. So thank you for sharing the labor laws with us."*

Student at Capitol Hill High School wrote:

*"I really enjoyed your speech because I learned about stuff you need to know about when you get a job."*

***Paying Attention Pays*** is unique in that it teaches students important information that most people in the general population are not aware of until they are in the workforce. The program teaches students about workplace issues that are not learned in a classroom or through a textbook. It also prepares students to gain a better understanding about their rights at work.

The statewide program (using a game to teach the youth employment laws) became a FIRST for Oklahoma and a FIRST at the national level. In 2003 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, ***Paying Attention Pays*** set a national standard by becoming the FIRST Child Labor game introduced nationally at an Interstate Labor Standards Association (ILSA) national conference. ILSA is an organization comprised of labor officials representing all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the USDOL, and several countries (including Russia, Taiwan, and Canada).

***Paying Attention Pays*** has since been used as a model by several American states and Canada to develop a similar educational outreach program to their respective schools using a game to teach the labor laws. ***Paying Attention Pays*** has been very successful when it comes to educational outreach at schools because teens pay attention when they are having fun. Teens are more likely to absorb the information when they are playing a game as opposed to sitting in class and getting a lecture over the labor laws. This concept has been adopted as a best practice because of the approach ***Paying Attention Pays*** uses to highlight important issues for students to know before entering the workplace.

The award-winning, ground-breaking ***Paying Attention Pays*** program has met a lot of success and has been honored with the 2002 American Society for Training and Development Award of Excellence, the 2006 Quality Oklahoma Governor's Commendation for Excellence, and the 2007 National Association of Government Communicators Gold Screen Award.

For a more effective Child Labor program at schools, ODOL reviewed input from agency employees, teachers, students, and other State Labor Departments. Through qualitative and quantitative measurement tools, a lesson plan was carefully designed to allow students to internalize what they learn from the

presentation, thus making them more knowledgeable about their rights. Improving the quality of service to schools through innovation, fun, and friendly competition enabled ODOL to realize an activity increase (partnerships with more than 30 schools enabling ODOL to reach out to more than 5,000 students to date). The result is that more teachers are recognizing the program's value and more students are learning about employment laws prior to entering the workplace.

14. **What were the program's start-up costs? (Provide details about specific purchases for this program, staffing needs and other financial expenditures, as well as existing materials, technology and staff already in place.)**

There were no start up costs to develop the program. Staff time was absorbed into the routine activities. A laptop computer was already in place. Furthermore, the handout material, play money, flash cards, and prizes were available through the Agency.

15. **What are the program's annual operational costs?**

ODOL is looking to partner with the Oklahoma State Department of Education and Oklahoma Career Tech to combine resources and technology. Furthermore, ODOL is in the process of working with local businesses to sponsor game prizes. ODOL is also exploring grant opportunities to help expand the program.

To increase marketing of the *Paying Attention Pays* program statewide, a budget is in process to be introduced to the Oklahoma State Legislature for the 2008 Fiscal Year.

16. **How is the program funded?**

The program is currently being funded through ODOL. This includes handouts, program material used at schools, CD copies, prizes, and staff time. As this program continues to grow, opportunities will need to be pursued for additional funding. Currently, the only cost factors involve staff time and salaries.

17. **Did this program require the passage of legislation, executive order or regulations? If YES, please indicate the citation number.**

Not applicable.

18. **What equipment, technology, and software are used to operate and administer this program?**

A laptop computer, color printer, projector, CD containing power-point slide show, and software to create game material (game dollars, prize certificate, etc.).

19. **To the best of your knowledge, did this program originate in your state? If YES, please indicate the innovator's name, present address, telephone number and email address.**

Yes. The program was conceived by Lester P. Claravall, a Child Labor Specialist who currently works for the Oklahoma Department of Labor. His contact information is as follows:

**Lester P. Claravall**  
P.O. Box 721296  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73172  
405-623-1481  
[lclaravall@oklaosf.state.ok.us](mailto:lclaravall@oklaosf.state.ok.us)

20. **Are you aware of similar programs in other states? If YES, which ones and how does this program differ?**

Through ILSA, Oklahoma became the first state to introduce a lesson plan using a game format to reach out and educate teens on the youth employment laws. Prior to *Paying Attention Pays*, there were no similar programs in other states. *Paying Attention Pays* became the first Child Labor game introduced nationally at an ILSA national conference.

Over the years, it has been very interesting to see the growing trend of how other states are just now adopting the game concept of *Paying Attention Pays* to reach out to students in their respective schools. Oklahoma is the leader and has set the national standard when it comes to the creation of a Child Labor game as an educational outreach tool to teach students about the youth employment laws. Several American states and Canada have asked Oklahoma about *Paying Attention Pays* and the success experienced in the school system. Most programs in other states currently approach the classroom from an adult learner standpoint instead of one that tailors to the learning style of teenagers. That is one of the things that has made *Paying Attention Pays* such a huge success.

The following have since requested and received a copy of the *Paying Attention Pays* program:

**State Labor Departments:**

Alaska	Arkansas	California	Connecticut	Delaware	Florida
Georgia	Illinois	Kentucky	Louisiana	Missouri	Minnesota
Montana	Nebraska	New Jersey	New York	N. Carolina	Oklahoma
Ohio	Oregon	Pennsylvania	Tennessee	Texas	Utah
Washington	Wisconsin				

**Other Labor Departments:**

District of Columbia

**Federal Labor Departments:**

United States Department of Labor  
Canada Department of Labor

21. **Has the program been fully implemented? If NO, what actions remain to be taken?**

No. Oklahoma has facilitated *Paying Attention Pays* to 32 schools, mostly in the Oklahoma City vicinity. The goal is to reach out and teach all Oklahoma students in every school throughout the state. Partnering with other agencies to combine resources and technology will enable this goal to be accomplished. ODOL is currently in the process of partnering with the Oklahoma State Department of Education and Oklahoma Career Tech to make this happen so that all Oklahoma students will benefit from *Paying Attention Pays*.

22. **Briefly evaluate (pro and con) the program's effectiveness in addressing the defined problem(s) or issue(s). Provide tangible examples.**

Pros

- o Students need this information because everyone will eventually enter into the workplace at some point whether it be next summer, after vocational training, or graduation from a university. Teaching them the basics about the labor laws will enable students to better understand their workplace rights.
- o The numbers clearly show how much schools value this program. In 2003, ODOL facilitated *Paying Attention Pays* at six schools compared to 19 schools in 2006. This figure has more than doubled in the recent years. From 2003 to present, ODOL has experienced an activity increase by presenting over 200 school presentations at 32 schools and reaching out to over 5,000 students who are now aware of their rights in the workplace.
- o The goal of *Paying Attention Pays* is being met. Quantitatively, the number of schools and the number of participants has grown each year since the inception of the program during the Fall of 2002. Teachers have been very receptive to the program and have continued to extend repeat invitations and referrals. Qualitatively, the written evaluations from students and teachers show how beneficial the program is when it comes to teaching the labor laws at schools.
- o *Paying Attention Pays* has been very well received by the Oklahoma State Department of Education. ODOL and the Oklahoma State Department of Education established a partnership to reach out to every school in Oklahoma so that every student across the state will benefit from the program.
- o It has been very rewarding to see Canada and other American states (such as Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, and Texas) develop programs using *Paying Attention Pays* as a model to create their own game version to their respective schools.

### Cons

- o Without the combination of resources and technology with other agencies (i.e. Oklahoma State Department of Education), students are entering the workplace unprepared and unknowledgeable. However, the partnerships are in the development phase and *Paying Attention Pays* should be in every school within the next 12 months.
- o Not planning properly can also lead to problems. Once the program is marketed to every school in the state, ODOL needs to make sure that it has the material (game packets, handouts, etc.) to distribute; available staff to facilitate the program at the request of schools; and adequate funding. Within 12 months, videoconferencing could realistically mean going from 32 schools to over 300 schools wanting the *Paying Attention Pays* program for their students.

### 23. **How has the program grown and/or changed since its inception?**

What started out as a concept to tap into schools to teach teens about the labor laws has turned out to become a first-ever statewide program. *Paying Attention Pays* has also become a first-ever concept that set a national standard when it comes to educational outreach at schools. The game format has since been adopted nationally and even internationally. *Paying Attention Pays* has become a ground-breaking, award-winning program.

The number of schools and the number of students who have gone through the program has continued to increase each year. Since its inception, the number of school visits and the number of participants has more than doubled.

The initial goal has been accomplished. *Paying Attention Pays* was carefully designed to allow students to internalize what they learn from the program, thus making them more knowledgeable about their rights. The creation of the game has been enjoyed by teachers and students.

The combination of resources and partnering with others has been a huge plus. The partnership, between ODOL and the Oklahoma State Department of Education, will enable the *Paying Attention Pays* program to be available to every school across Oklahoma.

The program has been successful because it is innovative, educational, and fun. The result is that more teachers are recognizing the program's value and more students are learning about employment laws prior to entering the workplace. Over the years, teachers have continued to extend repeat invitations and referrals to other schools.

Recently, *Paying Attention Pays* has caught the attention of the media. Over the next several months, the success of *Paying Attention Pays* will be aired on PAX and FOX television networks.

### 24. **What limitations or obstacles might other states expect to encounter if they attempt to adopt this program?**

Some of the limitations or obstacles may include the following:

- o Manpower to implement this program statewide based on the number of school requests to facilitate the program.
- o Acceptance from the school system and being able to help school officials understand the importance of the program and how this program will benefit their students planning to enter into the workplace in time.
- o Cooperation with the Information Technology Division to create the game material and graphics to be used for the program.
- o Establishing partnerships with other agencies to combine available technology and resources to reach out (i.e. videoconferencing, publications, etc.).
- o Available funding to facilitate and market the educational outreach program statewide.