I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

Date: March 17, 2015

Contact Information:
Organization Name: Valley Youth House Committee, Inc.
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Website: www.valleyyouthhouse.org
Year Incorporated: 1973

Has your nonprofit ever applied to the Community Foundation?   Yes ___ No_x_ Not Sure___
Has your nonprofit ever received funding from the Community Foundation? Yes ___ No_x_ Not Sure___
__Donor Advised Fund(s)   ____Fund for Chester County   ____Don’t know/Not sure

Field/s of Interest:
___ Arts, Culture & Humanities   ___ Environment/Animal Welfare   ___ Education
___ Health   x Human Services   ___ Religion

Organization Information:
Geographic Area Served (if not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served):
Valley Youth House serves all of Chester County from an office location in West Chester as well as ten other counties in Eastern Pennsylvania.

Describe Population Served and Annual Number of People Served:
Valley Youth House serves at-risk youth and their families, including youth aging out of foster care, in the juvenile justice system, experiencing mental health issues, and at risk for homelessness. Over 37,000 individuals are served annually.

Mission:
The mission of Valley Youth House is to provide prevention and intervention services, shelter, counseling, life skills, and behavioral health services to abused, neglected, mentally ill, or homeless youth and their families. Agency programs foster positive development, enabling at-risk youth to become healthy, productive, responsible members of the community.

Proposal Summary:
Funding is requested to support the Life Skills Development Program, which helps prepare older Chester County youth for independent living after exiting foster care or the juvenile justice system.

Annual Budget $ 20,518,216  214 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
90 % of budget for program expenses  31 # of Board Volunteers
9 % of budget for administrative expenses  225 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
1 % of budget for fundraising expenses  1,500 (estimate) # of Volunteer Hours
100 % total

Top 3-5 funding sources:
United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley - $166,587
Anonymous Donor - $50,000
Keystone Savings Foundation - $50,000
Homeless Assistance Fund, Inc. - $49,000
Lehigh Valley Community Foundation - $30,000

Grant Amount Requested from CCCF: $ 5,000
II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Organization’s history, goals, key achievements and distinctiveness
Valley Youth House programs address the community crises of child abuse and neglect, family disintegration, academic failure, violence, truancy, and gang involvement. The agency served over 37,000 youth and their families last year across 11 Eastern Pennsylvania counties. All Valley Youth House services are grounded in a Positive Youth Development Model, enabling youth to become more confident in their abilities, more resilient to adversity, and better prepared for the transition to adulthood.

The Valley Youth House continuum of services includes:

- Life skills training and housing for older youth transitioning out of care to independence
- Education programs to prevent destructive behavior among youth (such as substance abuse, violence, teenage pregnancy, and truancy)
- School-based mental health intervention, counseling and referral programs
- Shelters, street outreach, and 24-hour hotlines for runaway and homeless youth
- A community-based residential treatment program with eight beds for sexually reactive boys
- Home-based child welfare and behavioral health services
- A coalition with the mission of eliminating child abuse and neglect in the Lehigh Valley
- Therapeutic recreation at the agency’s Camp Fowler to supplement traditional treatment

Valley Youth House has extensive experience and expertise in Independent Living Programs (ILP) for youth who are involved with the Department of Children, Youth, and Families and Juvenile Probation. The ILP is the agency’s largest and fastest growing service division, serving roughly 1,700 youth annually, and is recognized nationally (by HUD and the National Alliance to End Homelessness, among others) as a best practice model for services to transition age youth. The agency has a long history of working with the transition aged population and currently holds contracts in five counties (Carbon, Lehigh, Montgomery, Northampton, and Philadelphia) to provide Chafee IV-E Independent Living Programs with services similar to those provided in Chester County. The methods of service delivery are based on the findings of nationally recognized research organizations (such as the Casey Family Programs and Chapin Hall at the University of Chicago), as well as practices that have been found successful within the agency’s programs. In 2014, the program had an 82% success rate in assisting youth in the development of the skills and resources to live independently, reunite with their family, or transition to alternative living situation.

Among youth completing out-client IL services last year:

- 83% exited to stable housing
- 90% completed high school, earned their GED, or were on target for graduation
- 53% were employed

Funding request:
The proposed grant would help to underwrite the purchase of a used van to transport participants in the Life Skills Development Program, which prepares youth for making a successful transition from out-of-home care to independent living.
Description of key initiatives
The Life Skills Development Program serves youth ages 15-21 who are in foster care, aged out of foster care, or in the juvenile justice system. Youth are referred to the program either by The Chester County Office of Children, Youth, & Families (CYF) or the Chester County Juvenile Probation Office. The program provides two instructional series: a thirteen-class job skills series and an eight-class life skills series. The job skills series is conducted twice during the year. The life skills series is repeated five times each year.

Topics covered in the job skills series include:
- How to dress, act, and speak to create a professional first impression
- Building a resume
- Writing cover letters and other communications with potential employers
- Researching and applying for career opportunities
- Identifying legal and illegal hiring practices
- Securing references
- Keeping a job and pursuing promotion
- Preparing for, completing, and following up on interviews
- Two days of job shadowing and three days of volunteer work in fields related to clients’ interests

The life skills series includes:
- Communication and conflict resolution
- Goal planning and time management
- Building healthy relationships and making good decisions
- Creating and maintaining a budget
- Managing credit cards and bank accounts
- Finding and keeping an apartment
- Tenant’s rights
- Developing community and personal permanency resources to maintain stability after aging out of care

Life skills instruction is primarily conducted by Valley Youth House Independent Living staff. However, a variety of presentation styles are employed including guest speakers from the community who are experts in their fields, such as: the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency for presentations about accessing and affording higher education; Amnion Crisis Pregnancy Center and Planned Parenthood for pregnancy and STD prevention information; Susquehanna Bank for banking and financial education; and local CareerLink offices and The H.O.O.D. for employment assistance and education.

In addition to the educational series, The Life Skills Development Program provides college tours (such as to Temple University, West Chester University, Penn State’s Brandywine campus, and other local colleges) and enrichment activities such as cooking workshops, museum visits, and beach trips.

Since the program’s inception in 2012, 106 youth have participated in educational series and 92% of the youth have completed at least one of the series.

Specific needs and issues to be addressed
The Life Skills Development Program helps youth ages 15-21 to develop the skills and resources to become productive members of the community following exit from care.
According to the Kids Count Data Center, there were 57 Chester County youth aged 16 and older who were served by the foster care system between April 1, 2012 and March 31, 2013. In 2012, there were 665 juvenile delinquency dispositions in Chester County for youth age 15 and older.

Without intervention, outcomes for youth exiting care are dismal. By age 24:
- 25% will not complete high school
- 24% will experience homelessness
- The median annual earnings from employment will be just $8,000
- 81% of males will be incarcerated
- 77% of females will become pregnant

Organizational impact if initiative is undertaken
The eight-passenger van we propose buying will be used to transport clients to the educational series and enrichment activities. Currently, staff use their own vehicles to transport clients or the agency pays for the client’s cab fare. The purchase of a van would reduce costs and improve accessibility of services.

How will this grant enhance your organization’s capacity?
The purchase of a van will facilitate transportation of Chester County youth to Life Skills Development Program. Fewer youth will miss class due to inability to find or afford transportation, which will increase attendance and graduation numbers.

How will this increase in organizational capacity be measured?
The increase in capacity will be measured by the number of youth who graduate from the Life Skills Development Program.

Activities to implement the initiative. Please include a description of the expected activities; timeline and costs to implement the initiative. If external consulting services are required, include the anticipated costs and expertise of the consultants to be hired. Why it is important to fund this now?
The van would be purchased within one month of receiving grant funding and would be placed into use immediately after purchase. The asset would be depreciated over five years and is expected to have a useful life of at least seven years.

This application coincides with an application currently submitted to the Stewart Huston Trust for $7,500, which will provide for the full cost of the van ($12,500) when combined with this proposal.

How impact and results will be demonstrated
The impact will be demonstrated by the increase in graduates from the Life Skills Development Program. With the van, the program will increase the number of graduates by 10% (five students) from the previous two years, which graduated 48 and 49 students.
III. ATTACHMENTS

E-mail this support information:

1. Copy of 501 (c) (3) federal tax-exempt letter
2. List of Board of Directors, with their affiliations
3. Most recent annual report and financial statement, audited if available
4. Itemized organizational operating budget with actual results for prior fiscal year and current fiscal year to date
5. Current strategic plan. If your nonprofit does not have a current strategic plan, explain why.

Note: DVG Common Grant Application may be submitted with CCCF Summary Sheet.
Visit www.chescocf.org for an electronic version of this application.
E-mail applications are strongly encouraged.

E-mail completed proposals to grants@chescocf.org
Attn: Beth Harper Briglia, Vice President of Donor Services & Grantmaking
Chester County Community Foundation