

I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION -- GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

Date: August 23, 2018

Contact Information

Organization Name: LGBT Equality Alliance of Chester County, Inc.

Address: 200 Lincoln Avenue, Suite 104, Phoenixville, PA, 19460

Phone: (484) 888-9705

Year Incorporated: 2015

Executive Director: N/A (No compensated staff or board members)

Board of Directors Chair: Julie K. Mesaros

Primary Contact: Julie K. Mesaros

Primary Contact E-mail: julie@lgbteachesco.org

Has your nonprofit ever applied to the Community Foundation? Yes

Has your nonprofit ever received funding from the Community Foundation? Yes – \$1,000 restricted grant for technology acquisition (laptop, printer, and equipment) in 2016 / Operations / Fund for Chester County

Field/s of Interest: Education; Health; Social Well-being; Human Services; Advocacy

Organization Information:

Geographic Area Served: Our programs and events occur primarily in Chester County's larger municipalities of Phoenixville, West Chester, Exton, and Malvern, but we serve a wide geographic base throughout the county. Our external reach often also includes Montgomery, Delaware, Bucks, Berks, and Philadelphia counties; and Delaware and Maryland.

Describe Population Served: (1) People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, or asexual (LGBTQIA). The term queer is not derogatory by our in-group definition; it's meant to include those who are gender non-binary (neither male nor female) or who wish not to categorize themselves. (2) People who are not LGBTQIA identifying but are supportive of our community members through personal relationships or community partnerships. (3) People whom we attempt to educate and partner with, to build empathy and understanding across lines of sex, gender, and sexuality.

Annual Number of People Served: 2,000+ (1) Social Support and Networking Events: 500+ (2) Health and Wellness Events: 200+ (3) Education Events and Outreach Activities: 400+ (4) Chester County Pride Weekend: ~1,000

Mission: To create and sustain a safe, supportive environment for the adult and youth LGBT+ community in Chester County. We fulfill our mission by partnering with local organizations and businesses to facilitate social, health, education, and outreach programs.

Proposal Summary: **Capacity Building Proposal Focus:** Mission, Vision & Strategy

Annual Budget: \$76,000

25% of budget for administrative expenses

30% of budget for fundraising expenses

45% of budget for program expenses*

(*Program expenses relatively low due to no salaries.)

0 Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

7 Board Volunteers

75 Active Non-Board Volunteers

2-5 hours/week: Board Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources: (1) Chester County Pride Weekend sponsorships, (2) Chester County Pride Gala auction and ticket sales, (3) Individual donors, (4) Small event sponsorships, (5) Occasional grants

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: \$ 2,590.00

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION -- GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

1. Organization's history, goals, key achievements and distinctiveness

LGBT Equality Alliance of Chester County has a unique position as the only nonprofit organization of its kind in Chester County. We have demonstrated a strong, active, and able commitment to partnering with local organizations to serve youth and adult LGBTQIA (LGBT+) community members in Chester County. We fulfill our mission according to three pillars: **(1) Health and Wellness, (2) Education and Outreach, and (3) Social Support and Networking.**

The organization is governed by a 'working board', relying on unpaid volunteers to manage and coordinate programs and events. We have a modest budget but a dedicated collective will propelling our mission. Since our inception in 2015, we have established ourselves as the go-to nonprofit organization for the LGBT+ community not only in Chester County, but for a large swath of Greater Philadelphia's western suburbs. In doing so, we continue to build a positive reputation through online and word-of-mouth communications, and hence we frequently receive offers to partner on and co-sponsor all types of events in Chester County.

In four and half years, we have hosted large-scale community events which fulfill our entire mission, such as our signature annual fundraiser, Chester County Pride Weekend: 2 Pride Festivals in Phoenixville and 4 Pride Galas in Phoenixville or Malvern. (We were prepared for our 3rd annual Pride Festival earlier this year, but it was canceled due to weather.) We also host many year-round events and programs, which typically overlap in mission purpose, as follows:

For **Health and Wellness**, we hold a monthly adult LGBT+ support meeting at Phoenixville Hospital, facilitated by a certified psychologist. We've held 3 LGBT+ Health Fairs, with a 4th Health Fair plus an LGBT+ Discussion Panel scheduled at West Chester University on October 14, 2018.

For **Education and Outreach**, we manage an LGBT+ training program in which we coordinate and fund contracted trainers to train local government, school, church, and other groups, on topics like LGBT terminology, transgender issues, intersection of sexuality and faith, and history of oppression. We've also hosted 2 adult and youth LGBT+ Discussion Panels and we're scheduled to host a nationally known transgender advocate speaker October 3, 2018. In addition, we have done extensive outreach throughout Chester County, at many schools, fairs, films, plays, festivals, expos, and First Friday events. Most proudly, we're approaching our 3rd annual Holiday Pride Drive (food/toiletry/paper goods drive) for shelters and warming centers around Chester County: Coatesville, Phoenixville, West Chester.

For **Social Support and Networking**, activities on which our organization was founded, we have held our signature monthly, now quarterly, TEA Dances in Phoenixville and West Chester. We've also held youth and family-friendly events, such as bowling nights, 'Gayme Nights' (board game nights) at West Chester University, and the LGBT+ Night Game at the Reading Fightin' Phils, which we've sponsored the past 3 years, permitting us 500 free tickets for our target population. Our signature rainbow teapot stickers are displayed on store windows of LGBT-friendly businesses in Phoenixville and other municipalities in Chester County.

2. Funding request

- **Description of key initiatives:** Formal, consultant-guided strategic planning sessions for our board of directors from October - December, 2018. Please see attachment: Strategic Planning Proposal from Sylvia & Carter & Associates.

- **Specific needs and issues to be addressed:** In order to further expand our organization’s role as advocates and facilitators of LGBT+ focused programming in Chester County, we need a strategic plan that is tactical and goal-oriented in supporting our vision and mission, with a view to creating a stronger volunteer base on board and committee levels.
 - **Organizational impact if initiative is undertaken**
 - **How will this grant enhance your organization’s capacity?** Formulating a strategic plan for 2 years at a time will provide a foundation for our organization to: make short- and long-term decisions, utilize an optimal portion of our budget for programming, and more effectively utilize our volunteers. We will actively implement our 2-year strategic plan, which will result in board members working more effectively as a board and executing daily activities of the organization more efficiently, which will then enhance the work of committee-level volunteers and programming for our target populations.
 - **How will this increase in organizational capacity be measured?** The strategic plan will include measurable performance indicators, such as: (1) Increase our board membership to maintain a 9-12 person board for minimum 2-year term each; (2) Increase our event and program frequency, and thereby number of people served, by 25%; (3) Increase our community partnerships by 25%; and (4) Increase our gross total donations and sponsorships by 25%.
 - **Activities to implement the initiative:** We’ve hired Sylvia & Carter & Associates to facilitate our formal strategic planning sessions. Please see their proposal attached. Implementation on the board level will generally involve organizing a more cohesive governance structure, which will allow for maximum effectiveness and efficiency through board member training and evaluation of board size, member roles and skill sets.
 - **Why it is important to fund this now:** Our board membership has become stable and experienced for the first time since our organization’s inception. We’re doing very positive work for our target population and we’d like to become more grounded and predictable in that work for the long term. Our board now has the time and energy to dedicate several months to strategic planning sessions, whereas during the first half of each year we’re heavily focused on preparation for Chester County Pride Weekend in June.
3. **How impact and results will be demonstrated:** Our strategic planning facilitator/s will provide pre- and post-assessment tools, and measurable, step-wise objectives to guide our progress and demonstrate the impact of strategic plan implementation on our organization’s overall capacity from January 2019 to December 2020.

III. ATTACHMENTS (# 1-5 INCLUDED)

1. Copy of 501 (c) (3) federal tax-exempt letter + organization legal name change document
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. For capacity building initiative: itemized budget and external consultant’s proposal
6. No current strategic plan: We’re applying for a capacity building grant to fund consultant-led sessions to develop our first formal strategic plan.

