

I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

Date: June 20, 2019

Contact Information

Organization Name: Westside Community Center
Address: 430 Hannum Avenue, West Chester, PA 19380
Phone: 610-314-4327

Executive Director/CEO Name: Ryan Enns
Executive Director/CEO E-mail:
Ryan@westsidecommunitycenterwc.org
Board Chair Name: Michelle McGowan
Primary Contact Name: Ryan Enns
Primary Contact E-mail:
Ryan@westsidecommunitycenterwc.org

Website: <http://www.westsidecommunitycenterwc.org>
Year Incorporated: 2012
FEIN: 46-0764528

Has your nonprofit ever applied to the Community Foundation? Yes No Not Sure
Has your nonprofit ever received funding from the Community Foundation? Yes No Not Sure
X 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 Human Services Religion

Organization Information:

Geographic Area Served:

West Chester Area School District (students served primarily live in the Borough of West Chester)

Describe Population Served and Annual Number of People Served: The Westside Community Center (The Westside) serves 100 students (Middle and High School) through our core After School Program, Skate-Spot Program, Summer Soccer Camp and Enrichment Programs (LEAD & Thrive). 100% of students served are enrolled in the West Chester Area School District and predominantly live in poverty and come from single-parent households. Many students have experienced transient housing conditions, homelessness, abuse, food-insecurity, parents addicted to drugs/alcohol, are first or second generation immigrants and are struggling academically. In addition to our core programs, approximately 10 families are served through our Community Garden and over 255 adults receive free tax preparation services through our partnership with VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance).

Mission:

Westside Community Center's mission is to empower families and youth academically, socially and Spiritually; inspiring them to take on leadership roles in their community.

Proposal Summary: The Westside Community Center respectfully requests \$25,000 of capital support to help fund renovations/equipment needed for the Washington Project.

Annual Budget \$185,390

74 % of budget for program expenses
13 % of budget for administrative expenses
13 % of budget for fundraising expenses
100 % total

2FT/2PT # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
6 # of Board Volunteers
26 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
560 # of Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources:

Pilgrim Foundation \$10,000, Erie Insurance Foundation \$10,000, Individual donors, Special Events

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: \$25,000

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

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

In 2012, the Westside Community Center (The Westside) was founded with the mission of empowering families and youth in the West Chester area by helping them to develop academically, socially and spiritually. Ultimately, as individuals experience growth in these areas, our goal is that they will be inspired to become positive role models and leaders in the community.

In order to accomplish our mission, The Westside initially prioritized 3 programs to serve community needs —The After School Program, The Community Garden and The Skate Spot. The Community Garden and Skate Spot were, and are still, open to all and the After School Program continues to serve middle and high school students in the West Chester Area School District. Over the past 2 years, we expanded our programming by instituting 3 new Enrichment Programs developed and facilitated in partnership with West Chester University students: LEAD (Leadership & Career Readiness), THRIVE (Nutritional Education) and EDGE (Leadership, Social and Diversity Empowerment) .

Our distinctiveness lies in our holistic engagement with the community. In addition to the programs that we run; The Westside also serves as a site where community members can access critical services such as free tax preparation done by Volunteer Income Tax Assistance volunteers (VITA). Last year, 255 members of the community benefited from the tax preparation done by VITA at our location (Helping put \$426,765 federal dollars and \$19,965 state dollars back into people's pockets). We also partner with Young Lives, an organization who serves teenage moms and The Bridge Academy, an organization serving at-risk youth in Coatesville. Throughout the year we also host events such as skateboarding competitions, neighborhood barbecues, and movie nights in an effort to provide community resources and build healthy and impactful relationships throughout West Chester.

We are pleased to report that in our most recent survey of core students, 84% said The Westside helps them feel more motivated academically, 80% improved reading and/or writing skills and 72% plan to enroll in college or a trade school after high school. Additionally, over 80% said that since coming to The Westside they feel more confident, better about themselves, have developed new friendships and over 76% said The Westside helps them avoid alcohol, drugs, and skipping/dropping out of school.

2. Funding request

Description of key initiatives

The Westside serves a diverse population of at-risk youth and their families in the West Chester Area School District. Since its founding, The Westside has operated its services out of Providence Church West Chester's building, a central place in the Borough of West Chester that is easily accessible by foot for students living in the borough.

In December 2018, Providence Church purchased the adjacent car wash property on West Washington Street and provided The Westside with a 99 year lease to utilize and renovate the space as needed. Since the cease of its operation, the car wash property had been neglected and attracted drug dealing, crime and other negative activity. Despite its current condition, Providence Church and The Westside saw the benefits that this space could provide the community. With help from the community, The Westside plans to revitalize the property via the following four stages:

1. Demolish the car wash, Re-pave the parking lot, & Install skate boarding features (demo in progress):

Before the space can become a safe space for recreation and community activities, The Westside needs to demo the current carwash bays and re-pave the parking lot. Once the demo and repaving are complete, The Westside will work with Jessie Clayton from 5th Pocket Designs to install new skate features to create a larger and more appealing skate spot for the community. The expanded skate spot will continue to serve a sub-culture where there are many negative influences. The Skate Spot is a positive and welcoming environment where youth and adults can be encouraged and

experience the love of God in a unique and tangible way. The new Skate Spot will continue to be available to the community on Tuesdays from May through November during the hours of 4-8PM. Currently, an average of 35 skateboarders utilize this program and we anticipate service numbers to significantly increase with expanded space and features.

2. Create green space & install raised garden beds for The Westside Community Garden:

The Washington Street property is currently an overgrown and neglected eye sore for the community. The Westside plans to clean up the property and create green space for members of our community to use. We also plan to expand our current community garden and add raised beds to the property to provide more affordable and fresh produce for the community.

3. Build basketball court & install benches and picnic tables:

Our section of the borough needs an outdoor basketball court. We plan on adding a basketball court to the property and installing benches and picnic tables for the community to enjoy. Unsupervised teens can be a strain on any community. By providing an outdoor basketball court, we can provide community youth with the supervision and safety that they need. Student's love for sports also serves as a great incentive to increase student's participation and academic motivation. And finally, the space will also serve as a means to draw community members out of their homes so we can foster conversations and healthy relationships.

4. Build children's playground:

The Westside desires to serve people of all ages and backgrounds. The Westside's core programs currently serve Middle and High School aged youth; however, our mission is to serve youth AND families. The addition of a playground will increase our outreach in the community by creating a clean and safe space for young families to gather.

Specific needs and issues to be addressed

West Chester, PA is a beautiful town; but within it lie pockets of poverty often masked by the fancy town centers, parks and restaurants. The Westside is in its 6th year of serving approximately 100 disadvantaged, underserved youth in West Chester. Students served by The Westside are low-income, at-risk youth. The majority of students are minority youth (45% Latino, 27% African American, 16% Mixed Race, 11% White, 1% Other) and living in single parent homes. Additionally, many have experienced trauma (transient housing, homelessness, abuse, domestic violence, food insecurity, etc.), are English Language Learners, and are struggling academically. Over 36% will be the first in their families to graduate high school and 68% will be the first in their families to go to college. As a result, our students lack the motivation and guidance needed to reach their potential.

Since its inception, The Westside has operated its services out of Providence Church West Chester's building, a central place in the Borough of West Chester easily accessible by foot for students living in the borough. This partnership has enabled The Westside to save significant overhead expenses; but has been limiting for recreational space. The purchase and renovation of the adjacent car wash will be instrumental in not only reducing drug use, crime and other negative activity in the neighborhood; but also generating increased opportunities to serve at-risk youth and their families.

The addition of outdoor recreational space is imperative as we seek to connect with local families in need. This new pocket of land will generate a clean and safe space for families to gather and will serve as a hub for healthy conversations, relationship building, and community restoration. Many of these families are currently connected to The Westside because their older children attend our after-school program, they receive free tax preparation via our VITA partnership, or because they receive free produce from our community garden during the summer. The space will also be home to many community outreach activities including BBQ's, movie nights and back to school events.

Why it is important to fund this now

The Westside's Washington Project is time-sensitive. The property is currently home to negative activity, so The Westside wants to move quickly to revitalize the space and make it a positive hub for healthy conversations,

relationship building, and community restoration. Safe and supportive environments are critical for our community. Students and families served by The Westside face difficult circumstances including homelessness, addiction, language barriers, poverty, abuse, food-insecurity and/or illiteracy. Additionally, rising costs of living in our community requires many of our student's parents to work 2-3 jobs to provide for their family. Consequently, many of our students are left home alone and unsupervised in the out-of-school time hours. Research confirms that the hours of 3-6PM are, "the peak hours for juvenile crime and experimentation with drugs, alcohol, cigarettes and sex" and that hours spent alone afterschool are, "lost opportunities to help students grow and develop the skills and competencies to make positive life decisions that can lead to their future success" (After School Alliance).

The Westside seeks to prevent these outcomes by providing a safe and supportive environment during the critical out-of-school-time hours that offers a variety of academic supports, nutritional education, leadership development and recreational activities. Recreational activities are one of the greatest incentives to increase student attendance and academic motivation. Currently, The Westside's capacity to provide recreational activities is limited by our space.

The sooner we move forward with this project, the quicker we will be able to transform it into a positive environment that will improve the health and well-being of youth and their families in West Chester.

How impact and results will be demonstrated

Impact will be demonstrated through beautification of the space, reduced crime and drug activity in the area and increased enrollment and positive outcomes via The Westside's programs. Project outcomes will be shared with stakeholders via newsletters, annual reports and social media.

III. ATTACHMENTS

E-mail or 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. If capacity building initiative, itemized budget (including external consultant's proposal, if applicable)
6. Current strategic plan. If your nonprofit does not have a current strategic plan, explain why.

- **E-mail proposals to grants@chescocf.org.** Receipt will be confirmed by e-mail.