I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

Contact Information
Organization Name: Friends Association for Care & Protection of Children
Executive Director/CEO Name: Jennifer Lopez
Address: 113 West Chestnut St.,
West Chester, PA 19380
Phone: 610-431-3598 ext.222
Website: www.friendsassoc.org
Year Incorporated: 1939
FEIN: 23-1381006

Executive Director/CEO E-mail:.lopez@friendsassoc.org
Board of Directors Chair Name: Matthew Holliday
Primary Contact Name: Lorri Sarosy
Primary Contact E-mail: l.sarosy@friendsassoc.org

Has your nonprofit ever applied to the Community Foundation? Yes _V_ No__ Not Sure__
Has your nonprofit ever received funding from the Community Foundation? Yes _V_ No__ Not Sure__
__V__ 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 (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served):
We serve all families with children experiencing or at-risk of homelessness in Chester County.

Describe Population Served and Annual Number of People Served: We serve the most vulnerable families and those with the greatest barriers to permanent housing. Each year we serve 120 or more families: 249 children/156 adults for a total of 405 individuals.

Mission: Friends Association promotes the independence of families with children by providing shelter, programs and services that prevent and end homelessness in Chester County, PA.

Proposal Summary: See attached.

If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:
___Mission, Vision & Strategy ___Governance & Leadership ___Strategic Relationships
___Fundraising & Development ___ Technology Other: ____________________________

Annual Budget $999,159

___81% of budget for program expenses ___9# of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

___6% of budget for administrative expenses ___13# of Board Volunteers

___13% of budget for fundraising expenses ___700# of Active Non-Board Volunteers

100% total ___5,000# of Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources: Chester County Dept. of Comm. Dev., United Way of Chester County, foundation grants, fundraising events.

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: $7,500
History and Goals

Friends Association has served children and their families since 1822. The original organization housed orphans in Philadelphia. We have grown and changed since the agency was formed, but remain true to our mission of helping families remain stable and housed.

The families we work with have a wide range of needs and barriers that challenge their ability to obtain and maintain permanent housing. Our goal is to work with each family to develop a plan to use their strengths and skills to resolve barriers and maintain housing and family stability.

In 2009 we started the Homelessness to Independence Initiative. Since then we have worked with 786 families with an overall 89% success rate – families obtaining housing and maintaining housing for 6+ months.

Distinctiveness

The core principles that guide our programs:

1. **Housing First**: we believe housing is a basic human right and provide housing readiness education through case management and online education through the Prepared Renter Program.

2. **Strengths-Based**: Families are provided options and recommendations that guide and inform their choices. We emphasize each family member’s strengths. The families we serve are resourceful and resilient. We use an integrated services approach to address the interconnected issues families’ face that resulted in their housing instability.

3. **Trauma-Informed**: We work to understand the dynamics and impact of trauma on the lives of the families we work with.

4. Opportunity for families to transition among programs, i.e. shelter families transition to Homeless Prevention or Housing Stability Case Management for additional case management guidance, education and services.

We are the only shelter/housing agency in Chester County that works with single moms and dads, two-parent, multi-generational, grandparent and same-sex partner headed households.

Community Need

Almost 60,000 families with children (57,971) are homeless on any given night in the United States, according to the 2017 federal Point-in-Time count. Nationally that means 7.4 of 10,000 families are

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homeless. In Pennsylvania there are 6.2 homeless families for every 10,000, ranking us 13th in the country.

4,816 Chester County families live below poverty level. 6.4% of children below the age of 18 live below the poverty level. Median rent in Chester County is $1,250. 44.2% of renters pay 30% or more of their income on housing costs, as reported by Chester County Dept. of Community Development.

Programs

Friends Association’s Homelessness to Independence Initiative includes four programs, developed to address the range of needs of those we serve. Programs include:

**Emergency Family Shelter (EFS):** houses families in one of 6 apartment units in the shelter. Each family lives autonomously in an apartment for 90-120 days as they work with their case manager to obtain work, permanent housing and access mainstream benefits.

Families achieve success when they find employment or increase income and move to permanent housing. **28 families served annually.**

**Homeless Prevention Program (HPP):** provides 12-18 months of case management, education, integrated services and rental assistance for families facing eviction.

Program length allows families the support and guidance they need to complete education and work skills programs, achieve goals and learn skills that contribute to their ability to maintain family and housing stability. **44 families served annually.**

**Outreach Case Management (OCM):** offers short-term case management (1-2 months) to families experiencing homelessness as they await an opening in a shelter or housing program, when all are at capacity.

Families are temporarily housed in local hotels while they work with their case manager to obtain mainstream benefits and work. **24 families served annually.**

**Housing Stability Case Management (HSCM):** provides long-term case management for families who moved to permanent housing from a shelter. Families receive 6-12 months of case management, integrated services and education.

We are working with families with greater and multiple needs, including:

- 32% with a disability
- 36% justice involved
- 17% mental health
- 13% chronic health issues
- 5% drug and alcohol issues
- 4% veterans

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• 13% parenting youth

Chester County is a vibrant, healthy community with work opportunities and strong community spirit. Our excellent schools, services and work opportunities attract families. Rent and cost of living is very high in Chester County, creating barriers for families who wish to live and work here.

Each year we work with more than 100 families (250 children/160 adults). The families we work with strive for a productive life for themselves and opportunities for their children. They need guidance, education and the support network we all rely on to achieve goals. Many families have experienced trauma and lack the skills, education and knowledge needed to achieve family and housing stability.

Friends Association fulfills our mission by providing homeless or at-risk of homelessness families with children, the guidance, education, financial assistance and mainstream benefits needed to resolve their homelessness and provide them with the skills and tools they need to maintain family and housing stability.

Funding for our programs is needed now because of the level of need among the families we serve and the complexities of problems families and their children are facing: addiction, justice involvement, medical/mental health issues and other barriers to family/housing stability.

**Program Impact & Results**

92% of families served exit programs either having moved to permanent housing from our shelter or maintaining permanent housing for 6+ months, through the Homeless Prevention Program.

68% employed with earned income at exit

90% of families have health insurance at program exit

95% of families obtain 2-3 additional mainstream benefits that increase overall family income

92% of families complete a monthly budget and learn to manage income/expenses

Data for every family we serve is tracked and compiled. A portion of our funding comes from contracts we have with Chester County Dept. of Community Development. All contracted county agencies are required to enter information in the Chester County central database. The information is used across agencies to understand numbers served, need, usage and future planning.

We maintain an internal database on families served to understand overall family success rates and impact of programs. We analyze length of program usage, services and education programs completed compared to success rates to understand the levels and types of services that result in the greatest family success rates. We use this data to revise and update programs.

Families complete surveys at program entry and exit and we follow-up with families 6 and 12 months post program.
Friends Association
History and Success Story

Friends Association has worked with homeless children and families since 1822, addressing current needs and adopting “best practices” of the day.

In 2009 we began the Homelessness to Independence Initiative. Since then we added two programs to the initiative – Outreach Case Management and Housing Stability Case Management.

In January 2019, Jennifer Lopez-Cerrato accepted the Executive Director position, replacing Catherine Friedman who left Friends for a new endeavor. After 3 decades as an accomplished criminal justice leader, Jennifer retired as Deputy Chief of Chester County Probation, Parole and Pretrial Services to pursue her interest in developing strategies to heal and restore communities.

In our commitment to address the changing needs of the families we serve we adopted a Trauma-Informed Care (TIC) approach. TIC is based on the recognition of the impact of trauma on every day functioning and a collaborative approach to finding coping mechanisms.

Using an Integrated Care Plan that is strengths-based and holistic we will continue to focus on housing first while including a comprehensive plan for education, work skills and mainstream benefits. Families receive services that match their depth of need. Through screening and assessment tools we gather detailed information about past and current living/financial situations to help identify barriers to housing stability and together find solutions to resolve these.

Our program partners Open Hearth, Chester County OIC, Chester County Human Services and others are integral to the comprehensive plan.

100% of staff has participated in trainings to learn the skills needed for this updated care approach, including:

- **Mental Health First-Aid**
- **Stewards of Children (identification and prevention of child abuse)**
- **Housing First**
- **Bridges Out of Poverty**
- **Domestic Abuse (emphasis on impact on the immigrant population)**
- **Trauma-Informed Care**
- **Cultural Sensitivity**

*fall 2019

Families experience many daily challenges and achieve success despite the challenges as evidenced in the following story:

Carrie and partner Charmeka and their 6 year old twin sons D’Ante and Darian were sleeping in their car when we met them. They were accepted into the Outreach program and moved to a hotel that
evening. Within 2 weeks the family moved to our shelter and things began to change for them. The twins were enrolled in school and Carrie and CharmeeKa found work. They lived in the shelter for 5 months while regaining stability.

In May the family moved to an apartment in a safe neighborhood close to school and work. Carrie and CharmeeKa transitioned to the Housing Stability Case Management program for additional case management, education and support to ensure long-term success.

Carrie told us that there have been lots of ups and downs, but Friends support never wavered. D’Ante and Darian are adjusting well and were accepted into the Rainbow Elementary Gifted Program. Their summer was spent in a neighborhood with friends close by and a yard to play in.

In Carrie’s words, “we would not be where we are without Friends Association and case manager Indira. Life is still not easy and it may never be, but we are stable and making it and see a bright future for D’Ante and Darian.”