



**April 16, 2020**

**Organization Name:** Lighthouse Youth Center  
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**Chester County Geographic Area Served:** The Lighthouse Youth Center serves the area of Oxford Borough and the surrounding townships in the Oxford Area School District.

**The Community\* in which Lighthouse Youth Center Serves, impact of COVID-19 and how Lighthouse Youth Center has responded**

The Oxford Area School District (OASD) in Southern Chester County serves 3,795 students (2018-2019). Per capita income is \$29,459 (2017). Among children ages 5 to 17 served by OASD, 11.43 percent, live in poverty (2017) -- Forty-seven percent (47%), or 1,791 of OASD's students, are eligible for the free or reduced price lunch program (2018-2019). In the 2017-2018 school year, 65 students experienced homelessness, compared with 32 homeless students first reported in the 2011-2012 school year. During 2012-2016, there were 166 evictions in the OASD, with devastating consequences affecting poverty, health and education, and compounding disparities in the community. **Among the four school districts serving southern Chester County, OASD's per capita income is the lowest and OASD's poverty rate and percentage of students eligible for free or reduced price lunch are the highest.** These are the children the Lighthouse Youth Center serves on a daily basis. \*Source: Vickery Consulting.

Currently, 245 unduplicated youth are registered at the Lighthouse Youth Center. Students come to the Lighthouse daily to seek refuge and gain encouragement in their personal lives. Of the 245 youth we serve: 79 are Hispanic, 65 are Caucasian, 56 are African American, and 45 are Multi-Racial.

With the Lighthouse Youth Center being closed the Lighthouse students aren't able to complete their homework assignments, because no Wi-Fi at their homes. This deterrent has caused anxiety among our students and their parents/guardians. The students are also missing their free or reduce breakfast and lunch meals at school each day. As well as their free 2:30 p.m. snack and 5:00 p.m. meal at the Lighthouse Youth Center.

With the above items mentioned, the Lighthouse Youth Center worked with Armstrong Cable to bring in a Wi-Fi Access Hot Spot from Cleveland, Ohio. They installed this Hot Spot on one of our telephone poles. Our students are now able to access this free Hot Spot in our parking lot and within a block radius of the Lighthouse Youth Center. Our program director and program assistants are now showing our students how to access this free Wi-Fi and help them complete their homework.

Since, March 16 we have turned our facility into a warehouse storage. Individuals, churches and businesses are dropping off food, paper supplies and school supplies to us. We are also purchasing local grocery gift cards, laundry detergent and supplies from the local grocery stores. Every Thursday, we box or bag up these items and deliver them to Lighthouse families. We are also working with the Oxford Area School District with food bag delivery days. Our Executive Director and Oxford Mayor team up in a truck and trailer and deliver these food bags to the Lighthouse families. These acts of kindness are real lifelines that are helping our families cope with the COVID-19 crisis.

We are requesting \$5,000 to help offset cancelling our April 30 Spring Celebration Banquet to comply with CDC guidelines. This year we had budgeted \$67,000 towards our \$390,000 yearly budget and the excitement and fellowship it generates often exceeds what we budget each year. Even without holding the banquet, Lighthouse supporters have contributed \$27,000 to help with the budget. This still leaves us with a \$40,000 shortfall toward this year's budget.

We will use the funds immediately to pay our maintenance and utility bills as we use continue to use our facility as a food storage warehouse and a distribution center. We will also use the funding to continue to employ our 2 full time and 5 part time employees. This dedicated group will then be able to continue to help our elementary, secondary and Lighthouse college scholarship students complete their school assignments and provide emotional support during this difficult time. Your generosity also will enable us to continue our Thursday Food Blessing Bags Program to the Lighthouse families. We are maintaining a detailed spreadsheet to make sure that all of our youth and their families are being served.

We appreciate your consideration to help fund the Lighthouse Youth Center in this unprecedented time of need so we can continue to serve our youth, their families, and the community.