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COVID-19 Rapid Response Mini-Grant Letter of Request

Date:

Contact Information

Organization Name: Community Warehouse Project
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Board President: Glenda Brion
Vice President: Catherine Friedman
Primary Contact Name: Glenda Brion
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In a few brief paragraphs, please explain:

- 1. What geographic area is served?** *(If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served)*
- 2. What population is served, what has been the impact of COVID-19, and how has your nonprofit responded?**
- 3. How much funding is sought? How does this compare to your annual operating budget? What will the funding be used for? What is the expected timeframe for use of funds?**

1. Community Warehouse Project provides furniture and household goods to Chester County families and veterans in need--at no charge.

2. The beneficiaries of our mission are women, children, families and veterans who have experienced homelessness or near homelessness due to a financial crisis or personal tragedy or loss and are now poised to rebuild their lives and turn an empty house or apartment into a home.

Community Warehouse Project, launched by founder Glenda K. Brion in 2017 is a service organization with the singular purpose of supporting homeless families and veterans in Chester County, PA who are about to move into a new home but have little or no furniture and necessities. As a staff member of a local housing/shelter provider, Glenda witnessed first-hand this unmet need and was motivated to create an agency to help alleviate this hardship. CWP volunteers collect and redistribute donated usable furniture and other household items free of charge one time to people who have been pre-screened for need and referred by more than 40 community and government-based agencies to ensure that those in need have the basics to begin rebuilding their lives-- beds, kitchen tables/chairs, dressers, lamps, sofas, dishes, pots and pans and more.

We serve families and veterans primarily in Chester County--one of the wealthiest counties in our Commonwealth. Yet, more than 780 children and their parents experience homelessness each year with an additional, 1,900 children and their parents facing eviction at any moment. Chester County has also experienced an increase in homelessness among families caused by the opioid addiction crisis and an increase in mental health issues coupled with a lack of affordable mental health professionals. Adding a further barrier to stable housing, the issue of homelessness is exacerbated by the serious lack of affordable housing in our county. CWP serves those ready to enter a safe and stable home after they have successfully worked with numerous supportive housing and case management programs throughout our county.

Even in these unprecedented times of sheltering in place and quarantines due to the Covid-19 outbreak, CWP continues to receive calls from our network of non-profits asking us to help women, children and veterans about to move into their new safe place—a true sanctuary and quite frankly a dire necessity in this crisis. We continue to be able to help as many as possible while exercising social distancing and adhering to all safety protocols. However, understandably donations of furniture, beds and more have slowed down significantly. The demand for our services and furniture remains ongoing but at some point our two warehouses will not have the items so desperately needed—specifically the most basic of needs – mattresses and pillows.

Additionally, as with most non-profits in our region, CWP has had to postpone our important spring fundraiser. Being a start-up non-profit organization founded in 2017 and relying 100% on community-based philanthropy to fund our small operating budget of less than \$128,000, losing the revenue of our Big Hearts Event will take a significant toll on our organization. Our March 2019 Big Hearts Event raised just under \$55,000. Prior to postponing our 2020 event we had received \$13,025 in sponsorships, donations and ticket sales. We do plan to reschedule our event, but at this point with the lack of revenue coming in we anticipate having to curtail some of our work.

3. Community Warehouse Project is seeking a Collateral Damage Grant from Chester County Community Foundation in the amount of \$3,000 to support our Mattress and Bed Fund which last year was able to purchase \$30,000 worth of full and twin-sized mattresses for women, children and veterans. Our Mattress and Bed Fund is in addition to our small operating budget. Your grant in this amount represents 10% of the funds needed and if granted will be expended May through August 2020 to purchase mattresses.

Thank you for joining with other philanthropic organizations in Chester County to serve those most affected by the Covid-19 crisis.

Please email grants@chescof.org

- _____ This Brief COVID-19 Rapid Response Mini-Grant Letter of Request
- _____ Copy of annual operating budget or most recent audit
- _____ 501c3 determination letter

Request letters will be posted on the Community Foundation's website, in order to share with fund advisors, donors, grant panelists, and other funding sources.

Grants will be processed a few times monthly.

We estimate mini-grants will range from \$500 to \$5000.

Please direct general questions & inquiries about the Rapid Response Mini-Grants to grants@chescof.org.
Beth, Steph, Cierra or Kevin will answer you.