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)*  
   The Bridge Academy and Community serves the city of Coatesville.

2. **What population is served, what has been the impact of COVID-19, and how has your nonprofit responded?**  
   The Bridge regularly serves families of Coatesville by various programs throughout the year. Programs work to provide tools necessary for academic achievement, life skills, creative expression, and spiritual growth and leadership. During this time of social distancing and a stay at home order, the Bridge staff has stayed closely connected with our families even though physical programs cannot take place. Families range in sizes and ages (some have families of 1-3 people, but we also have families with 10-15 people living in one home). Most are in single parent households, or under the care of guardians. Many of the parents of our children work in fields that have been effected by COVID-19. Our families are balancing the loss of income, food insecurity, and job insecurity. The added strain of managing the academic futures of their children is also an additional hurdle to overcome.

   The Bridge has created a program “Love Your Neighbor, Love Your Neighborhood”, which is providing a coordinated approach to assessing and meeting the needs of the families we currently work with. Here is the process:

   1. **Intake.** Families are in contact with the Bridge via social media, phone calls, and/or text message to alert staff about their needs. Staff take notes and create a plan to address those needs. **“The Bridge staff currently has 60 families in our registered intake already.”**

   2. **Information and Referral.** Based on the needs shared, staff makes referrals to other community-based and social service organizations to address needs outside of our scope.

   3. **Food/toiletry distribution.** Working closely with the Chester County Food Bank, and various donors, we will receive food and toiletry donations for distribution to our families. 3 stand up freezers were donated by Whirpool and Penske. Local companies and donors have committed to helping stock these freezers in order to provide meals as needed by specific families. Over the next weeks and months, staff will work to distribute according to family size and need.

   4. **Financial Assistance.** The Bridge is encouraging families to continue to make good faith payments on regular bills as they are able, rather than deferring all bills during these coming weeks and months. If all families defer bills, they will be in an extreme financial crisis as this pandemic lifts and bill payments return to mandatory payments. Families struggling to pay bills will have the opportunity to apply for financial assistance with utility bills, rent, or other immediate needs. Gift cards to Giant, Aldi, or Walmart will also be distributed as needed so that families can keep up with their grocery/ household item needs. A few select volunteers have offered to shop for those that cannot leave their homes, while continuing to practice social distancing.

   5. **Academic Support.** The Bridge focuses on the academic growth and life skill development of our youth. Staff will post and provide reading sessions, and resources to supplement the educational development of our children. Staff will be in contact with our families individually and will come around them to help make sure they can access school work, internet, etc. We will print school work, provided by Caln Elementary School, books to read at home, and school supplies, so our students remain engaged through this process. Currently staff is working with families to ensure they have computers/ laptops and access to the internet.
The Bridge requests $5,000 in order to provide for needs of the families we work with. Our annual operating budget is $339,300 for this fiscal year. The funds will be used for financial relief, academic and family support, and provision of food or other household needs. Please see the attachment which shares the full project budget of $50,050 and includes more details regarding the use of the funds. The expected time frame for the full project budget ranges from April 1 until the end of September. After this pandemic lifts, our families with critical needs will still be impacted by this period of time.

Please email grants@chescocf.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@chescocf.org.
Beth, Steph, Cierra or Kevin will answer you.