

GRANT PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

The Chester County Community Foundation *connects people who care with causes that matter, so their philanthropy makes a difference now and forever*. The Community Foundation is a collection of **Field of Interest** and **Donor Advised Funds** with **\$2.5+ million granted annually** to nonprofits in Chester County and beyond. **99%** of the grants issued by CCCF are made possible through the generosity of the Fund Advisors, who make grant decisions throughout the year.

Proposals submitted by nonprofits are considered for 2 types of grants:

Field of Interest & Donor Advised Funds (No Deadline)

- ◇ Grants **focus on Chester County** causes and issues, but are not limited to Chester County.
- ◇ Charitable nonprofits working **in all fields of interest** are considered for grant awards. (I.e. arts, culture, and humanities; education; community improvement; environment; religion; health; and human services)
- ◇ **General operating** grants are encouraged. Nonprofits should be specific about their mission, goals, and measurable outcomes.
- ◇ Proposals can be submitted **anytime throughout the year**.
- ◇ Grant decisions are made **intermittently** throughout the year, as Fund Advisors desire.
- ◇ Grant **awards** typically range from **\$500-\$7,500**.

Fund for Chester County Capacity Building Grants (Due 9/15)

- ◇ For eligibility in this grant program, nonprofits must be **located in and serve Chester County**. NPO's with budgets of \$750,000 or less are preferred.
- ◇ The goal of CCCF's capacity building grantmaking is to **strengthen the effectiveness of NPO's serving the Chester County region**, in areas including:
 - Mission, Vision, & Strategy
 - Governance & Leadership
 - Strategic Relationships
 - Operations & Technology
 - Fundraising & Development
- ◇ Proposals must be submitted by **September 15** to be eligible for consideration.
- ◇ Grant **awards** typically range from **\$500-\$5,000**, with monies distributed by **February**.

- * All Community Foundation Funds accept this grant application form. An electronic form is available at www.chescof.org.
- * **Email proposals to grants@chescof.org**; Proposals are considered "complete" when CCCF has **confirmed** receipt of the **Grant Proposal Summary Sheet, Narrative, and Attachments**. Proposals are shared electronically with Fund Advisors, Donors, and Grants Committees.
- * Per IRS Regulations, applicants must be charitable, tax exempt organizations with 501(c)(3) certification and cannot be individuals.

Please contact Grants Administrator, **Kevin Baffa**, at **(610)-698-8211** or grants@chescof.org with any questions.

I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

One page only. This page will be shared electronically with Grant Committee Members & Fund Advisors.

Note: If Philanthropy Network of Greater Philadelphia's Common Grant Application is used, the Community Foundation's Summary Sheet **MUST** accompany application.

To obtain an electronic version of this application, visit www.chescocf.org

Date Sept. 6, 2019

Contact Information

Organization Name: The Barn at Spring Brook Farm
Address: 360 Locust Grove Rd., West Chester, PA 19382
Phone: 610-793-1037
Website: www.springbrook-farm.org
Year Incorporated: 2006
FEIN: 20-3417567

Executive Director: Nan Latona
Email: nlatona@springbrook-farm.org
Board Chair: Sharon Cichocki
Primary Contact: Nan Latona
E-mail: nlatona@springbrook-farm.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

Arts, Culture & Humanities Environment/Animal Welfare Education
 Health Human Services Religion

Mission: The mission of The Barn is to enrich the lives of children with disabilities through animal-assisted activities.

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): The Barn serves children from throughout Chester County and surrounding neighborhoods.

Describe Population Served and Annual Number of People Served: Children, ages 2 to 12 years old, who live in Chester County and the surrounding counties and who have physical, cognitive and/or developmental concerns gain short and longer term benefits from our programs. During 2018, our core staff of 3 fulltime employees served 474 program enrollments (representing a 9% increase over the previous year) for a total of 3,952 service hours for approximately 350 children.

Annual Budget \$ 338,025 3 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
85 % of budget for program expenses 13 # of Board Volunteers
9 % of budget for administrative expenses 300+ # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
6 % of budget for fundraising expenses 8800+ # of Volunteer Hours
100 % total

Top 3-5 funding sources: Fiscal Year 2018 The Boudinot Foundation \$20,000; Springbank Foundation \$15,000; Welfare Foundation, Inc. \$10,475.

Is this grant proposal for: Capacity Building or General Operating ?

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: The Barn would be grateful for Donor Advised support in any amount. We welcome visits from the CCCF donors and advisory staff. Thank you for the opportunity to update our information.

Proposal Summary: We are seeking general operating funding to support our four signature programs offered annually March through the end of November: Camp Geronimo, Individual Programs, Educational Field Trips and Socialization Events. Each program provides an unmatched degree of individualized attention and programming designed to advance the health, development and wellbeing of differently-abled children through animal-assisted activities that have been proven successful. Our programs are offered to the children and their families regardless of their financial means.

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Grant Proposal Narrative
Prepared for Chester County Community Foundation ~ September 2019

Organization History, Target Population and Geographic Community

The concept for The Barn was conceived in 2004 initially as a passion project of founder Mary Beth Drobish, owner of the beautiful 17.5-acre West Chester, PA farm property on which The Barn resides. Following the death of her husband, Mrs. Drobish felt called to combine her love of children with her passion for farm animals and sought to develop an environment where the two could co-exist in a healing way. She believed that children who are differently-abled would benefit physically, psychologically, cognitively and developmentally from interactions with specially selected, kid-sized farm animals. In 2005, The Barn was incorporated as a 501(c) (3) organization and shortly thereafter welcomed children with disabilities through its doors and into its lush pastures. A core staff and dedicated volunteers achieve our mission through our signature programs offered annually March through November—Camp Geronimo, Individual Programs/Life Skills Development, Socialization Events and Educational Field Trips.

Our mission is to enrich the lives of children with disabilities through animal-assisted activities. Each animal is specially selected for its suitability to work with children with disabilities. Among our animals are four miniature horses, two miniature Sicilian donkeys; two Baby Doll sheep, four Nubian goats, two miniature rabbits and a potbellied pig. The Barn itself is a fully handicapped-accessible bank-barn and was constructed with the special needs of children with disabilities in mind. Outside, in addition to a chicken coop housing three hens, children can explore multiple gardens, fields, and forested areas. A specially-designed wheelchair-accessible hay wagon provides trips around the property and a handicapped-accessible tree house lovingly built by volunteers offers a peaceful place for children to spend time in nature. A new Outdoor Learning Center is currently being planned which will include sensory gardens, raised beds for growing treats to feed our animals and a wheelchair accessible labyrinth.

Our kid-sized animals provide a range of learning opportunities from walking them to grooming and feeding leading to higher levels of task management and enhanced communication and socialization skills for the children. The bond between the animals and the children we serve is extraordinarily empowering and life-enriching—and we believe it is key element that sets our program apart from others in the region.

In the past year, our core staff of 3 employees served 474 program enrollments (representing a 9% increase over the previous year) for a total of 3,952 service hours for approximately 350 children with the majority coming to us from across Chester County. Over 300 volunteers provided more than 8800 hours of service in support of The Barn and the children and families we serve. Our programs and reputation continue to attract experienced and dedicated volunteers who provide our unprecedented one-to-one counsel and care for each of our child participants. Our vision is a caring community where children with disabilities and their families thrive. We believe that we will achieve this vision through our guiding principles: Integrity, Quality, Impact, Equity, Respect, Confidentiality, and Passion.

Statement of Need

The children we serve, ages 2 to 12 years old, are from Chester County and surrounding communities. Some of the common diagnoses of the children we serve are: autism spectrum disorder; Down syndrome; attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; cerebral palsy; physical disabilities; epilepsy and seizure disorders; genetic disorders; and intellectual and developmental disabilities.

In addition to serving the needs of our children, The Barn serves as an experiential learning facility for occupational and physical therapy, kinesiology, special education teaching and social work students and interns from several colleges and universities in the Delaware Valley, including Temple University, Salus University, West Chester University, University of the Sciences, and Philadelphia University. This two-fold focus advances the health and wellbeing of our children and their families, while furthering the education of future specialized healthcare professionals. Our students and interns often tell us that their experience at The Barn is unmatched by other practical education programs and because of this their choice of career path is solidified.

The numbers of children and families affected by emotional, physical and developmental disabilities in our region continues to grow. **The 2015 American Community Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that 3,662 children with disabilities were living in Chester County alone, 3% of all children under the age of 18.** These numbers do not take into account the staggering new statistics on ASD. According to the Centers for Disease Control:

- One in every 59 children is now diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder.
- ASD is about 4.5 times more common among boys (1 in 42) than among girls (1 in 189) and is reported to occur in all racial, ethnic and socioeconomic groups.
- About 1 in 6 children has a developmental disability.

Over the last several years, The Barn has experienced a dramatic increase in the number of children with ASD. In fact we estimate that 65% of all the children we served in 2018 had been diagnosed with ASD. We do not expect that number to fall in 2019; rather, given the data, it is

more likely that it will increase. We are constantly implementing new tactics and procedures for their benefit and the benefit of children with other disabilities. Most recently, we hosted a sold out “Evening with Temple Grandin”, a prominent author and speaker on both autism and animal behavior and a professor of Animal Science at Colorado State University. It is our hope that this event will be the first of several such publicly visible forums serving this deserving population and educating the community at large.

Our Unique Programs

The Barn focuses on the developmental progress and emotional support that smaller animals and a peaceful farm setting can provide for children with disabilities ages 2 – 12. Programs are largely executed by trained volunteers, including emerging healthcare professionals representative of regional colleges and universities.

Individual Programs, offered to children ages 2 to 12 once a week for twelve-week sessions, provide one-on-one therapy with an experienced volunteer. Our staff works with parents and guardians to develop an individualized Barn Activity Plan for each child to help set goals, track progress and to complement any existing therapy or education. Examples of goals include improving fine motor skills, developing communication skills and building self-esteem. Weekly sessions are scheduled for March through May, 2-6 p.m.; June through August 3-6 p.m.; and September through November, 2 to 6 p.m.

Camp Geronimo, our most popular program, **provides up to 96 children ages 6 to 12 a unique summer day camp experience** - an opportunity to have fun in a safe, secure setting while learning new skills that address their specific needs. **All six of our 1-week camp sessions** are overseen by a certified Physical Therapist with expertise in adaptive recreational therapy. Our unique one-to-one ratio of counselors to campers allows children with a range of abilities to participate in summer camp, truly a first for many of them. A Registered Nurse is on site each day of camp to ensure each child’s needs are met.

The Barn offers **four annual socialization events** geared to local families who have children with disabilities. These include an Autumn Festival, Summer Splash, Spring Fling and Pancakes with Santa. The goal of these events is to provide our families further opportunities to interact with one another and with the Barn staff and animals. In addition, The Barn provides parent support in the form of seminars and mutual support groups and as well as a lending library of resources for children with special needs.

The Barn also offers 12 **educational field trips** annually to groups of students from local schools and programs such as the Chester County Intermediate Unit (CCIU), the ARC of Chester County, Greenwood Elementary School, Overbrook School for the Blind, and St. Edmund’s Home for Children among others. Each group brings their own counselors and aides and sets goals in conjunction with the Barn’s staff. Children, parents and staff participating in these field trips are often amazed at the extent of the hands-on interaction involved.

Need-Based Tuition Assistance and Subsidization

The Barn at Spring Brook Farm strives to ensure that our quality programs are accessible and affordable to all who wish to participate regardless of their financial means. Each year, in addition to self-subsidizing our programs so they remain affordable, over \$10,000 is allocated for need-based tuition assistance for children whose families might be faced with financial hardship. By opening our doors to all who wish to participate, not just to those who can afford it, we are able to engender greater diversity amongst our participant population and extend the reach of our programs as a whole.

Impact and Evaluation

All of our programs provide an unmatched degree of individual attention and are designed to advance the health, development and wellbeing of the children. Here are just a few of the measurable objectives that we see repeatedly and that scientific research has proven:

- Children with disabilities have improved motor skills and muscle development as a result of grooming animals and taking them for walks around the property.
- Children who have difficulty interacting with others are better able to socialize thanks to repeated eye contact with animals and practicing basic introduction skills.
- Children with autism achieve higher levels of task management and mental alertness by focusing on specific tasks such as feeding the animals.

The actual impact of the programs offered is demonstrated through the personal achievements of the children in the course of their activities at The Barn. The evaluation of the children is a total team effort. Family members help by communicating the child’s specific needs and assist our staff and volunteers in setting attainable goals that are reflected in individualized Barn Activity Plans for each child. Feedback from therapists and aides as well as parents and guardians is freely given but also actively sought throughout each child’s participation in Barn activities. In the case of the Individual Programs, each child’s progress is tracked and formal evaluations are completed after six and twelve weeks; at the program’s conclusion, written assessments are provided to each family.

Both qualitative and quantitative information gathered are important in measuring individual progress, as well as in helping us to better assess and adapt our programming for the greatest possible impact. In this context, we continue our work with our partners at West Chester University’s Masters of Social Work Department. In 2019, WCU’s Dr. Page Walker Buck and her colleague published their findings of their in depth exploratory study designed to investigate parental perceptions of animal assisted activities for children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and the impact of the animal assisted activities had on the socioemotional behaviors of their children. As a whole, participating parents suggested that interactions with animals are qualitatively different than interactions with humans and the work

performed at The Barn allowed for enhanced communication and connection for their children because anxiety and frustration was significantly reduced.

Our staff also solicits feedback from our families to ensure that we are meeting their individualized needs. After the 2018 summer sessions, we received positive feedback from all the families participating in Camp Geronimo. Surveys stated that children experienced improved motor, social and communications skills as a result of the goal-oriented and one-to-one activities provided at the Camp. 100% of parents indicated that they would sign-up again to participate in the 2019 sessions and that they would readily refer others to Camp Geronimo and indeed our 2019 sessions were completely full well before applications deadlines.

The Importance of Your Funding

It is our sincere hope that donors investing their philanthropic funds at **Chester County Community Foundation** will consider learning more about The Barn at Spring Brook Farm. Please also consider scheduling a visit so you may witness firsthand the small triumphs that lead to longer lasting progress for our children and their families. As a small organization with annual budget under \$350,000, charitable gifts of any size can make an impact on a child's life. The Barn is an amazing place where the simple act of petting a miniature horse or feeding a baby goat can change a child's day and more importantly their future. Thank you for your time and consideration.