

## GRANT PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

- We *connect people who care with causes that matter, so their philanthropy makes a difference now & forever.*
- We are a **collection of Field of Interest & Donor Advised Funds** with **@\$3.5M granted annually** to nonprofits in Chester County & beyond.
- **99%** of our grants are made by our generous Fund Advisors, who make grant decisions all 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 & 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, & humanities; education; community improvement; environment; religion; health; & human services)
- ◇ **General operating** grants are encouraged. Nonprofits should be specific about their mission, goals, & measurable outcomes.
- ◇ Proposals can be submitted **anytime all year.**
- ◇ Grant decisions are made **intermittently** all 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 & serve Chester County.** NPO's with budgets of \$500,000 or less are given preference.
- ◇ The goal of capacity building grantmaking is to **strengthen the effectiveness of NPO's serving the Chester County region,** in areas including:
  - Mission, Vision & Strategy
  - Governance & Leadership
  - Partnerships & Collaborations
  - Operations & Technology
  - Fundraising, Development & Marketing
- ◇ 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.**

- Use this form @ [www.chescocf.org](http://www.chescocf.org) to apply online for grants from all Community Foundation Funds.
- **Email proposals to [grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org)**
- Proposals are considered “complete” when CCCF has **confirmed** receipt of the **Grant Proposal Summary Sheet, Narrative & Attachments.**
- Proposals are shared electronically and online with Fund Advisors, Donors & Grant Panels.
- Per IRS Regulations, applicants must be charitable, tax exempt organizations with 501(c)(3) certification & cannot be individuals.

Please contact Grants Administrator **Kevin Baffa** at **(610)-698-8211** or **[grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org)** with any questions.

# I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

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

Note: If Philanthropy Network's Common Grant Application is used, CCCF's **Summary Sheet MUST accompany application.**

To obtain an electronic version of this application, visit [www.chescocf.org](http://www.chescocf.org)

**Date**

## Contact Information

Organization Name: Mighty Writers  
Address: 1501 Christian St. Phila PA 19146  
Phone: 267-239-0899  
Website: [www.mightywriters.org](http://www.mightywriters.org)  
Year Incorporated: 2009  
FEIN: 01-0920922

ED/CEO Name: Tim Whitaker  
ED/CEO E-mail: [twhitaker@mightywriters.org](mailto:twhitaker@mightywriters.org)  
Board Chair Name: Michael Epstein  
Board Chair Approval (check here):   
Primary Contact Name: Naomi Levecchia  
Primary Contact E-mail: [nlevecchia@mightywriters.org](mailto:nlevecchia@mightywriters.org)

## Organization Information:

### Field/s of Interest:

Arts, Culture & Humanities       Environment/Animal Welfare       Education

**Mission:** To teach kids to think and write with clarity so they can achieve success.

**Geographic Area Served** (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): Kennett, Oxford, West Grove

## Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:

We focus on the bilingual community in and around Kennett Sq and West Grove, working predominately with kids of immigrant farmworkers. Mighty Writers Kennett El Futuro started in 2019 and we've worked with more than 250 families.

**Annual Budget** \$ 200,000 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff 1  
80 % of budget for program expenses 13 # of Board Volunteers  
10 % of budget for administrative expenses 25 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers  
10 % of budget for fundraising expenses hundreds! # of Volunteer Hours  
100 % total

## Top 3-5 funding sources:

**Hamilton Family Trust, Douty Foundation, Patricia Kind Foundation, individual donors**

**Is this grant proposal for:** Capacity Building  X

## If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:

X Fundraising, Development & Marketing       Technology      Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation:** \$ 5,000

**Proposal Summary:** Mighty Writers seeks designated funding so we can grow our base of support in Chester County, form strong partnerships and relationships with individual donors, businesses and local foundations and communicate effectively with them and potential partners/funders/supporters.

## II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

1. **Nonprofit's history, goals, key achievements & distinctiveness:** Mighty Writers (MW) teaches kids ages three through 17 to think clearly and write with clarity so they can achieve success at school, at work and in life.

Last year, MW reached 3,300 students. Not bad, but not good enough either. We need to reach kids— many more kids— in hard-pressed neighborhoods all over the area.

We push hard because we see what happens when kids begin to think clearly and write with clarity: grades improve, personalities become more upbeat, futures come into view. We see self-esteem soar. And kids finding purpose.

MW opened its first writing studio in 2009. Today, we have 8 locations, 3,300 students, 600 volunteers, a staff of 22 and a \$1.9m budget. With an email list of over 22,000 names, thousands of social media followers and news articles in the Washington Post, New Yorker, NPR, WHYY, CBS, NBC News, and more--MW is a movement! Literacy is a crisis and MW seeks to expand rapidly and help even more kids achieve success.

Starting in the fall of 2019, MW began bilingual programming in Kennett Square in Southern Chester Co., home to the largest population of Mexican immigrants in the state and where half the kids in the region reside in deep poverty.

Pennsylvania ranks 48th out of the 50 states in the well-being of its young Latinx population. Only 18% of Latino fourth graders scored at or above proficiency in reading.

All our programs are free and bilingual.

### PRIOR TO COVID:

Workshops were offered three to four times per week and included writing, storytelling, mindfulness activities, and an artistic element like vision board creation, Mexican folk art mask-making, and/or traditional dance. Many of the workshops' themes are geared towards celebrations of Central American and Latinx culture. Moreover, workshops will incorporate arts-centered field trips and guest workshops by local artists.

MW offered these programs in several locations:

1. The Garage Youth Center in West Grove
2. West Grove Public Library
3. Avon Grove Intermediate and Penn Long Elementary schools
4. Kennett High School
5. Hopewell Elementary, Oxford School District

We have collaborated with many other area organizations including After the Bell, Historic Kennett Sq., Casa Guanajuato, YMCA of Kennett Area, La Comunidad Hispana, West Chester University, Delaware County Community College and are active members of the Southern Chester County Chamber of Commerce.



SINCE MARCH 2020; Since the quarantine, our community partnerships have strengthened. Some of these partners include the Boy Scouts of West Grove, Chatham Financial, Manfredi Cold Storage, Kennett Area Community Service, Bryn Trust, Gotham Financial and countless local restaurants and businesses (see attachment).

The organization's strategic plan focuses on three core activities; expanding to reach as many kids as possible and supporting this effort through increased marketing and brand awareness and increased fundraising.

All three of these strategies remain in place with the following adaptations.

On March 13, MW centers closed to regular kid-traffic. Instead, we launched several new initiatives, in the true spirit of resilience and supporting our communities.

In pursuit of our mission, we quickly began offering lunches to kids. Our home base was the Garage Youth Center in West Grove.

We know that kids can't learn to think and write with clarity when they are hungry. And no kid should go hungry.

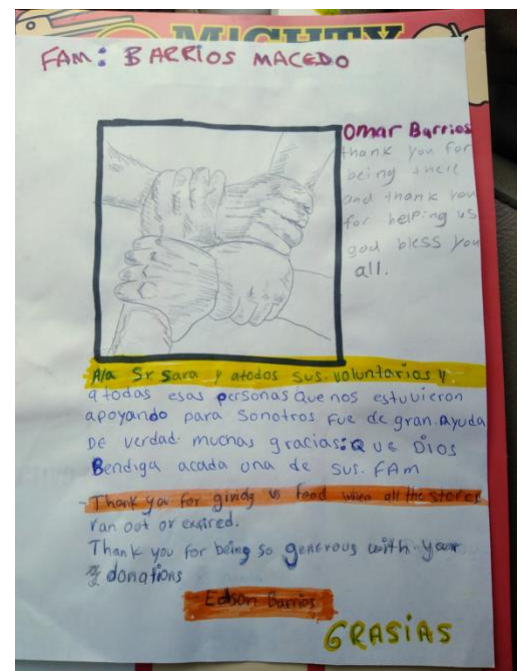
What began with 50 lunches quickly transformed into nearly 500 people coming weekly to pick up lunches for kids, boxes of groceries with fresh produce (including milk and eggs and ethnically relevant foods), brand new bilingual books, and MW own literacy and mindfulness activity books for kids ages 7-17.

Each literacy packet contains fun activities, mindfulness exercises and a writing competition with a \$100 first place prize. Themes and writing projects change weekly, with some past examples of Community and Poetry, Empowerment Poetry, and Out of This World story writing.

MW At Home replaced our in person writing workshops and mentorships. New, weekly online workshops for kids of all ages includes Mighty Toddlers, perennial favorites like Girl Power! and Crafty Readers, along with brand new workshops like Fake News: Conspiracy Outbreak, Sports Writing, Writing to Ground Ourselves, Stories from Quarantine, College Ready and Mighty Mindfulness.

Both our food and literacy distribution program and MW At Home programming will continue as long as there is need.

**2. Funding request & Key Initiatives:** Our aim is to grow Mighty Writers' Chester County presence so we can continue to reach more kids and families. While we search for our own space, we need to grow our marketing and communications efforts in and around Southern Chester County so we can attract a diverse portfolio of financial supporters; individuals and small family foundations, local, regional and national foundations, corporate partners and other regional businesses who can help Mighty Writers financially and with in-kind contributions of volunteers,



expertise, goods and services, and donations of food, household supplies, books and other necessities.

Funding is our greatest need. With additional financial support, we intend to grow our programming by renting a space of our own where we can continue our food distribution and eventually offer in-person programming.

For our kids and families in Chester County, the clock is ticking. Tomorrow is today. It's why we focus so intently on getting kids on their road to glory *now*. At Mighty Writers we believe that literacy is kryptonite to poverty. The ability to express oneself. To think clearly. To write with clarity. Nothing, we believe, beats poverty senseless with as much efficiency and finality as intensive reading and writing experiences.



Through our virtual writing programs, Mighty Writers develops unique and enriching communities, champions the stories of diverse youth writers, and drives each student to reach their maximum potential.

Qualitative results are assessed through surveys of parents and youth. Surveys measure each students' interest and motivation for writing, along with parental satisfaction.

Of the 564 youth who joined us for online workshops during the spring of 2020, all of them received an additional survey that focused on issues related to basic needs and online learning. Responses were as follows:

- **Before the workshop, 48% of workshop participants felt “good” or “very good” about writing. At the end of the workshop, 92% of students felt “enthusiastic” or “very enthusiastic” about writing.**
- Before the workshop, 37% of students wrote on their own a few times per a week or more. At the end of the school year, 66% of students wrote on their own a few times per week or more.
- 94% of survey participants said they would join MW for another online workshop.

The impact of receiving greater funding and partnership support from the Chester County community will reverberate far beyond the dollars. Growing our capacity means serving more kids, teaching them to think and write with clarity and achieving success. We will measure this impact in a variety of ways, including but not limited to the growth of revenue, the increased number of volunteers, goods donated, individual and institutional supporters and most importantly, how many more kids and families reached with our programs. All families will be surveyed.

Our efforts at increasing revenue, targeting and reaching partners and supporters have been ongoing since 2019. With this support, we will be able to produce polished materials that can be mailed directly to homes, as well as emailed. Our timeline will be to do a spring mailing and then concentrate our efforts more directly for fall and winter 2021. Moreover, we can have more direct meetings with people from within the community, expand our network through grassroots efforts and show the outcomes of our programs.



### III. ATTACHMENTS

*E-mail or mail this support information*

1. Copy of 501 (c) (3) federal tax-exempt letter
  2. List of Board of Directors, with their affiliations
  3. Most recent annual report & financial statement, audited if available
  4. Itemized organizational operating budget with actual results for prior fiscal year & current fiscal year to date
  5. If capacity building initiative, itemized budget (including external consultant's proposal, if applicable)
  6. Current strategic plan. If your nonprofit does not have a current strategic plan, explain why.
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