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**Chester County Nonprofit  
Innovation & Resiliency Fund  
Grant Request Form**

**Contact Information**

Nonprofit Org Name: Citizen Advocacy of Chester County	ED/CEO Name: Moira F. Mumma
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EIN: 23-2117795	Grant \$ Amount Requested: \$9000
Year Founded: 1980	

*In filing this application, the nonprofit certifies that it complies with all federal, state & local laws, including taxation; complies with current public health guidelines; and complies with coronavirus pandemic phased reopening restrictions.*

Agreed by: Moira Mumma	Date: 10/15/20
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**Nonprofit Field/s of Interest**

Arts, Culture & Historic Preservation	Education	Health
Community Development	Environment & Animal Welfare	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Human Services

Figures	Current	PRE-COVID (as of 1/1/20)
Annual Operating Budget	200,425	\$ 217,300
Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff	1 3/4	# 1 3/4
# Board Volunteers	12	# 12
# Committee Volunteers	32	# 32
# Active Direct Service Volunteers	42	# 42
Annual Volunteer Hours	4980	# 5160

**Funding:** Please indicate if your nonprofit has received funding from any of these regional sources over the past few years. We will invite them to review this funding request.

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ChesCo Comm Fdn	<input type="checkbox"/>	Brandywine Health Fdtn	<input type="checkbox"/>	United Way ChesCo	<input type="checkbox"/>	ChesCo Dept Comm Devel	
<input type="checkbox"/>	ChesCo Fund/W&Girls	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Phoenixville Comm Health Fdtn	<input type="checkbox"/>	United Way S ChesCo	<input type="checkbox"/>	ChesCo Dept Health	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Other significant funders: The Community Coalition						<input type="checkbox"/>	ChesCo Dept Human Svcs

**Narrative:** In a few concise paragraphs, please explain:

**Mission**

Citizen Advocacy is a relationship based form of protection and advocacy for people with disabilities – a way to promote, protect and defend the welfare and interests of, and justice for, people with disabilities who are diminished in status or seriously physically or emotionally isolated. Unpaid citizens are recruited as advocates, and they are encouraged to be particularly active on behalf of their partners in the basic-needs areas of safety, health, housing, employment and education.

The long-term and proactive nature of these relationships causes a paradigm shift in the foundation of a person's life, often breaking life-time patterns of isolation, poverty and vulnerability and replacing them with safety, greater well-being and improved prospects in all aspects of their lives. Through 40 years of this work, Citizen Advocacy of Chester County has shown that it is a critical and effective means to enrich, safeguard, and even save lives in our communities.

It is based on the belief in the power and competence of the ordinary citizen. It depends on the ability of individuals to care for and connect to others and to make lifelong voluntary commitments to step in and sometimes work extremely hard for and with someone they would not ordinarily meet. The power for change is being put squarely back in the hands of the community.

**What geographic area is served? (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served)**

Citizen Advocacy serves the northeastern part of Chester County, encompassing Phoenixville and a 20-mile radius around it, including Berwyn, Paoli, Malvern, Exton and Spring City (we also serve Royersford and Mont Clare which border Phoenixville across the river in Montgomery County).

**What population is served? How have your service numbers been impacted by COVID?**

Citizen Advocacy recruits and matches voluntary advocates with people who have cognitive and/or physical disabilities and are isolated and vulnerable. Both advocates and partners are deliberately and strategically recruited who have a very broad range of ages, skills, races and living situations. For example, partners may live independently, in group homes, in institutions, with their family, in nursing homes, or in prison. Some partners are unable to speak or communicate, or to walk, see or hear. Others may have debilitating illness. Others might have jobs and live independently with only minimal help. But all have in common the vulnerability to segregation and isolation and the dangers which that brings.

Recent COVID impact headlines:

"'This really is life and death.' For people with disabilities, Coronavirus is making it harder than ever to receive care." TIME

"Pandemic means Americans with disabilities aren't getting the services they need." PBS News Hour

"Homes for the disabled see surge of Covid-19." New York Times

These headlines reflect the reality for people with disabilities during COVID and have led to a major pivot in our program toward more support of our existing advocates as they wrestle with the new and complex impacts of the devastating truth that people already marginalized have been hit disproportionately hard by the pandemic. Right now, more people need our services, and our existing advocates need more different types of support. Advocates have to find ways to continue offering protection when in many situations there are prohibited from actually being present to advocate on their partner's behalf.

Fact: 75% of COVID deaths to date that have occurred in Chester County are in long term care facilities and personal care homes, and 47% of the people we serve live in those settings. Thus, advocates have had to find incredibly creative new ways to make contact – building relationships with staff, sending in packages and mail, contacting other resident who can use phones, etc. to gain access to and information about their partners and to ensure their well-being. Some advocates are looking into legal guardianship so that they can access information, as the largest institutions are still completely closed to visitors. Advocates in non-institutional settings have had to find ways to get their partners to medical appointments, to food distributions, to have prescriptions picked up and other essential errands and supports needed while also keeping to strict COVID safety protocols.

We have also had to depend on zoom and other video technologies as well as finding safe ways to meet face to face in order for us to get to know potential partners and advocates and then to introduce them to each other. This has involved many safely distant walks with masks on and other "porch" visits. Our most recent introduction between a new advocate and partner took place by meeting in his large lobby, when in the past we would have instead been able to go out for lunch or some such other more community based activity.

## What has been the impact of COVID-19, and how has your nonprofit responded?

### Finance:

1. Last year, we raised over 50% of our income from our events, but all three of those events fell this year in the COVID time frame. As a result, the annual spaghetti dinner was cancelled (this is the only event we had to cancel and counts for \$4000 of income), the 34th Annual Phoenixville Run is currently being held virtually, and the 18th annual theater event and auction usually held in May was turned into a virtual film festival held in August. The good news that due to incredibly creative committees, our theater event came in only \$7000 short of its budgeted goal of \$48,000, and we were able to engage people in a variety of new ways – the event ended up being both effective and base-broadening. The race is still underway – it covers 3 weeks – but we were able to retain all of our past large sponsors. We had budgeted \$35,000 and currently it looks like we will successfully raise \$25,000. This income includes new innovations such as creating teams that will do their own fundraisers in addition to paying their entry fees.
2. We were able to successfully obtain a PPP loan for \$28,350.
3. We added a summer appeal which dealt directly with the COVID effects on our program and will also hold our usual annual appeal in December.
4. 2020 is our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the organization was completely ready to launch an anniversary campaign to build our reserve fund. This plan was halted with the advent of the pandemic, but the campaign committee members attended a number of seminars on continuing campaigns during the pandemic and recently decided to relaunch the campaign and carry it on through 2021.

Altogether, we are inspired, excited, and motivated by our board and committees' resilience and innovation in completely transforming our fundraising events, going immediately after the PPP relief, and pursuing the reserve campaign.

### Operations – moving to a smaller, less expensive office space:

Because COVID forced us to work virtually and this safely distanced from each other, we realized that we could continue to operate more efficiently and effectively if we moved into a much smaller office space and continued to work partially from home. To this end, we have rented a small office in Franklin Commons on the north side of Phoenixville and will be moved in by the end of November. Initial costs will be incurred for the move and also for upgrading some of our computer systems for more effective home use. We see this as a long-term investment in run-rate reduction and operational efficiency, leading to more time and effort to focus on program.

### Program:

Pivot to more intensive advocate support and to meet increased vulnerability of more potential partners (see answer to second question above for more detail).

## **What would this funding be used for? How does this demonstrate innovation and resiliency in dealing with COVID impacts? What would be the community impact of this anticipated funding? Why is it important to fund this now?**

The funding we are asking for would be used to cover the costs of moving to much smaller and more efficient space and to outfit our staff to work more nimbly and effectively from home. While this is a direct response to COVID right now, we see this also as a permanent change that will improve our capacity to deliver our critical program in the future as well. It will benefit the community by directing more resources to the finding and matching of citizen advocates and their increasingly vulnerable partners.

*We see this move as one part of Citizen Advocacy's ability to adapt – to reconfigure a program based in every way on personal contact in initiating advocacy matches and in raising the funds to support that work, to one that continues to thrive while recreating all it does to be safely socially distanced.*

**How much funding is sought? How does this compare to your annual operating budget and this years' projected deficit? What is the expected timeframe for use of funds?**

We are requesting \$9000, to cover moving costs, two new laptops and a printer for working from home, and to make up for next year's lost spaghetti dinner/ 40<sup>th</sup> party income, as it now looks like that event will likely be postponed until our fiscal year 2022.

We are not projecting a deficit for the coming year, as we budgeted for an income total of \$34,000 for major gifts and grants, and this money would help meet that targeted goal.

The moving and equipment funds would be used immediately (we'll be moved in and fully set up by Nov. 31), and the event funds will be used to meet current general operating expenses.