

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 to apply online for grants from all Community Foundation Funds.
- **Email proposals to 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 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

Date 5/18/2021

Contact Information

Organization Name: **Mighty Writers**
Address: **1501 Christian St, Philadelphia, PA 19146**
Phone: **(267) 239-0899**
Website: www.mightywriters.org
Year Incorporated: **2009**
FEIN: **01-0920922**

ED/CEO Name: **Tim Whitaker**
ED/CEO E-mail: twhitaker@mightywriters.org
Board Chair Name: **Michael Epstein**
Board Chair Approval (check here):
Primary Contact Name: **William Gusler**
Primary Contact E-mail:
wgusler@mightywriters.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

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

Mission: At Mighty Writers we teach kids from 3 to 17 to write and think with clarity so they can achieve success at school, at work, and in life.

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served):

All of Chester County are welcome to our workshops and food distributions.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:

Mighty Writers El Futuro Kennett serves children ages 3-17 in our bilingual writing programs, and all poor, economically disadvantaged, and indigent families throughout Chester County. Our food distribution events serve over 400 families weekly, and our writing programs serve between 50-100+ students (virtually and in person).

Annual Budget \$139,920

76 % of budget for program expenses

11 % of budget for administrative expenses

13 % of budget for fundraising expenses

100 % total

36 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

15 # of Board Volunteers

510 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers

9,600 # of Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources:

We receive the majority of our funding from Foundation and Corporate support (70%), then individual support (20%), and we receive the rest from In-Kind Donations and Fees for Service Programs (10%).

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

If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:

Mission, Vision & Strategy Governance & Leadership Partnerships & Collaborations
 Fundraising, Development & Marketing Technology Other: _____

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: \$7,500

Proposal Summary:

We are asking for financial support through a grant from the Chester County Community Foundation to support Mighty Writers El Futuro Kennett “Food & Literacy” programs. The support will allow us to continue our mission of teaching kids to think and write with clarity, as well as continue providing much needed groceries, diapers, personal hygiene products, and books to those in need throughout Chester County. The needs have grown increasingly since we brought our program to Chester County. What began as a handful of bilingual workshops, at borrowed space in Kennett Square, has grown to a virtual world of programs geared towards everyone from toddlers to teens preparing for college. Even when we had to halt our in person workshops and go virtual, the need kept growing. We began providing lunches to our students, and that soon evolved to a daylong food distribution program providing groceries to over 400 families every week. The need is great and has shown no sign of slowing down – and we have no plans to slow down either. To continue to provide these services to the disadvantaged children and families in Chester County, we sincerely ask for your financial support through your grant program.

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.

1. Nonprofit's history, goals, key achievements & distinctiveness

About Mighty Writers: In 2009 on a corner in South Philadelphia, Mighty Writers opened its first writing center for kids with a single mission: to get kids to think clearly and write with clarity.

We believe in the power of writing. Every day, we see writing transform the lives of kids who walk into our neighborhood writing centers. First, they learn to think clearly. Then, they express their thoughts clearly in writing. When this happens, self-esteem soars. Fuzzy futures become clear. With eyes keenly fixed on the prize, our Mighty kids graduate high school and go to college. All our workshops inspire creativity, practice clear thinking, and stimulate clear writing. And, all our programs are always free.

Mighty Writers saw the need for bilingual writing programs in Chester County, and in 2019 Mighty Writers El Futuro Kennett came to fruition. We brought our favorite aspects of Mighty Writers out to the Spanish speaking community in and around Kennett Square – home to the largest population of Mexican immigrants in the state. There are over 10,000 students living in poverty, and nearly half of them live in what's considered "deep poverty" – a family of four subsisting on an annual household income of \$11,775. Meanwhile the Chester County area is ranked as the 20th wealthiest region in the entire country.

Coronavirus Crisis: When the Covid19 virus began affecting our area, we had to close the doors to our writing centers, and put our workshops, tutoring sessions, and one-on-one mentoring on hold. But we didn't stop for long. We knew we had to keep serving our kids, so we came up with a plan and pivoted the way we reached them – Mighty@Home! We began holding online workshops, and moved our tutors and mentors virtually.

Food and Literacy: While Mighty@Home allows us to provide virtual workshops and remote mentorships, we noticed another issue affecting our kids – hunger. We know that a child cannot think or write clearly when they're hungry, so we decided to take on that issue as well. What began as providing lunches to the kids involved in our programs, has turned into a full day distribution effort.

Every Friday, Mighty Writers holds a distribution event in the Kennett Square area, where we supply fresh produce, milk, eggs, bread, and other groceries to over 400 local families, which seemingly keeps growing each week. In addition to the food we provide, we also offer feminine hygiene products, as well as diapers and wipes for our smallest Mighty members. And of course, books!

Conclusion: At Mighty Writers, we operate with the conviction that our mission is urgent. Because, for kids today living in hard-pressed neighborhoods, the clock is ticking. Tomorrow is today. We push hard because we see what happens when kids begin to think clearly, write with clarity, and aren't worried about where their next meal will come from: grades improve, personalities become more upbeat, futures come into view. We see self-esteem soar. And kids finding purpose. Now, that's Mighty!

2. Funding request

• Description of key initiatives

- a. Writing Workshops: we plan on increasing our bilingual writing workshops and one-on-one tutoring sessions as we begin to hold in person events again
 - b. Food Insecurity: we will continue and increase our food distribution programs as the need grows within the community
 - c. Vaccination Education: we will continue to partner with Penn Medicine to administer Covid19 vaccinations throughout the Chester County community, as well as increase our efforts to educate the community and curtail the stigma and misinformation about vaccines
 - d. Technology Gap: we will address the issue of the technological gap within the migrant community that limits the access that students have to the internet when they're not in school
- **Specific needs & issues to be addressed**
 - a. Bilingual Writing Workshops: in an effort to help keep the bilingual students up to par with the rest of the students throughout their district, we offer free writing workshops, mentors and tutors, that will allow them to receive extra help when needed
 - b. Food Insecurity: a majority of the students in our programs were receiving free breakfast and lunch at school, and when Covid closed the schools, they were missing meals. We began providing free lunches to the students in our programs, and then we realized their parents were struggling to provide food for the family, and thus began our food distribution program that take place every Friday
 - c. Vaccinations: our community has been hesitant to get a Covid19 vaccination, and with most of them living and working in close quarters to each other, and their jobs considered "essential" it is vital that they understand the importance of being vaccinated
 - d. Technology Gap: with a lot of homework and projects being done online, we found that the students in our programs do not always have access to the internet at home, so it has become a necessity for us to do what we can to give our students the access to the internet.
- i. **Why it is important to fund this now**
 - a. It is important to fund these programs now more than ever because kids cannot think or write with clarity when they're hungry, and with our food distribution events serving over 400 families every week, the need is not slowing down. And our writing workshops have become more vital than usual, as the learning gap is ever growing from the disruption caused by the Covid pandemic and schools closing and going virtual.
 - ii. **How impact & results will be demonstrated**
 - a. We track our food distribution program by the amount of families we serve each week. The way we track the success of our writing programs is by surveying the students and parents at the end of each cycle, as well as utilizing "MY Access" to track students grades.
 - iii. *For capacity building grant proposals:*
 - *How will this capacity building initiative impact your nonprofit?*
 - *How will this impact be measured?*
 - *Include a description of the expected activities; timeline & costs to implement the initiative. If external consulting services are required, include the anticipated costs & expertise of the consultants to be hired. Include external consultant proposals if applicable.*

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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WHAT IS CAPACITY BUILDING?

Capacity building helps bring a nonprofit to the next level of operational, programmatic, financial, or organizational maturity, in order to more effectively & efficiently fulfill its mission.

Capacity building may include (but is not limited to) projects which address:

- **MISSION, VISION & STRATEGY**
Organizational Assessment - Strategic Planning - Financial Planning
- **GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP**
Board Development - Executive Transition/Succession Planning - Leadership Development - Staff Training & Professional Development
- **PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS**
Coalition Building – Collaboration - Mergers & Acquisitions - Strategic Restructuring
- **RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT & MARKETING**
Major Gift Donor Identification, Cultivation, Development & Stewardship - Development Campaigns (Annual, Capital, Planned Giving) - Earned Income Development - Social Enterprise Feasibility & Development - Marketing, Branding & Communications
- **TECHNOLOGY & OPERATIONS**
Business Continuity Planning - Financial Management - Human Resources - Volunteer Management - Industry Certification - Risk Management - Technology Improvements