

## 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

Date: 7/7/21

## Contact Information

Organization Name: Bridge Academy & Community Center ED/CEO Name: Jordan Crans  
Address: 578 Olive St. Coatesville, PA 19320 ED/CEO E-mail: Jordan.Crans@gmail.com  
Phone: 610-466-9505 Board Chair Name: Seth Windle  
Website: www.thebridgeacademy.org Board Chair Approval (check here):   
Year Incorporated: 2002 Primary Contact Name: Jordan Crans  
FEIN: 20-0881049 Primary Contact E-mail:  
Jordan.Crans@gmail.com

## Organization Information:

### Field/s of Interest:

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

**Mission: The Bridge Academy & Community Center's mission is to equip youth and families with the tools necessary for academic achievement, life skills, creative expression, spiritual growth and leadership.**

**Geographic Area Served:** *Coatesville Area School District, primarily the City of Coatesville.*

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

<b>Annual Budget</b> \$482,000	<u>3FT/3PT</u> # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>82</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>7</u> # of Board Volunteers
<u>15</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>52</u> # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>3</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>1000</u> # of Volunteer Hours
<i>100 % total</i>	

**Top 3-5 funding sources:** Iron Mountain, Brandywine Health Foundation, Pilgrim Foundation & Connolly Foundation.

**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:** \$5,000

**Proposal Summary:** The Bridge Academy & Community Center (The Bridge) respectfully requests \$5,000 of general operating support to help us serve low-income, children, teens and families in Coatesville.

## II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

*Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.*

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

The idea for The Bridge was planted in 2001 and in early 2002, an official 501(c)(3) was established. During 2002, a Board of Directors was recruited and the search for a permanent location began and resulted in using 570 Olive Street, Coatesville PA. In 2018, The Bridge expanded with the purchase and renovation of 578 Olive Street; an adjacent building that provides additional space for staff offices, group meetings and program activities. Since 2002, The Bridge has matured into a thriving organization that is making a tremendous impact on the City of Coatesville. The Bridge's Executive Director, Jordan Crans, has been involved with The Bridge since 2003, playing several roles before transitioning to Executive Director in 2008. Each year has brought further community relations, more effective programming, and continued collaboration between other organizations in Coatesville.

Today, The Bridge is open 4-5 days a week, providing a variety of academic, enrichment and spiritual programs for children from PreK-12th grade as well as programs, services and resources for local mothers. In addition to our regular programs, The Bridge partners with more than 15 organizations and churches to meet the ongoing needs of our student's families including back to school supplies, Christmas presents & trees, winter coats, clothing, and holiday dinners (Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter).

All of The Bridge's programs and services are designed around the following core goals:

- 1) *Provide a safe, supervised and supportive environment for students during out-of-school time hours.*
- 2) *Reduce hunger.*
- 3) *Motivate and equip students academically.*
- 4) *Create opportunities for students to be creative, express themselves and learn new skills.*
- 5) *Empower youth to become leaders in their community*
- 6) *Foster Spiritual exploration and development.*
- 7) *Connect students with positive adult role models.*
- 8) *Cultivate positive peer-to-peer friendships.*

We are pleased to report that in our most recent survey of core students, 97% of students said they feel safe at The Bridge, 100% feel supported, 97% increased confidence and self-esteem, 95% are doing better in school and 84% improved reading, writing or math skills. Additionally, since attending The Bridge, 100% of students have made new friends, 87% are getting in trouble less, 100% say The Bridge helps them avoid sex, drugs, alcohol and skipping/dropping out of school and over 90% say they want to be a leader and make a difference in their community.

### 2. Funding request

The Bridge respectfully requests \$5,000 of general operating support to help us serve low-income, children, teens and families in Coatesville.

#### • Description of key initiatives

**After School Program:** The Bridge provides after school programming from 2:15-5:00PM, T-Th. during the school year (Current schedule during COVID), as well as Wednesdays from 5-7pm. Time includes homework help/ academic enrichment. It also includes various activities such as art, wood chips, cooking, outings, etc. The Bridge separates ages to ensure quality instructional time for students. Older students have the opportunity to serve as volunteers with younger peers when appropriate. Our desire is to create a positive atmosphere where students can focus and get the support they need to achieve academic success. Through parental permission, we are also allowed to speak directly with teachers to better understand each student's situation and personalize their tutoring time. Staff often participates in IEP and other parent- teacher meetings for the students.

**Summer Program:** The Bridge's Summer Program serves youth ages K-12 in the Coatesville Area School District. The program runs for 5 weeks and provides lunch daily, academic support and a variety of enrichment, leadership and recreational activities to help keep students safe and positively engaged throughout the summer. This year, the Bridge played a deeper role by running 2 weeks of additional camp in June with a partner organization, The Camp at Old Mill.

**Weeknight Gatherings:** Special weeknight programs are provided for different age groups that run two hours for each program. Each night focuses on a different age group and provides food, games, inspirational teaching, and arts & crafts. Currently, during COVID, Elementary grades receive opportunities on Wednesdays and some Thursdays. Teens receive opportunities Thursdays.

**Specialized Programs:** The Bridge provides specialized programs throughout the school year to provide small group settings where students can learn unique skills, foster creativity and develop leadership skills. Specialized programs have limited capacity and require students to sign up in advance. The Bridge currently offers fitness classes, cooking class, woodchips (carpentry), STEM, and Mr. Jack's Bible Club.

**Mom's Club:** Mom's Club is offered at The Bridge every Wednesday during the school year from 12:30-2:00PM. The majority of mothers served are low-income, single mothers. Mom's Club provides a relaxed atmosphere where they can fellowship with one another over a meal, learn new life skills, and be inspired in their faith. Free childcare is provided to ensure mothers with young children can attend. This group also has one time events throughout the year, and an annual "Women's Retreat".

**Back to School Book Bag Drive:** The Bridge works collaboratively with community partners from the surrounding Coatesville area to collect donations and ensure students have the supplies and resources needed for a positive start to the new school year.

### • Specific needs & issues to be addressed

The Bridge serves low-income, at-risk youth in the city of Coatesville, PA. The Bridge relies on generous support from the community to provide our programs at no-cost to families which is critical as 95% of students served come from low-income, single-parent households (95% of students receive free/reduced price lunch). The majority of students reside in the blocks immediately surrounding our building and are minority youth, 91% are African American, 2% Latino, and 7% Caucasian.

Throughout the school year, The Bridge provides several out-of-school time programs to ensure the safety and well-being of at-risk youth in our community. When students are home alone and unsupervised, they are at-risk for, "experimentation with drugs, alcohol, cigarettes and sex...it is also a time of lost opportunities to help students grow and develop the skills and competencies to make positive life decisions that can lead to their future success" (After School Alliance). The need for these out-of-school time programs is increasingly important during the summer months as well when students experience increased amounts of time unsupervised. Additionally, for many of our students, home is not where they feel safe, feel loved, or find support. Most students served by The Bridge have trauma-filled homelives that include poverty, transient housing, abuse, neglect, food insecurity, and/or parents battling addiction, mental health issues or other challenges.

The Bridge provides safety and supervision for these students. Research confirms that out-of-school time programs, "support academic achievement and...play a role in reducing health disparities...(and can) improve children's diet quality and food insecurity, which may further support physical and mental health and learning" (CDC.gov). Additionally, out-of-school-time programs at The Bridge are critical because they, "provide activities that can build off the lessons students learn during the school day, help children further explore their interests and have an outlet to express themselves, employ staff who fulfill the role of mentors, and offer an ecosystem of support that raises student confidence in their abilities and their future possibilities" (After School Alliance). Students who participate in The Bridge's Programs must enroll in advance and enrollment is capped to ensure we operate within our capacity.

### • Why it is important to fund this now

The Bridge's general operating budget for our current fiscal year (April 1, 2021 – March 30, 2022) is \$482,000, an increase from \$340,400 in 2020-2021. The pandemic brought many challenges for our students, their families and our organization. This past year demonstrated how critical operating support is to allow us the flexibility needed to remain innovative and adapt to the shifting needs of our community. We had to reinvent ourselves every few months and shifted to providing food distributions and working with students in smaller groups. These changes increased expenses and stretched our staff further as CDC regulations and safety concerns hindered our traditional capacity for volunteers.

As we adjusted, we also worked with a Human Resource Consultant to help strategize how The Bridge can best strengthen, retain and expand our staff, not only during the pandemic, but for the future. We recognized a critical need to expand our staff and provide benefits. We have a great team and as they continue to be stretched to care for families in our city, we need to ensure we are taking care of them. This is reflected in our 2021-2022 budget with an increase of \$120,000 towards staff and benefits. This year we reassigned staffing to have Secondary and Elementary Program Staff. We promoted our Elementary Program Coordinator to Full Time, and hired a Full Time Program Director, FT Secondary Program Coordinator and PT Office Administrator. We are in the process of hiring a PT Communications Staff. These additions will not only allow us to reach and

effectively impact more students, but also allow our Executive Director to focus more directly on the continued growth and sustainability of The Bridge so we can expand partnerships and meet our budgetary goals.

Just as our staff expenses are increasing so are our program expenses. We needed to increase our crisis budget of \$17,000 to \$25,000 to meet the heightened needs of families due to COVID-19 (food, grocery gift cards, rent/utility expenses, etc.). Additionally, students are returning with social and mental health issues and have experienced significant learning loss over the past 1.5 years. We want to increase our investment in literacy support for students and extracurricular activities like field trips to help rebuild their social skills and academic motivation. Academic support is needed beyond tutoring – more than ever before, our staff are filling gaps for parents – we are fighting to keep kids in school, to reignite their desire to learn to read, to graduate and to attend college. Our staff are showing up for IEP meetings, emailing teachers and transporting students all while responding to crisis needs and continuously shifting our service model and adjusting safety protocols.

As we move forward, the year holds many unknowns. General operating support will allow us to remain flexible and innovative and to strategically expand our staff and adjust our programs to most effectively meet the needs of youth and families in Coatesville.

### • How impact & results will be demonstrated

Students who participate in The Bridge's Programs are expected to demonstrate the following outcomes:

- Students will feel safe and supported.
- Students will stay on track academically.
- Students will avoid risky behaviors (drugs, alcohol, fights, etc.).
- Students will develop healthy friendships.
- Students will demonstrate increased confidence and self-esteem.
- Students will demonstrate improved attitudes and behavior.
- Students will be empowered to serve as leaders among their peers and community.

The Bridge will measure results by administering post-program surveys and tracking student's grades, program attendance, behavior and participation.

The Bridge's impact is also demonstrated through students like Evian. Like many Bridge students, Evian struggles with reading, which affects her ability to succeed academically. Evian began coming to The Bridge as a baby because her mom attended the weekly Mom's Club. Evian stayed on grade level in Kindergarten with the partnership of an excellent teacher that communicated well with Bridge staff, and mom. However, her first and second grade teachers did not engage as much regarding Evian's needs. She was a well behaved child and slipped through the cracks. In third grade, teachers connected again with mom and The Bridge and we quickly realized that Evian needed immediate reading intervention in order to have a chance at getting back on grade level. The Bridge was able to set Evian up with a specific and skilled reading tutor to go through Reading with Results. Reading with Results is a certified Barton program, using the Orton- Gillingham Method specifically for students with dyslexia. She has participated in this program for over a year and has grown at incredible rates. Her tutor has continued working with her virtually throughout the entire pandemic and summer months. Evian graduated from Level 4 in their program and is now reading independently and working alongside a tutor for 2 hours each week. This is just one example of the many needs addressed by The Bridge and our ability to intervene and provide support that students would not have access to without the Bridge.

*\*COVID-19 continues to leave many unknowns for the year. We successfully re-opened for in-person programming this past summer (2020) in a modified format and continued to offer modified in-person programming during the school year. Our 2021 Summer Program is up and running, with limited capacity. As we move forward in 2021, we will continue to adjust our program delivery as needed to align with CDC regulations and to ensure the ongoing safety of our staff, volunteers and students.*

## III. ATTACHMENTS

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.