

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 8/31/2021

Contact Information

Organization Name: Chester County Futures
Address: 50 S. 1st Avenue, Suite 105, Coatesville, 19320
Phone: 610-458-9926
Website: ccfutures.org
Year Incorporated: 2004
FEIN: 31-1822506

ED/CEO Name: Maria McDonald
ED/CEO E-mail: mmcdonald@ccfutures.org
Board Chair Name: Matthew Rovi
Board Chair Approval (check here):
Primary Contact Name: Maria McDonald
Primary Contact E-mail: mmcdonald@ccfutures.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

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

Mission: Chester County Futures provides comprehensive academic enrichment, mentoring and scholarships to motivated, disadvantaged youth to succeed in school, higher education and life.

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

We serve four school districts: Coatesville Area, Kennett Consolidated, Oxford Area and Phoenixville Area

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:

Annual Budget \$ 963,150 10.0 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
80 % of budget for program expenses 17 # of Board Volunteers
7 % of budget for administrative expenses 195 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
13 % of budget for fundraising expenses 2,300 # of Volunteer Hours
100 % total

Top 3-5 funding sources: The Pew Charitable Trusts, State Street Foundation, SAP, Lenfest Foundation, Voya

Is this grant proposal for: Capacity Building ___ or General Operating X

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: \$ 1,000-6,000

Proposal Summary: Futures respectfully seeks funding support for its academic enrichment, mentoring college transition operations. Your gift will allow at-risk students to graduate high school and attend college or trade schools so they may end their cycle of poverty

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE BY CHESTER COUNTY FUTURES

1. ORGANIZATION'S HISTORY, GOALS, KEY ACHEIVEMENTS AND DISTINCTIVENESS -- In 1996, Chester County Futures (Futures) was formed to offer economically disadvantaged adolescents an equal opportunity to earn a higher education. The organization, created under the 501(c) (3) sponsorship of the Chester County Community Foundation, incorporated July 2003 and received its own 501 (c)(3) in 2004.

Initially program enrollment was a small group of 12 Grade 9 students. For 2021-2022 school year, we will reach 195 Grade 9-12 students in four school districts. These districts are: Coatesville Area, Kennett Consolidated, Oxford Area and Phoenixville Area. The enrollment does not include 130 post-secondary students who also receive services through our college transition and scholarship program. In total, Futures projects serving 325 Chester County students.

As of June 2021, 100% of our seniors (42) graduated on time. Some 91% have enrolled in college or technical schools. Several have entered military service. Our four-year post-secondary school graduation rate dropped to 33% in the pandemic. This is still three times greater than the national average for low-income college students and 1.3 times higher than the graduation rate for low-income students in the state. Futures is the only organization in the county that provides multiple years of academic enrichment, mentoring, scholarship and college transition supports for low-income public school students.

2. FUNDING REQUEST -- Futures requests funding for Passport to College and Steps4Success. Your support will provide in-person after-school academic enrichment sessions, real-world learning, mentoring and other supports for the students. Passport students engage in individual advising sessions and college and career site visits. They have guidance to access post-secondary school. Steps4Success enables our predominately first-generation college students to adjust to higher education. We seek support ranging from \$1,000-\$5,000.

A. Specific Chester County Needs and Issues Addressed -- The pandemic created unprecedented economic hardships and virtual education disrupted learning for students, especially for low-income youth. According to educational experts, on average, low-income students suffered eight to nine months of learning loss while high-income students experienced three to four months of learning loss. Within the county, numerous students remain negatively impacted at home and or in school by the lingering effects of the pandemic and learning loss. They face dismal socioeconomic conditions. All 100% of our students receive free or reduced priced meals at school. Lunch data for the 2020-2021 is not reliable or unavailable in the state databases. Last year though, 42.1% of secondary students in the four districts served received free or reduced priced meals. This percentage was projected to increase in the 2020-2021 pandemic. County statistics show an educational attainment gap that most likely worsened between low-income and high-income students. In 2020, some 27% fewer students in the least affluent schools entered college compared to the percent of students in the most affluent schools. Students in the least affluent districts had a much lower college readiness score (14.0) compared to (57.0) in the most affluent schools. (US News, 2021 Rankings of Best High Schools in the U.S.). These disparities were magnified by the pandemic. Studies show that even high performing low-income and minority youth are at a disadvantage in college access and completion. They are less likely to graduate due to social, cultural and financial barriers. Steps4Success addresses the issues with on-going guidance, support and other services.

In 2020-2021, student enrollment included 80% minority youth (45% Hispanic, 29% African-American, 2% are Asian and 4% bi-racial). Some 37% lived in single parent households, or with a grandparent or guardian. The vast majority (80%) had parents who did not attended college, and 13% come from families where neither parent graduated from high school.

Futures has six program staff responsible for Passport to College and Steps4Success activities during the year. They will deliver virtual or in-person after-school classes, individual advising sessions, events and coordinate virtual or actual college tours and career site visits as deemed safe in the pandemic.

B. Organizational Impact – Our impact is huge for disadvantaged youth who are served by the programs. The community gains motivated and engaged adolescents in the classroom. Low-income neighborhoods have hope that their youth can enter and complete post-secondary education. The county gains a diverse and skilled labor pool. (Our internal data shows that a majority of our college graduates return to the local community to live and work). The young adults bring industry-valued credentials and workplace skills to area corporations. Our programming services provide overburdened and under-funded public schools with resources and knowledgeable staff. Low-income families do not have the resources or knowledge to support their child’s dream of a higher education so we fill in the gaps.

C. Overall strategies to implement the organization’s mission (or project) -- There are four strategies. First, academic enrichment sessions contain skill-building activities to improve student performance. Grade-appropriate classes will be in-person to increase student motivation and knowledge. Individual advising will occur in-person on a quarterly basis. Our equitable curriculum includes study skills, essay writing, positive peer relationships, time management, SAT Prep, financial literacy, and college and job interviewing classes. Passport also builds developmental skills within each student through leadership and community projects that will be offered in 2021-2022. Second, the most vulnerable students have actual in-person mentoring opportunities with one-on-one mentors who offer extra guidance. Third, Futures awards scholarship funds to graduating students for their college or trade school education. Fourth, we have college transitional supports and services enabling students to adjust to higher education.

D. Why it is important to fund this now? --The latest college enrollment and completion rates are dismal and unequal for low-income communities in the county. The number of families that fell into poverty grew in the pandemic. A huge education gap exists between low-income youth and high-income youth. Equal educational opportunity is critical for the families, the schools and the communities where opportunity is threatened. The pandemic worsened their educational and economic plight. Without the right supports and on-going assistance, low-income youth will not secure post-secondary credentials. Such industry-valued credentials are essential in today’s labor market as young under-educated adults cannot obtain self-sustaining jobs. Area companies find fewer well-qualified and diverse job applicants locally, recruiting applicants beyond the region. We make a positive difference by addressing these issues and by empowering economically disadvantaged youth, including minority youth, to harness their abilities to earn an education. We give the youth and their families hope and a chance for a better future.

3. TIMETABLES WITH ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO THE NONPROFIT’S MISSION --- By the end of the 2021-2022 school year, we will have the following outcomes: 1) 100% of Futures’ Class of 2022 graduate from high school; 2) 90% + of our high school graduates enroll in post-secondary education; 3) 50% of students earn 85+ in core subjects; 4) 100% of students engage in online and actual career and college exploration; 5) 100% of students advance to the next grade level; 6) maintain or increase the post-secondary retention rate of 75% and 7) increase the 32% college graduation rate.

4. HOW IMPACT AND RESULTS WILL BE DEMONSTRATED – Our program is measured against established goals and objectives for short-term and long-term outcomes. The program is measured on a quarterly basis through a review of student grades, attendance, and engagement in Futures. The high school graduation rate, our college/post secondary school enrollment rate and college/post-secondary retention and graduation rates are calculated and reviewed annually. Program staff conduct periodic pre and post student surveys and periodic informal interviews with parents, teachers, guidance counselors, principals and other individuals to guarantee high quality program activities.