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.chescof.org to apply online for grants from all Community Foundation Funds.
- Email proposals to grants@chescof.org
- Proposals are considered “complete” when CCCC 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@chescof.org with any questions.
I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

**Contact Information**
Organization Name: Phoenixville Women’s Outreach
Address: 201 Starr Street Phoenixville, PA 19460
Phone: (484) 302-8151
Website: phxvillewomensoutreach.org
Year Incorporated: 2015
FEIN: 47-227-0202

ED/CEO Name: Andrea Blue
ED/CEO E-mail: andrea@phxhouse.org
Board Chair Name: Mike Bryson
Board Chair Approval (check here): X

**Organization Information:**
Field/s of Interest:
___ Arts, Culture & Humanities ___ Environment/Animal Welfare ___Education
___ Health _X_ Human Services ___ Religion

**Mission:**
To help single homeless and low-income women from crisis to independence by providing housing with a structured program of stability; resources and support to break the cycle of dependence and poverty; a savings program to aid in becoming financially independent; skills training empowering self-sufficiency, confidence, and independence; and job placement assistance, interviewing practice, and employment guidance.

**Geographic Area Served** (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): We serve the greater Philadelphia area. Our clients are predominantly from Chester County with some from Montgomery County.

**Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:** We serve single women who are experiencing homelessness. Our clientele do not have dependents. On average, we house and support 12-14 people a year in our 6-bed home. Our second site has 5 beds.

**Annual Budget**
$202,366
1 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
86 % of budget for program expenses
7 % of budget for administrative expenses
7 % of budget for fundraising expenses
100 % total

**Top 3-5 funding sources:**
Our top funding sources our individual donors and foundation grants. In 2020, we received just over $65,000 from individuals and $170,000 in grants. Our Foundation funding in the last year:
Phoenixville Community Health Foundation general operations ($10,000);
Westminster Presbyterian Church purchase and install windows ($10,000);
100 Women of Phoenixville general operations ($17,000);
Phoenixville Community Health Foundation restricted mortgage money ($50,000);
Richard M. Schulze Family Foundation general operations ($5,000)

**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:** $5,000

**Proposal Summary:** Phoenixville Women’s Outreach is asking for help with General Operating. Throughout our 6 year history we have relied on the assistance of Foundations as well as generous community members to carry out our mission. We are a small but mighty organization that operates frugally and sensibly to make a tremendous impact on our participant’s lives, one woman at a time.
II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.

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

In 2014, after decades of serving meals to those in need, our founders Cheryl and Barry Messere were surprised to come upon women living out in tents by the river in the winter’s cold. Feeling an immediate calling, they discovered their town had a men's shelter and a family shelter; but nothing for women. The Messere’s began to spread this news to other inspired volunteers who rallied support of agencies, churches, and organizations. They committed to establishing a transitional housing program for single women. “The House” welcomed its first participants in January 2015. Purposely near the bus route, and in walking distance to many community resources, The House is a shared living experience which houses 6 women at a time. Unlike other shelters which require women to vacate after 8 weeks, our regulations allow stays for 9 -12 months as long as participants are employed, following house rules and saving money. Time at The House includes personal goal setting and small group workshops on life, social and health skills. We have a unique mandatory savings program that helps create a nest egg for our clients. A commitment to save 60% of their income is made by our participants. Motivation comes from a matching grant program we have with BB&T Bank.

A few years after we began offering health and healing, it became very clear that affordable housing in the area was extremely limited. After working towards self-sufficiency, our participants were having a hard time finding a feasible ‘next step.’ In response, Phoenixville Women’s Outreach created a second program at a new site. Our “Next Step House” (opened in 2020) is a shared living arrangement for women that offers independence and affordable rents. Subsidies are available to eligible residents with a new partnership with the Housing Authority of Chester County. The program has been established somewhat as a pilot program creating a living situation that does not exist anywhere else nearby. The Next Step House has created a safe, comfortable home in the community where women from our transitional home have established jobs, health networks, spiritual communities and social bonds.

We achieved a great deal in our short history. Acquiring a second property and opening our Next Step House was a tremendous achievement for our organization. We were able to commit to the project with support from both the Phoenixville Community Health Foundation, the Affordable Housing Task Force and Quest for the Best. Our second site doubled the amount of women that we can help at a time. In 6 1/2 years, we have helped 76 women. Clients leave The House with a job, savings, renewed hope, increased self-esteem, and pride. Throughout the time of Covid-19, we stayed open and continued serving women in need. From the middle of March 2020 until now, throughout the pandemic, we brought in 17 women and gave them respite to prepare for the next step of their life. In January of 2021, we welcomed our first, full-time paid Executive Director. With this hire and restructuring, we find ourselves moving from the infancy of our organization to adolescence. As we move from our start-up phase to one of growth, our top priorities are focused on greater stability, effectiveness and efficiency in delivering our mission. With ongoing strategic planning, we will assess our outcomes and the way we measure success to strengthen our service model to better serve our clients. We work to continue to improve fiscal management and reporting to ensure transparency and compliance with current IRS and nonprofit standards. Our Board of Directors is committed to ensure the staff and volunteers have the support needed to do their jobs effectively. We are cognizant of the importance of the quality of our facilities which require continued maintenance and improvements. Upgrades are needed at the old farmhouse apartments: its current bathroom needs to be gutted and old copper pipes need to be replaced. Outdoor lighting needs to be enhanced. We aim to install a second bathroom on the third floor. We assume the responsibility of the utility costs to run both our homes which includes electric, trash, water, internet and security.
2. Funding request

- Description of key initiatives
- Specific needs & issues to be addressed
- Why it is important to fund this now
- How impact & results will be demonstrated

Our key initiatives:
1) **The House**: 9-12 month program providing housing, meals, and emotional support for women experiencing homelessness. Our staff work with each woman individually to create SMART goals with weekly meetings and daily interaction. Clients are connected to community resources and commit to savings.

2) **Next Step House**: a HUD-subsidized low-income shared apartment for graduates of *The House* (or other transitional programs), which enables clients to afford a home near jobs, health networks, spiritual communities and social bonds.

3) **By You For You Savings Program**: While at *The House*, 60% of the client’s income is deposited into a savings account to build a nest egg for when she is ready to leave. Every consecutive deposit is partially matched by a grant from BB&T Bank.

4) **Employment Assistance Program**: Clients are provided with guidance in securing employment, including search techniques, application & interview assistance and clothing/uniform obtainment.

5) **Workshops & Trainings**: Clients participate in small group trainings. Topics include physical & mental health, financial literacy & habits, emotion regulation, communication and self-care.

In 2015, we implemented a transitional program to allow women experiencing homelessness to heal and connect to essential services. Our original program helps participants reach goals towards self-sufficiency and includes resources in finances, job services and emotion regulation. Our model proves successful and continues to help women in crisis.

After three years of *The House*, we assessed that the shortage of local low-income housing in our area made it extremely difficult for our participants to find their next homes close to the networks they had developed while in the program. The need for low income housing in our area is great. There are very few housing opportunities for women whose income is between 20%-80% of AMI (Area Median Income). These are individuals of the workforce at our gas stations, supermarkets, pharmacies, food service, delivery companies and healthcare facilities. They are essential workers of our neighborhood in need of dignified, secure homes. In 2020, we opened The Next Step House to provide a low-income shared housing arrangement for five formerly homeless women (most of whom have completed the transitional housing program at The House) who are ready to live independently.

Phoenixville Women’s Outreach, like so many social service agencies, are poised right now ready for a downpour of need as the pandemic becomes less of a threat and emergency programs diminish. For example, moratoriums on evictions are expected to cease this year which will no doubt spur an increase in housing insecurities. We aim to remain robust and able to meet the need.

Our work is, by design, simplistic and individualized. We find success in every woman whom we are able to give respite. *The House* serves 6 single women at a time who are experiencing homelessness without children in their care. We serve an average of 13 women each year. To date, in our 7th year, we have helped 76 women.
A second level of success lies in the growth of our participants. We offer many opportunities for personal growth through one-on-ones, workshops, and referrals. It is important to us that each of our clients leave our program with new or strengthened skills. We measure this with our intake and discharge surveys.

We may be proudest of our savings program. Our By You For You Savings program, a mandate of our program agreement, is a pillar of participant success. We expect women to secure employment/income within their first 30 days with us. Then they agree to put 60% of their net income into savings for their stay. We work hard to see this commitment through as it is their ticket out to self-sufficiency.

The Next Step House offers 5 bedrooms in the shared apartment. Each resident will find individual success by continuing to meet their expenses without strain. Pivotal success will be found when residents of The Next Step House are able to secure a growing savings (similar to the pattern of The House’s By You For You program.) Further success is possible when we watch our residents take their “next, next step,” to an independent situation that doesn’t require sharing. The condition of our facility will also determine success. Are we continuing to provide a safe, well-maintained, comfortable home with a safe infrastructure and without structural flaws?

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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