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:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Field of Interest &amp; Donor Advised Funds (No Deadline)</th>
<th>Fund for Chester County Capacity Building Grants (Due 9/15)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>◊ Grants focus on Chester County causes &amp; issues, but are not limited to Chester County.</td>
<td>◊ For eligibility in this grant program, nonprofits must be located in &amp; serve Chester County. NPO’s with budgets of $500,000 or less are given preference.</td>
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<tr>
<td>◊ Charitable nonprofits working in all fields of interest are considered for grant awards. (i.e. arts, culture, &amp; humanities; education; community improvement; environment; religion; health; &amp; human services)</td>
<td>◊ The goal of capacity building grantmaking is to strengthen the effectiveness of NPO’s serving the Chester County region, in areas including:</td>
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<td>◊ General operating grants are encouraged. Nonprofits should be specific about their mission, goals, &amp; measurable outcomes.</td>
<td>o Mission, Vision &amp; Strategy</td>
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<td>◊ Proposals can be submitted anytime all year.</td>
<td>o Governance &amp; Leadership</td>
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<td>◊ Grant decisions are made intermittently all year, as Fund Advisors desire.</td>
<td>o Partnerships &amp; Collaborations</td>
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<td>◊ Grant awards typically range from $500-$7,500.</td>
<td>o Operations &amp; Technology</td>
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• 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

Contact Information
Organization Name: The Barn at Spring Brook Farm
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Year Incorporated: 2005
Primary Contact E-mail: nan.latona@springbrook-farm.org
FEIN: 20-3417567

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

Mission: The mission of The Barn at Spring Brook Farm is to enrich the lives of children with disabilities through animal-assisted activities.

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): The Barn serves all of Chester County, in addition to the Greater Philadelphia region.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served: Children, ages 2 to 12 years old, who live in Chester County and the surrounding counties and who have physical, cognitive and/or developmental disabilities gain short and longer term benefits from our programs. During 2020, our core staff of 3 fulltime employees served 350 children through 450 program placements. Approx. 68% of the children served had autism spectrum as a primary or secondary diagnosis.

Annual Budget $334,229
___ 80% of budget for program expenses
___ 12% of budget for administrative expenses
___ 8% of budget for fundraising expenses
3 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
12 # of Board Volunteers
90 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
100 % total

Top 3-5 funding sources:

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: $5000

Proposal Summary:
History, goals, key achievements & distinctiveness

The Barn at Spring Brook Farm was conceived in 2004 as a passion project of founder Mary Beth Drobish, former owner of the beautiful 17.5-acre West Chester, PA farm property on which The Barn resides. Following the death of her husband, Mrs. Drobish felt called to combine her love of children with her passion for farm animals and sought to develop an environment where the two could co-exist in a healing way. She believed that children who are differently-abled would benefit physically, psychologically, cognitively and developmentally from interactions with specially-selected, kid-sized farm animals. In 2005, The Barn was incorporated as a 501(c) (3) organization and shortly thereafter welcomed children with disabilities through its doors and into its lush pastures. Typically three fulltime staff and nearly 300 dedicated volunteers and health profession students/interns achieve our mission through several signature programs offered annually March through November: Camp Geronimo, Individual Programs/Life Skills Development, Socialization Events, Family Barn Visits, and Educational Field Trips. In 2020, The Barn served the needs of 350 children through 450 virtual and in-person program hours.

Our mission is to enrich the lives of children with disabilities through animal-assisted activities. Each animal in our program is specially selected for its suitability to work with children with disabilities. Among them are miniature horses, miniature Sicilian donkeys; Baby Doll sheep, Nigerian goats, rabbits, hens, a barn cat and a potbellied pig. The Barn itself is a fully handicapped-accessible. Outside, in addition to a chicken coop housing our hens, children can explore multiple gardens, fields, and forested areas. A specially-designed wheelchair-accessible hay wagon provides trips around the property and a handicapped-accessible tree house lovingly built by volunteers offers a peaceful place for children to spend time in nature. An Outdoor Learning Center established in 2019 currently includes sensory gardens, raised vegetable beds for growing produce donated to the West Chester Food Cupboard, a musical soundscape, and a labyrinth. The Barn is a leading regional resource committed to providing children with disabilities and their families a hands-on, animal and nature-based experience that brings joy and encourages participants to pursue their best lives. Our small-sized animals provide a range of learning opportunities derived from walking, grooming and feeding them, leading to higher levels of task management and enhanced communication and socialization skills. The bond between the animals, nature, and the children we serve is extraordinarily empowering and life-enriching—and we believe it is key element that sets our program apart from others in the region.

The Children We Serve – Statement of Need

The children we serve, ages 2 to 12 years old, are from Chester County and surrounding communities. Some of the common diagnoses of the children are: autism spectrum disorder (ASD); Down syndrome; attention deficit hyperactivity disorder; cerebral palsy; physical disabilities; epilepsy and seizure disorders; genetic disorders; and intellectual and developmental disabilities. Over the last several years, The Barn has experienced a dramatic increase in the number of children with ASD and over 65% of all the children we served in 2020 had ASD as a primary or secondary diagnosis. The numbers of children and families affected by emotional, physical and developmental disabilities in our region continues to grow. The 2015 American Community Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau estimated that 3,662 children with disabilities were living in Chester County alone, 3% of all children under the age of 18. These numbers do not take into account the staggering new statistics on ASD. According to the Centers for Disease Control:

- One in every 59 children is now diagnosed with ASD.
- ASD is about 4.5 times more common among boys (1 in 42) than among girls (1 in 189) and is reported to occur in all racial, ethnic and socioeconomic groups.
- About 1 in 6 children has a developmental disability.

COVID-19’s Impact on and Response to The Barn’s Programs for Children with Disabilities

Upon the outbreak of COVID-19 in March, 2020, The Barn suspended all programs to keep our children, parents, staff and volunteers safe. We pivoted to develop and deliver several live and recorded virtual programs for our children to maintain interaction with our animals, natural spaces and skilled volunteers, while enabling us to retain the relationships we have with the families we serve.

Once Chester County entered its Green Phase and opened up with some eased restrictions, we launched a Family Barn Visit program as an option for summer “in-person” programming: children under the direct supervision of at least one adult household member was guided by our Program Manager or an occupational therapy student volunteer from a distance of 6’ to participate in animal-assisted and nature-based activities. To counter the challenges families were facing with childcare, siblings were permitted to participate as well. Family Barn Visits were met with so much enthusiasm that it has been added to our line-up of programs.

Unable to host visiting classrooms from area schools for in-person Educational Field Trips, we began offering a pre-recorded digital version to teachers at no charge, as well as a live version using Zoom, should teachers prefer a more immersive experience for their students. Both the live and pre-recorded field trips have been very well received- 210 children participated in virtual Field Trips in 2020. In fact, production of a professionally produced version generously funded by a Fall Resiliency Grant is nearly ready for distribution.

Our Traditional Programs

For now, there is a “new normal” at The Barn but, on the bright side, even when things return to the “old normal,” we will have successfully created an array of virtual programming we can offer to children whose health is too compromised to participate in our regular “in-person” programs. Our traditional programs include:

- **Camp Geronimo**, our most popular program, provides up to 96 children ages 6 to 12 a unique summer day camp experience - an opportunity to have fun in a safe, secure setting while learning new skills that address their specific needs. Our unique one-to-one ratio of counselors to campers allows children with a range of abilities to participate in summer camp, truly a first
for many of them. A Registered Nurse is on site each day of camp to ensure each child’s medical needs are met. To minimize potential exposure to the COVID virus, we ran at half capacity for six weeks during the 2021 summer months.

- **Our Individual Programs**, offered to children ages 2 to 12 once a week for two twelve-week sessions, provide one-on-one therapy with an experienced volunteer. Our staff works with parents and guardians to develop an individualized Barn Activity Plan for each child to help set goals, track progress and to complement any existing therapy or education. Examples of goals include improving fine motor skills, developing communication skills and building self-esteem. Because of the uncertainty of the course of the pandemic, this program is currently being offered in six-week sessions.

- We also provide an informal **Life Skills/Professional Development** for individuals aged 18 to 25 with a variety of disabilities. Our full-time facilities manager dedicates approximately 20% of his time to the oversight of this program as he manages students from the Chester County Intermediate Unit, Elwyn School and MelMark, as well as other young adults from families served by The Barn.

- The Barn offers four annual **Socialization Events** geared to local families who have children with disabilities. These include Autumn Festival, Summer Splash, Spring Fling and Pancake Palooza. The goal of these events is to provide our families further opportunities to interact with one another and with the Barn staff and animals. Currently, to minimize potential exposure, these events are being offered virtually.

- In addition, each year 12 in-person **Educational Field Trips** are provided to groups of students from local schools and programs such as the Chester County Intermediate Unit (CCIU), the Arc of Chester County, Greenwood Elementary School, Overbrook School for the Blind, and St. Edmund’s Home for Children among others. Each group brings their own counselors and aides and sets goals in conjunction with the Barn’s staff. Children, parents and staff participating in these field trips are often amazed at the extent of the hands-on interaction involved.

In addition to serving the needs of our children, The Barn continues to serve as an experiential learning facility for occupational and physical therapy, kinesiology, special education teaching and social work students and interns from several colleges and universities in the Delaware Valley, including Temple University, Salus University, West Chester University, University of the Sciences, and Philadelphia University. Our **Professional Clinical Affiliation Program** advances the health and wellbeing of our children and their families, while furthering the education of future specialized healthcare professionals.

On a modest annual budget of under $350,000, The Barn at Spring Brook Farm strives to ensure that our quality programs are accessible and affordable to all who wish to participate regardless of their financial means. Each year, in addition to self-subsidizing our programs so they remain affordable, over $10,000 is allocated for need-based tuition assistance for children whose families might be faced with financial hardship. By opening our doors to all who wish to participate, not just to those who can afford it, we are able to engender greater diversity and inclusion within our participant population and also extend the reach of our programs as a whole. Annually, The Barn provides approximately 31% of the children we serve with scholarships so they may participate in Individual Programs and/or Camp Geronimo. Annually, over 30% of Camp Geronimo participants receive need-based financial assistance.

**Impact and Evaluation**

Evidence shows that activities such as walking, grooming, feeding and talking to our animals leads to enhanced task management, communication and socialization skills. In a published research study of families with children with autism participating in The Barn’s programs by Dr. Page Buck of West Chester University, interaction with our animals was found to decrease anxiety, increase frustration tolerance, and increase verbal and non-verbal expression. Parents also reported feeling a new and deep sense of hope about their children’s long-term outcomes and happiness. We intend to participate in future research to further explore the impact our programs have on children with disabilities including ASD. In fact, we aspire make ourselves known as subject matter experts in the area of animal-assisted activities and their impact on children with disabilities.

The progress of our children is measured by a variety of goals and objectives related to their personal achievements during the course of the Barn program in which they participate. Family members communicate the child’s specific needs and assist our staff and volunteers in setting attainable goals that are reflected in an individual Barn Activity Plan for each child. Examples of goals may include but are not limited to: identifying the feelings of adults, children, and animals based on body language/expressions; exhibiting positive social interactions with another child; demonstrating socially appropriate behaviors; making requests using full sentences; following multi-step directions; and engaging in “messy” activities without becoming upset. Volunteers work one-on-one (sometimes two-on-one) with our children and note their progress in respect to their goals. At the conclusion of each session, weekly notes are assimilated by our Program Manager into a comprehensive report and shared with the child’s family. Finally, a survey is distributed to parents to assess any observed improvement. Outcomes that we repeatedly see include:

- Improved motor skills and muscle development as a result of grooming animals and taking them for walks around the property.
- Improved social interactions with others attributed to repeated eye contact with animals and practicing basic introduction skills.
- Ability to demonstrate socially appropriate behaviors such as waiting, turn taking, and sharing.
- Learning to ask permission and wait for a response prior to moving to a new location.
- Demonstrating improved communication skills, including participating in back and forth conversation that volleys at least three times
In 2020 we revamped both our volunteer/client session assessment methods and our post-program parent questionnaire in order to gather more specific data regarding observed program impact. Following are examples of responses of parents when asked about observable carry-over behavior from The Barn to home, school, therapies, etc.:

- “(My child’s) articulation has improved. She has begun speaking in complete sentences and seems a bit more outgoing with people she doesn’t know.”
- “Learning how to care for the animals - providing love and attention, feeding, along with more confident in making crafts on her own.”
- “(My child) would come home and talk about what he did and learned.”
- “He was happy when getting home after a session.”
- “Yes, she shared her experiences with her teachers and family; loved telling everyone about the animals.”
- “Yes, (my child) always seems "recharged" after her visits to the Barn.”

**Capacity building impact, measurement, timeline and cost**

In July, 2021 we engaged Al Weber from the firm Tweed-Weber-Danks to work with us to develop and advance a sustainable business model for The Barn that would set the course for our future growth and continued success (please see proposal attached). Thus far, staff and Board have met with Al on several occasions to formulate a working plan (please see plan attached) that is still in the process of development. The plan will be complete before the end of the year and will include implementation details through 2022. At the end of 2022, we will reconvene with Al to review progress, course correct as needed, and plan implementation through 2023. The process will repeat at the end of 2023 at which time implementation for 2024 will be determined. The funding we are requesting would be used to secure the professional services of Al Weber in the fourth quarter of 2022.

**Why it is important to fund this now**

Current circumstances, including growth restrictions by our Township, property limitations, and opportunities for program expansion, suggest it is now time for The Barn to assess its current status and develop a compelling plan for its future. Between new ownership of Spring Brook Farm; realizing our capability to deliver effective virtual programming as a result of our response to COVID; and being made aware of an unmet need for out-of-school activities for children with disabilities (summer camp, in particular), The Barn is poised to expand its programmatic offerings to impact more children and perhaps other populations such as teens and young adults (contingent upon the outcome of the initial plan which is still being developed).

**Timetable, with anticipated outcomes and relevance to The Barn’s mission**

We have already secured the services of a strategic planning professional and are planning meetings for our board of directors, staff, and community members skilled in the areas we need support with. The plan will be operationalized through 2022 . At the end of 2022, we will revisit and renew our strategies and identify operational objectives for the coming year (2023). We see opportunity to (1) serve additional children; (2) grow our business model by capitalizing on unused/underused/generationally-threatened farms and/or leveraging our relationships with existing organizations that provide complementary services; (3) increase earned revenue; and (4) identify new funding sources.

We have completed meetings one through four and are currently planning Meeting Five:

**Meeting One: Professional Staff**

- Introduce strategic planning and the Tweed-Weber-Danks process.
- Define the opportunities for growth, expansion, and improvement, and corresponding risks.
- Identify the key issues facing the organization with an enhanced focus on:
  - Facilities
  - Program Expansion
  - Revenue Growth
  - Organizational sustainability.
- Define preliminary areas of strategic focus

**Meeting Two: Professional Staff and Board President**

- Review and affirm or modify The Barn’s mission.
- Define the strategies to be implemented by The Barn at Spring Brook Farm to fulfill its mission and address its key issues.
- Develop potential 2021 – 2022 objectives to be considered in The Barn’s strategic plan.

**Meeting Three: Professional Staff**

- Exercise: Imagine what The Barn of the future would look like without any limitations

**Meeting Four: Board Retreat**

- Introduce strategic planning and the Tweed-Weber-Danks process.
- Review and affirm or modify the work developed by the planning workgroup in the first three meetings.
- Discuss the next planning steps.

**Meeting Five: Professional Staff**

- Review outcomes from Board Retreat
Meetings Six and Seven: Professional Staff, Board President, Invited Guests (Subject matter experts, committees)

- Develop the action steps, with corresponding target dates, to be implemented to accomplish those goals.
- Assign accountability to the appropriate individuals within the organization.
- Define the organization’s Critical Measures of Success.
- Develop a process to communicate The Barn at Spring Brook Farm’s strategic plan to essential stakeholders and monitor, measure, and report progress made.

The Importance of Your Funding

It is our sincere hope that the Chester County Community Foundation will see value in investing in the future of The Barn at Spring Brook Farm. We invite you to see firsthand the unique nature of our work and to join us in creating an exciting and impactful business model that will serve individuals with disabilities in our community for years to come. Thank you for your consideration of our request for a $5,000 capacity building grant.