

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: Bridge of Hope Chester County
Address: P.O. Box 304, Exton, PA 19341
Phone: 610-280-0280
Website: <https://chestercounty.bridgeofhopeinc.org/>
Year Incorporated: 1989
FEIN: 81-0555073

ED/CEO Name: Edith Yoder
ED/CEO E-mail: EdithY@bridgeofhopeinc.org
Board Chair Name: William Snyder
Board Chair Approval (check here):
Primary Contact Name: Kathy Beiler
Primary Contact E-mail: KathyB@bridgeofhopeinc.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

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

Mission: To end family homelessness through a comprehensive program of case management and engaging Christian faith communities in Neighboring relationships.

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

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served: families with dependent children who are homeless or in the process of eviction. Currently serving 7 families, this past 12 months served total of 9 families.

Annual Budget \$ 253,500 2 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
84 % of budget for program expenses 12 # of Board Volunteers
1 % of budget for administrative expenses 56 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
15 % of budget for fundraising expenses 28 Per Week # of Volunteer Hours
100 % total

Top 3-5 funding sources: WW Smith Charitable, JS Herr Foundation, Huston Foundation, Bob and Elizabeth Hodge, Fann Family Foundation

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: Homelessness does not end when someone is provided with housing. Homelessness ends when someone has the ability to provide safe housing for their family, and has the long-term resources to remain housed. Bridge of Hope has been ending family homelessness in Chester County for more than 30 years. Our goal is to increase the number of families we serve, by hiring a second case manager. Bridge of Hope's comprehensive program empowers families and ends the cycle of homelessness.



History, Distinctives and Goals: Bridge of Hope was founded in Chester County, and has been ending family homelessness for more than 30 years. The Bridge of Hope model is a unique solution to family homelessness that differs from the traditional shelter or transitional housing program. **We work collaboratively to help families move into safe and sustainable housing, and achieve long-term stability by providing comprehensive post-shelter and Whole Family Case Management services for 12-18 months.** Rental assistance is also provided on average for 6-8 months on a decreasing basis to coordinate with education or job training opportunities, which helps families begin working on financial goals. Families are accepted into the program regardless of race, ethnicity, faith or past experiences.

The Bridge of Hope model includes a distinctive component called Neighboring. Neighboring is provided for each family by a group of 6-10 trained volunteers from a local Christian church/group who build intentional relationships of support. Neighboring Volunteers walk alongside the family facing homelessness providing tangible and emotional support; such as emergency childcare, help to find housing and move in, networking through their social connections, a ride if transportation breaks down, encouragement and friendship. Data continues to show that support systems are critical for ending family homelessness in every community. (Bassuk, 2015, Services Matter: How housing and services can end family homelessness.)

Previously known as Bridge of Hope Lancaster and Chester Counties, in late 2019 we restructured and the two counties each became a separate Bridge of Hope affiliate under the umbrella of Bridge of Hope Inc. along with Bridge of Hope National. As a founding location of Bridge of Hope, this structure provides direct support and collaboration with the National office. The Bridge of Hope network includes 23 other independent Bridge of Hope locations across the country. Bridge of Hope Chester County had a strategic goal to serve 10 families in FY 2020-21, but because the barriers to exiting homelessness were exacerbated by the pandemic, the length of time families needed to reach stability increased. Five families were served in FY 2020-21. Our Program Director is currently providing case management for seven families, with 56 very active volunteers, which is the maximum case load for a director. Two families also graduated for a total of 9 families served thus far in FY 2021-22. Our goal for FY 2022-23 is to serve 12-14 families over the year, and meet the critical need in Chester County for services that end the cycle of homelessness.

Funding Request:

Family homelessness is a reality in our community. The Pennsylvania Department of Education reported more than 1,600 students in Chester County experiencing homelessness in the 2019-20 school year. This is a significant increase from the previous year. The current economic impact of the pandemic has disproportionately affected low income families. And, the recent flooding in Downingtown and Coatesville

has increased homelessness in an already vulnerable area. The cost of homelessness to a community is substantial.

Family homelessness is often hidden because rather than seek services, families attempt to live doubled-up, on couches, in cars, or in motels, in order to stay together. We believe children are the most vulnerable population experiencing homelessness, and therefore serve families with at least one child under the age of 18. According to the Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress, more than 80% of these families are headed by a single mother, also typical of families served by Bridge of Hope. This past year many shelters reduced space because of COVID-19 health concerns, and job loss and reduced income impacted the ability to sustain housing. Chester County has a severe shortage of low income housing, and that crisis will not resolve quickly. In addition, the cost of housing has increased dramatically. The number of calls for help to our office has more than doubled this past year.

In the Bridge of Hope program, the mother/parent seeks employment within a career that meets the family's financial needs while working to better their education, earning power, and establish a solid financial plan for their future. To ensure families never experience homelessness again, we provide first months' rent and security deposit to move into a safe and sustainable apartment of their choice. Through rental assistance provided on a decreasing basis and holistic case management services offered, **families achieve three main outcomes at successful graduation: safe and sustainable housing, improved financial position through job training and employment, and supportive Neighboring relationships.**

Homelessness often results when a family has exhausted their support system. The trauma of homelessness, and the underlying issues that may have resulted in homelessness such as domestic violence, health issues, or other crises have far-reaching impact on family health and well-being. Trauma can result in depression, anxiety and physical health concerns. For children, it impacts development and learning, as well as mental and physical health. The Adverse Childhood Experiences study (ACEs) found that the effects of poverty and trauma can be limited if the child has a consistent, buffering, loving relationship with an adult, particularly if that adult is the parent of the child. Providing time for the family to address their experience and needs can provide stability in the relationship between parent and child, and helps to build resilience.

Supportive relationships move families beyond the traumatic experiences and encourage the process of healing and wholeness. Intentional and supportive relationships in the spirit of cultural humility and mutuality can provide the tangible and emotional support often missing in the lives of families facing homelessness. Case managers coordinate with the Neighboring Volunteers and the family to encourage relationship building. Case managers also ensure a strengths-based approach; that the goals and desires of the family are the foundation of the services they receive. These key service components are vital for providing long-term solutions to homelessness.

Bridge of Hope is committed to meeting the needs of families facing homelessness in Chester County by expanding our program capacity to serve more families. We receive many applications from families that we cannot accept, due to staffing limitations. We work closely with several school districts, shelters and other direct service programs who provide referrals to Bridge of Hope for families who need "next step" services to achieve housing and improve their financial position. Our goal is to hire a second case manager this winter, and increase the number of families served in Chester County over the next year to between

12-14 families. **We are seeking a grant of \$5,000 to hire a second case manager, to increase the number of families we help transition from homelessness to stability.** The impact of increasing services will affect both our budget for staffing and for rental assistance. We began seeking increased support from foundations, businesses and individuals for this program capacity increase this summer. Almost fifty percent of the salary (a little over \$16,000) has been raised as part of our Bridging the Gap Initiative, and we raised \$20,000 in a joint fund for increasing rental assistance costs. We also have several pending grant submissions to foundations for Chester County rental assistance. Your support would allow us to begin the hiring process for a case manager.

Salary \$23 p/hour + benefits	Hours	Total per year
\$25.50 p/hour	25 hrs p/week	\$33,150

We invite you to partner with us to end family homelessness, for families such as Shamika’s*, who graduated from Bridge of Hope in Chester County several years ago:

Shamika moved out of a toxic relationship and into transitional housing through the Domestic Violence Center when her son was a toddler. She was taking classes to become a Certified Nursing Assistant but did not have any savings to rent an apartment. The DVCCC referred her to Bridge of Hope. Through Bridge of Hope’s program, she found an apartment with her case manager, and connected with a group of Neighboring Volunteers from a local church. They were impressed by her initiative and commitment to education and a nursing career. Shamika remembers clearly the day she went to pick up the keys to her apartment. Her landlord informed her that her rent had been paid for a year. She never knew who to thank, but that gift allowed her to begin taking classes to become a registered nurse. Shamika worked two part-time CNA jobs in addition to taking evening nursing classes. Her nursing clinical classes were on the weekends. With little extra time, Shamika decorated her kitchen with anatomy posters so she could practice while eating dinner or doing the dishes. One of her Neighboring Volunteers, a science teacher, also helped her study. Other volunteers helped with childcare, made pizza for them (her son’s favorite food) and celebrated her accomplishments. After graduating from Bridge of Hope she finished her RN and went on to get her Bachelor of Science in Nursing, the first in her family to get a college degree. Today she has a successful nursing career. Shamika recently reflected about her time in Bridge of Hope, “I have realized that your support system may not be who you want it to be; it may not be your friends or your family, but we all need support at times, and no one should go through life alone.”

Your support will allow more families, like Shamika’s, to join Bridge of Hope Chester County, and receive encouragement and support as they end the cycle of homelessness.

