

I. **CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET**

Date: 8/1/22

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: The Bridge will serve approximately 250 low-income, at-risk youth from grades K to 12th grade in the Coatesville Area School District and an additional 50 local mothers will be served via our monthly Mom’s Club and over 1,100 youth will be served via community outreach (Back to School Book Bag Event, Holiday Donations, Winter Coat distribution, etc.). Approximately 95% of students served come from low-income, single-parent households and most reside in the blocks immediately surrounding our building and are minority youth; 91% are African American, 2% Latino, and 7% Caucasian. Additionally, youth served by The Bridge have trauma-filled home lives that include poverty, transient housing, abuse, neglect, food insecurity, and/or parents battling addiction, mental health issues or other challenges.

Annual Budget <u>\$586,600</u>	<u>5FT/3PT</u> # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
83 % of budget for program expenses	<u>7</u> # of Board Volunteers
<u>14</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>52</u> # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>3</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>1100</u> # of Volunteer Hours
<small>100 % total</small>	

Top 3-5 funding sources: Iron Mountain, Nelson Foundation, W.W. Smith Charitable Trust, Pilgrim Foundation & Connelly 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

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

The idea for The Bridge was planted in 2001 and in early 2003, 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, recreation, social, enrichment and spiritual programs for children from K-12th grade as well as programs, services and resources for local mothers and families. 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 food/grocery donations, 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:

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

We are pleased to report that in our most recent survey of core students, 100% of students said they feel safe and supported at The Bridge, 93% increased confidence and self-esteem, 93% are doing better in school, 82% improved reading, writing or math skills and 64% have set goals for post-secondary education. Additionally, since attending The Bridge, 90% of students have made new friends, 93% are getting in trouble less, 95% say The Bridge helps them avoid sex and drugs, 90% avoid alcohol, 95% avoid skipping/dropping out of school and 93% say they want to be a leader and 95% want to 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 Programs: The Bridge provides after school programming Monday - Thursday. Registration is required and enrollment is capped. Our current schedule is:

- Elementary (K-5th Grade): Monday/Tuesday 4:30 - 6PM
- Secondary (6-12th Grade): Wednesday/Thursday 2:30-4PM

The After School Program includes healthy snacks, homework help, connection with schools/teachers, life skills, creative arts and other special opportunities. 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. During the last two weeks of June, the Bridge partners with the Camp at Old Mill in order to run an extended day camp for Bridge students. Then it transitions to a 5 week program at the Bridge. The program provides breakfast items, and a full lunch daily, academic support and a variety of enrichment, leadership and recreational activities to help keep students safe and positively engaged throughout the summer.

Weeknight Gatherings: Special weeknight programs are provided for different age groups that run an hour and a half for each program. Each night focuses on a different age group and provides food, games, inspirational teaching, and arts & crafts. Currently, Elementary grades attend Monday and Tuesday evening from 6 -7:30PM, Middle School attends Wednesday from 6-7:30PM and High School attends Thursday from 7-9PM. Weeknight gatherings are open to new students and include dinner. Registration is required but enrollment is not capped.

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 (carpentry, art, wood burning, crochet, cooking, equestrian, etc.) have limited capacity and require students to sign up in advance.

Mom's Club: Mom's Club is offered at The Bridge every Wednesday during the school year from 12:30-2PM. 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".

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

Pointman Leadership: The Bridge will be facilitating Pointman Leadership training at Coatesville Area School District (CASD) In partnership with The Parkesburg POINT and Providence Church Coatesville. CASD has asked our organizations to increase their presence on campus and help facilitate this program with their athletes. Pointman Instruction will directly impact CASD school climate and learning loss. Pointman instruction is built on time-tested, universal principles to help you and your management team develop into more dynamic personal leaders. Training focuses on 8 characteristics of a servant leader: Humility, Diligence, Conviction, Optimism, Integrity, Courage, Discipline, and Loyalty.

Specific needs & issues to be addressed

The Bridge respectfully requests a \$5,000 grant to help fund our programs for at-risk youth from the Coatesville Area School District. The Bridge relies on generous support from the community to provide the program 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).

According to the Pennsylvania Youth Survey, youth from the Coatesville area, "Suffer from much higher rates of depression compared with youth in the remainder of Chester County and the state as a whole. In addition, children in the Coatesville Area School District are disproportionately affected by neglect, abuse, delinquency issues, and low graduation rates " (Alliance for Health Equity). These statistics demonstrate the heightened need for programs like The Bridge in Coatesville.

The Bridge is strategically placed in a quadrant of the city that is home to a high risk population of minority youth and families. Approximately 85% of Bridge students come from single parent homes, 95% live in poverty and over 90% are African American. 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). Additionally, most students served by The Bridge have trauma-filled home lives that include poverty, transient housing, abuse, neglect, food insecurity, and/or parents battling addiction, mental health issues or other challenges.

Why it is important to fund this now

The Bridge’s general operating budget for our current fiscal year (April 1, 2022 – March 31, 2023) is \$586,600, a significant increase from \$482,000 in 2021-2022. The pandemic and hurricane Ida brought many challenges for our students and their families. The past 2 years 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 have increased the individualized support we provide to our student’s families (groceries, utility/rental assistance, etc.). We have also made critical expansions within our organization to operate more effectively within our means – this has included expanded programs, increased staffing and we are currently searching for a larger building in the City of Coatesville. 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 students’ attendance, participation and when available, their report cards.

The Bridge’s impact is also demonstrated through students like “L”. L has been coming to The Bridge for years, but this past year we really watched her come out of her shell. L started as a quiet student that generally stayed to herself. She would participate in our programs, but would not talk much. This past year we observed her engage with Art and when she experienced a field trip to the Sight & Sound production of Esther, she lit up. She participated in an essay competition after watching Esther and wrote a very detailed three page narrative. Our staff could see the significant changes in L. Her self-esteem and confidence increased and she started talking and engaging with others, sharing her personal art with the elementary kids and making people laugh. With support from foundations like yours, our hope is to provide ample opportunities for students like L to be creative, express themselves, feel loved and accepted.

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.