

CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

Date 9/15/2022

Contact Information

Organization Name: Brandywine Valley Active Aging
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Year Incorporated: 1977
FEIN: 23-2040210

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Board Chair Name: James J. Terry
Board Chair Approval (check here):
Primary Contact Name: Bill Pierce
Primary Contact E-mail: (above)

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

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

Mission: It is the mission of Brandywine Valley Active Aging to enrich the lives of aging adults living within our community by providing services that enhance the dignity and quality of their lives.

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

While services are open to all, Brandywine Valley Active Aging, through its physical and virtual campuses, primarily serves the municipalities located within and around the Coatesville and Downingtown Area School Districts.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:

BVAA provides programs and services to nearly 3,000 adults who are primarily age 50 and older. These individuals are generally vulnerable due to income, health, and other socio-economic factors.

Annual Budget \$ 1,273,457	<u>13.5</u> # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>76</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>15</u> # of Board Volunteers
<u>12</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>195</u> # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>12</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>4,355</u> # of Volunteer Hours

100 % total

Top 3-5 funding sources: (1) Chester County Department of Aging Services (General Operating) \$235,155; (2) Chester County Department of Aging Services (Congregate Meals) \$275,000; (3) Chester County Dept. of Community Development, \$112,900; (4) United Way of Chester County (General Operating), \$60,000

Is this grant proposal for: Capacity Building or General Operating ?

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: \$5,000

Proposal Summary: General operating funds helps BVAA lay the foundation to solidify their image following a pivotal merger, shape the future of the organization, and advance its mission by expanding on innovative programs. Strategic goals served by general operating funds include (1) return to traditional indoor program service models, (2) maintain new, post-COVID response program models, and expand on Information & Assistance benefits counseling to support vulnerable clients with one-on-one crisis and stabilization counseling.

Brandywine Valley Active Aging

It is the mission of Brandywine Valley Active Aging (BVAA) to enrich the lives of aging adults living within our community by providing services that enhance the dignity and quality of their lives. BVAA seeks funding to support operations and mission aligned expansion following a pivotal merger.

Organization

Brandywine Valley Active Aging builds on a history of more than 40 years of continued service by the former Coatesville Area and Downingtown Area Senior Centers. While services are open to anyone who seeks to improve the quality of their life, regardless of their age, Brandywine Valley Active Aging's programs and services are designed to offer the most value to individuals 50 and greater.

In August 2020, two Chester County senior centers entered discussions to build a partnership that would strengthen the organization and broaden its impact. The Coatesville Area Senior Center—founded in 1977— and the Downingtown Area Senior Center—founded in 1974—merged as Brandywine Valley Active Aging in January 2021. BVAA's programs reflect a new view on aging – one that empowers the people they serve.

Today, BVAA serves the community through its two physical campuses (City of Coatesville and Downingtown Borough) and virtual space. The organization primarily serves the municipalities located within and around the Coatesville and Downingtown Area School Districts.

BVAA provides programs and services to nearly 3,000 adults who are primarily aged 50 and older. These individuals are generally vulnerable due to income, health, and other socio-economic factors. By 2030 it is predicted that 20% of the nation's population will be individuals 65 years of age and older.

Need

Despite the historic growth of the older adult population, many senior centers have faced a static, and in many cases, falling attendance rate. Keeping senior centers relevant has become a top priority for leadership teams at senior centers across the country. In Chester County, with a population approaching 525,000, 16.3% are persons over the age of 65 (nearly 85,000).

Prior to Covid-19, an estimated 10-million older adults received one or more services from senior centers throughout the country. Understandably, the Coronavirus pandemic had resulted in the closure of most senior centers (facilities/indoor [congregate] services) across the nation, the commonwealth, and here in Chester County.

Lastly, Low-income individuals living in the Coatesville and Downingtown region are often set up for failure when they need to access support services or respond to a crisis. Seniors can struggle to navigate complex assistance programs and the onset of a crisis can easily destabilize them. Peer community-based organizations lack resources to step into the fold as reliable resources for ongoing support.

Major catastrophes are significantly more dangerous for these individuals and families. When major disaster strikes, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is limited in its impact. One FEMA case manager maxes their cases at 30 families. By comparison, BVAA managed (at its peak) 75 cases at a time during Hurricane Ida, more than double the FEMA caseload. Case management work is intensive; BVAA works closely with individuals and families through each step of disaster recovery and in conjunction with county, state, and federal resources.

Funding Request

When grantees are asked about the type of foundation support that would be most effective for their agency, general operating support continually tops the list. The lifeblood of any organization, general operating grants provide the working capital nonprofits need to advance their mission. However, research at the Foundation Center shows most foundations (54%) continue to provide less than 10% of their grant awards as unrestricted core support. Significant general operating grants not only open the door for nonprofit leaders to redirect their time and energy to other critical organizational needs

(capacity, effectiveness, planning, and sustainability to name a few), general operating grants afford organizations the opportunity to redefine their image, often addressing unmet community needs.

A general operating investment would lay the footing for Brandywine Valley Active Aging to solidify their image, shape their future, and advance their mission. As demonstrated, there is a clear need for Brandywine Valley Active Aging to continue in its traditional role as an 'activity center.' However, the team at Brandywine Valley Active Aging knows that the face of aging is dramatically changing and now is the time to prepare for a new view on aging.

Specifically, funds will be used to support the following activities:

- Return to traditional indoor program and service models
- Maintaining Covid 19 response program models (maintaining the daily drive-through meal program and the virtual campus) *Note: these new program models are intended to and will become part of the traditional programs offered by BVAA.*
- Continued expansion of the I&A program by growing capacity through the transition to community resource navigators.

Beneficiaries

BVAA will provide programs and services to nearly 3,000 adults who are primarily age 50 and older. These individuals are generally vulnerable due to income, health, and other socio-economic factors. By 2030 it is predicted that 20% of the nation's population will be individuals 65 years of age and older.

While services are open to all, Brandywine Valley Active Aging, through its physical and virtual campuses, primarily serves the municipalities located within and around the Coatesville and Downingtown Area School Districts.

BVAA's Information & Assistance Program (I&A) supports the more vulnerable of our clients who struggle to respond to and stabilize after emergencies (such as natural or human disaster). An estimated 95% of I&A clients live at or below the federal poverty line and are often one crisis away from homelessness and food insecurity. BVAA is in the process of expanding this program to provide more one-on-one case management, an approach that can see a high level of positive outcomes for clients.

Goals

Food Security

Meals: Typically serving 5,000 noon meals to 400 unduplicated individuals monthly, meals, specifically the congregate lunches, are the cornerstone of food security services.

- **Output Goal:** continue to provide at least 4,000 noon meals to 400 unduplicated individuals monthly

Supplemental Nutrition: The priority of high-quality nutrition expands beyond our walls. BVAA collaborates with the Chester County Food Bank on the distribution of more than 10,000 pounds of fresh produce, dairy, and groceries to nearly 150 individuals each month.

- **Output Goal:** provision of supplemental food to at least 500 individuals each month

Supplemental Programs: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP – formerly Food Stamps) provides nutrition benefits to supplement the food budget of income qualifying individuals and families, allowing them to purchase healthy foods, and work towards self-sufficiency.

- **Output Goal:** using various education tools, enroll at least 50 new individuals and households to receive SNAP benefits.

Senior Community Center Services

Physical Health: BVAA continues to provide structured, evidence-based group-exercise programming that has been demonstrated to help older adults improve or maintain their functional fitness or activities of daily living (also called ADLs). Prior to Covid 19, 80% of participants (72 individuals) maintained or improved their functional fitness. Our

physical activity programs help participants improve their physical health, expanding on their ability to meet the demands of daily living. Increased physical activity and engagement in movement classes allows older adults to “age in place,” reducing admissions to acute care and long-term care facilities. BVAA is proud to contract with the Chester County Department of Aging Services to be the county’s provider of county-wide, evidence-based health and wellness programs under Older Americans Act Title III Evidence-Based Programs and Health & Wellness Programs

- **Output Goal:** provision of 750+ hours of free physical activity and wellness classes
- **Output Goal:** 80% of FY23 participants report maintaining or improving their functional fitness
- **Output Goal:** Provide at least 4 evidence-based educational (wellness) classes such as Weight Loss, Pain Management and/or Chronic Disease Self-Management.

Information & Assistance / Community Resource Navigation: Community Resource Navigators (CRNs), work closely with approximately 1,000 older adults and other individuals to provide ongoing case management with the goal to help individuals and families achieve self-sufficiency.

- **Output Goal:** Continue supporting (12) individuals and families who are unhoused because of Hurricane Ida with a stretch-goal to have all rehoused before December 31, 2022.
- **Output Goal:** Continue supporting (35) households with the FEMA home buyout program.
- **Output Goal:** Finalize contract negotiations to provide intensive case management support for individuals who are unhoused or at risk for being unhoused.
- **Output Goal:** Continue to provide individualized support to 1,000 individuals annually and expand the support to include newly identified (eligible) individuals and families impacted by Hurricane Ida.
- **Output Goal:** Host outreach and enrollment events at (4) low-income senior housing facilities to complete applications for programs such as the PA Property Tax and Rent Rebate, LIHEAP, SNAP, etc.

Measuring Success

Once engaged, BVAA tracks client outcomes using Copilot, a contact management system that integrates with SAMS, the state mandated reporting system. Staff uses Copilot to coordinate support internally and externally with peer partner agencies.

The I&A program benefits from centralizing client data in the Chester County Client Information Management System (CCCIMS). CCCIMS also allows staff to minimize any risk of duplication of care, reducing administrative burden internally and for collaborating county agencies. Household income is included in this intake process. The CCCIMS system is helpful in addressing issues around homelessness and impending housing insecurity.

Program metrics are utilized in program delivery and planning formats. Team members meet regularly to discuss clients, challenges, new resources, and case load. During these meetings, the team collaborates to find the best outcomes for each client and improve the collective staff knowledge. Agency collaborations are discussed across the group for improved efficiency. Any issues with data collection, Copilot, or CCCIMS are also discussed.

Diversity, Equity & Inclusion

Over the past five years, BVAA has moved from having the conversation about diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) to implementing new best practices in our work. DEI-centered changes include all levels of the organization—from board and staff recruitment to education and training—to ensure that all guests feel welcome because they are welcome. Both the board and staff have grown in diversity of race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, orientation, education, financial position, and more. The organization’s efforts to build equity have included an internal philosophical approach for reviewing existing compensation packages that reflects our organizational value statement that our compensation packages should seek to protect our employees from becoming our future clients. The first step in adjusting compensation resulted in no employee earning less than \$15 per hour and has grown to ensure that no employee earns less than 1/3 the hourly rate of the highest earning executive. Additionally, all staff are invited and encouraged to participate in a company matched (up to 3% of an employee’s salary) Simple IRA retirement savings plan.