

## GRANT PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

- The Chester County Community Foundation **connects people who care with the causes that matter**, so their philanthropy makes a difference **now & forever**.
- We are **a collection of Field of Interest & Donor Advised Funds** with **\$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**.
- ◇ Nonprofits **budgets** must be **\$500,000 or less**.
- ◇ 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.chescocf.org](http://www.chescocf.org) to apply online for grants from all Community Foundation Funds.
- **Email proposals to [grants@chescocf.org](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.chescocf.org)*

**Date: 8/18/2022**

## **Contact Information**

Organization Name: Mighty Writers

Address: 121 Willow Street, Toughkenamon, PA, 19374

Phone: 484-748-0284

Website: [www.mightywriters.org](http://www.mightywriters.org)

Year Incorporated: 2009

FEIN: 01-0920094

ED/CEO Name: Tim Whitaker

ED/CEO E-mail: [twhitaker@mightywriters.org](mailto:twhitaker@mightywriters.org)

Board Chair Name: Michael Epstein

Board Chair Approval (check here):

Primary Contact Name: Sukripa Shah

Primary Contact E-mail:

[sshah@mightywriters.org](mailto:sshah@mightywriters.org)

## **Organization Information:**

### **Field/s of Interest:**

Arts, Culture & Humanities

Environment/Animal Welfare

Education

Health

Human Services

Religion

### **Mission:**

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

Kennett Square areas, Oxford, and Toughkenamon in Chester County, Pennsylvania.

### **Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:**

Our bilingual site MW Kennett El Futuro, is at 121 Willow St. in Toughkenamon, PA. This site serves immigrants, children and families from the Northern Triangle of Central America, who come primarily as mushroom pickers, working long, hard hours for low pay. Families often lack education and English proficiency. Subsequently, children lack social exposure and opportunities to overcome linguistic challenges. Due to this, many of these kids are at a double disadvantage. They start formalized education below grade level proficiency and have poor self-confidence.

Our demographics are 62% female and 100% Hispanic/Latin(x). All students in our program are from Latin(x) communities facing systemic disparities such as poverty, racism, and substandard education. In the communities, we serve, less than 70% of youth graduate high school, and an average of only 35% of students in each grade band are literacy proficient for their age group.

Each year, MW Kennett El Futuro serves 400-plus children ages 7 to 17 through free, community-based out-of-school-time literacy programs that include Afterschool Academy, Career and College Prep, One-to-One Mentorship, and Mighty Toddlers. From an equity lens, children cannot think clearly and write with clarity when they are hungry. And no kid should go hungry. Therefore, amid covid-led school shutdown and economic downturn, MW started distributing food, books and diapers to low-income families to alleviate learning loss exacerbated by the pandemic. MW's weekly Food and Literacy Distribution in Chester County serves 500-plus underserved families, including immigrants and refugees.

**Annual Budget** \$ \_\_\_\_\_ \$4,136,198 \_\_\_\_\_ 50 \_\_\_\_\_ # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

80 % of budget for program expenses    12 # of Board Volunteers  
8 % of budget for administrative expenses    # of Active Non-Board Volunteers  
12 % of budget for fundraising expenses    350 # of Volunteer Hours  
*100 % total*

**Top 3-5 funding sources:**

Longwood Foundation  
Justamere Foundation  
Fund for Girls and Women in Chester County  
William Penn Foundation  
Sheila Fortune 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:** \$ 7,500

**Proposal Summary:** Mighty Writers respectfully requests \$7,500 in general operating support to teach our free, high-quality, bilingual OST literacy, art, and mindfulness programs to kids ages three to 17 in underserved areas of Chester County. The programs include Afterschool Academy, College and Career Prep, Literary Art workshops, One-to-One Mentorship, and Mighty Toddlers.

Throughout the school year, MW will also provide a range of family-based workshops and activities such as Family Write Night, Family Cook Night, and Mindfulness Family Night to strengthen family relationships and community ties.

Funding will be used immediately to mobilize full, and part-time staff members and workshop leaders to teach culturally responsive literacy and art programs, purchase program supplies, take students on field trips, and manage operational costs of running in-person programming in MW Kennett. The total budgeted cost of this project is \$819,770. We have raised more than 60% in revenue through support from foundations, charities, and individual donations.

With the help of the Chester County Community Foundation, MW will help us achieve the following goals by the end of the 2022-23 academic year,

1. Teach 300-400 kids and youth through our afterschool, literary art, and mentorship programs and reach up to 600 students by the end of 2023.
2. Enroll 10-15 mothers in MW's Toddler program in the first year and increase participation to 20-25 mothers next year.
3. Achieve 20-25 successful 1:1 student-mentor relationships.
4. Increase academic performance across the curriculum (reading, writing, and critical thinking)
5. Improve English proficiency in ESL students.
6. Increase creativity and motivation to write frequently through culturally responsive arts programs.
7. Provide inclusive spaces to explore imagination and practice self-expression

8. Increase commitment and attachment with schools for increased school attendance
9. Develop positive cultural identities, cultural pride, ownership and cultural awareness.
10. Strengthen family relationships

## II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

*Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.*

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

### 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
  
- For capacity building grant proposals:
  - How will this capacity building initiative impact your nonprofit?
  - How will this impact be measured?
  - Include a description of the expected activities; timeline & costs to implement the initiative. If external consulting services are required, include the anticipated costs & expertise of the consultants to be hired. Include external consultant proposals if applicable.

## 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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Please contact Grants Administrator Kevin Baffa at  
(610) 696-8211 [grants@chescocf.org](mailto:grants@chescocf.org) with questions.



*Connecting people who care with causes that matter,  
so their legacies make a difference.*

## WHAT IS CAPACITY BUILDING?

**Capacity building helps bring a nonprofit to the next level of operational, programmatic, financial, or organizational maturity, in order to more effectively & efficiently fulfill its mission.**

Capacity building may include (but is not limited to) projects which address:

- **MISSION, VISION & STRATEGY**  
Organizational Assessment - Strategic Planning - Financial Planning
- **GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP**  
Board Development - Executive Transition/Succession Planning - Leadership Development - Staff Training & Professional Development
- **PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS**  
Coalition Building – Collaboration - Mergers & Acquisitions - Strategic Restructuring
- **RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT & MARKETING**  
Major Gift Donor Identification, Cultivation, Development & Stewardship - Development Campaigns (Annual, Capital, Planned Giving) - Earned Income Development - Social Enterprise Feasibility & Development - Marketing, Branding & Communications
- **TECHNOLOGY & OPERATIONS**  
Business Continuity Planning - Financial Management - Human Resources - Volunteer Management - Industry Certification - Risk Management - Technology Improvements



**MIGHTY  
WRITERS**

**EL FUTURO KENNETT**

**A PROPOSAL TO  
CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**

**MIGHTY WRITERS | EIN: 01-010920922**

**GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT REQUEST FOR MIGHTY  
WRITERS OUT OF SCHOOL TIME BILINGUAL LITERACY  
AND ARTS CURRICULUM**

**August 2022**



Tim Whitaker | Executive Director| [twhitaker@mightywriters.org](mailto:twhitaker@mightywriters.org)  
Contact: Sukripa Shah| Development Associate| [sshah@mightywriters.org](mailto:sshah@mightywriters.org)  
Address: 101 WILLOW ST, TOUGHKENAMOM, PA, 19374 Ph: 267-239-0899

# MIGHTY WRITERS: HISTORY, GOALS, AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Mighty Writers (MW) is the only non-profit in the region that provides free, bilingual, culturally responsive, community-based out-of-school-time (OST) programming to kids ages 3-17 with a mission to "teach kids to think clearly and write with clarity so that they succeed in school, work, and life."

MW opened its first writing studio in South Philadelphia in 2009 at the heart of a historic Muslim African American neighborhood. Between 2013 and 2015, MW expanded in West, North, and South Philadelphia to provide advanced writing programs for kids in the surrounding areas. In the fall of 2019, MW began bilingual programming in Kennett Square, Oxford, and West Grove in Southern Chester County. With initial funding from the Chester County Fund for Women & Girls, we started Girl Power workshops and Family Write Nights. Since then, we have offered a range of afterschool programming, including art, digital literacy, early childhood literacy, and family workshops in partnership with the Youth Garage Center, West Grove Intermediate School, Kennett Area Community Service, La Comunidad Hispana, and West Chester University. In 2022, we launched **MW Kennett (101 Willow St, Toughkenamon, PA)**, our first bilingual site in Chester County, to provide inclusive learning spaces for kids and youth within the community and from public and charter schools.



At MW, we emphasize the "**whole child approach**" to fulfill our mission to enable children to become the next generation of innovative thinkers and writers. When covid-led to the country-wide shutdown of schools, more than 80% of our students were food insecure. We know that kids cannot think or write with clarity when they are hungry. Therefore, to ensure that our kids continue to focus on their learning, MW launched a Food and Literacy Distribution Program to provide necessities, namely food, books, and household essentials (diapers, cleaning supplies) in the most impacted areas.

Over the years, we have been recognized for our award-winning free writing programs for youth garnering recognition in the press (The New York Times, New Yorker, Philadelphia Inquirer) and corporate and federal organizations. In 2014, MW was chosen by the President's Committee on the Arts and Humanities as one of the country's 50 top arts and humanities-based programs. Most recently, in 2020, we were honored by the Library of Congress as a Best Practice Honoree. Today, MW has eight writing centers, a budget of \$4 million, 3,500 students, 350 volunteers, and 50 staff members. MW is now a movement!



## MIGHTY NEED AND PROGRAMS

In Chester County, more than 90% of the students in our programs are students of color facing systemic disparities such as poverty, racism, and substandard education. They come from immigrant communities that subsist on an average annual household income of \$22,000 or less. Research shows that students living in sustained poverty perform lower in schools, have high exposure to truancy/delinquency, and drop out of school at faster rates—widening the opportunity gap. Poverty is a major impediment to students' academic achievements. More than 10,250 students in Chester County live in poverty. Nearly half of them live in what's considered "deep poverty" - a family of four subsisting on an annual household income of \$11,775 (Chester County Press).



Demographically, **100% of our students in our programs are from Hispanic/Latin(x) communities.** In our bilingual communities, less than 70% of youth graduate high school, and an average of only 35% of students in each grade band are literacy proficient for their age group. Additionally, more than 65% of Latino males do not complete high school in our service areas. Half of these boys find themselves within the criminal justice system two years after dropping out.

Most of our students are immigrants from Central and Latin American countries such as Guatemala, Mexico, Venezuela, and Puerto Rico. Their families often lack education and English proficiency. They undergo acculturation stress of learning and adapting to a new culture. Though English proficiency is one of the many outcomes of acculturation, it comes with added physical, social, and mental pressures. The gradual loss of cultural identity has been seen as a challenge from which many of our bilingual kids cannot seem to emerge, resulting in poor academic performance, increased high school dropouts, and reduced participation in school/social activities.



MW respectfully requests **\$7,500 in GOS to teach our bilingual curriculum and facilitate our Food and Literacy Distribution** that addresses urgent challenges and risk factors that our Hispanic students face such as low grade-level literacy proficiency, food insecurity, increased stress, lack of English proficiency, and lack of positive cultural identity. Our OST programs include the afterschool academy, early childhood literacy, mentorships, art, and cultural and family-based activities. Instruction is provided in Spanish and English. Our "**Spanglish**" curriculum allows students to take pride in their Spanish language and heritage while improving English and increasing literacy to succeed in and outside of school. Please find the program description below,

- **Afterschool bilingual academy:** Provides afterschool bilingual writing units to elementary and middle school students (grades 1-8) with 25 writing units daily Mon-Thurs from 3.30-5.30 pm.
- **College and Career Prep:** Programs focus on critical thinking, persuasive writing skills, and applied competencies such as resume writing and SAT preparation.
- **Literary art workshops:** Provides weekly writing integrated art workshops to students in grades 1-8 throughout the school year. Workshops deepen cultural awareness and foster positive cultural identities for children's improved academics and socio-emotional well-being. Workshops are eight to 12 sessions and hour-long with varying topics (art, playwriting, sports)
- **One-to-One Mentorship:** Matches adult volunteers in a one-on-one, supportive, writing-based relationship with a Mighty Writers participant in grades 4-12. Student-mentor pair must meet for 60-90 minutes one evening a week for at least six months.
- **Early Childhood Literacy program: *Mighty Mommy and Me Workshop:*** Provides 5-7 mothers and their toddler(s) with one hour workshop to learn basic English language skills. They practice alphabets and learn nursery rhymes, songs, and fairy tales. Each mother receives a bilingual book, which the MW instructor will read along with the mother. The instructor will ask questions and teach mothers to read aloud to their toddlers.
- **Food and Literacy Distribution Program:** Provides fresh, nutritious, and culturally responsive food and groceries such as beans, rice, tortillas, vegetables, meat, eggs and milk. Books and bilingual learning materials are distributed. We also hand our household essentials to families struggling to pay for diapers, female hygiene products and cleaning wipes.



Throughout the school year, MW will also provide fun and educational activities for students and families such as **Family Write Night, Family Cook Night, and Family Mindfulness Night**. We will take students on field trips to museums, art centers, and cultural sites for immersive learning experiences.

## MIGHTY GOALS AND OUTCOMES

**With the funding, MW anticipates achieving the following goals,**

- Teach 400-500 kids and youth through our afterschool, literary art, and mentorship programs and reach up to 600 students by the end of 2023.
- Serve 25,000 low-income families via Food and Literacy Distribution Program.
- Improve English proficiency in ESL students.
- Increase creativity and motivation to write frequently.
- Provide inclusive spaces to explore imagination and practice self-expression
- Increase commitment and attachment with schools for increased school attendance
- Develop positive cultural identities and cultural awareness.

MW collects qualitative and quantitative data to track the growth and quality of our programs. We additionally use a customized Salesforce platform to monitor and track registration for workshops and food distribution programs. We continue to use qualitative data such as surveys and participant feedback to improve our offerings. We survey parents, youth, and volunteers before and after participation in programs. Surveys measure each student's interest, motivation for writing, and parental satisfaction.

Program data collected will be synthesized into an end-of-year report by the Education Director. MW aims for programs to be participant-centered and will use survey results to improve the program's efficacy for the following year. MW's curriculum aligns with PA Core Standards for ELA (PreK-12) and Pennsylvania Career Ready Skills Continuum, including Social and Emotional Learning.

**The anticipated survey outcomes for the 2022-23 academic year are as follows,**

- 65% of students (grades 2-8) will demonstrate growth in English proficiency.
- 79% of the parents will say that they saw "a great deal of improvement" or "steady improvement" in their children's writing ability over the school year.
- 75% of parents will believe that MW helped their children's grades in school.
- 90% of parents will indicate they would re-enroll their child.
- 80% of the students will achieve satisfactory attendance and decreased school suspensions in their schools.
- 75% of high school seniors will graduate and 67% of high-school students will enroll in college
- 64% of students will draft their college essays and overcome writing challenges.
- 73% of the students will say that their mentor helped them achieve their primary goal (writing/reading goal)
- 80% of the families will attend and find the Mommy and Me workshop very helpful.

