

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: 9/15/2023

Contact Information

Organization Name: **Veterans Multi-Service Center**
Address: **213-217 N 4th Street**
Phone: **215-923-2600**
Website: **www.vmcenter.org**
Year Incorporated: **1980**
FEIN: **23-2764079**

ED/CEO Name: **Joe Brooks**
ED/CEO E-mail: **Joe.Brooks@vmcenter.org**
Board Chair Name: **Stephen Ramsey**
Board Chair Approval (check here): **X**
Primary Contact Name: **Ian Williamson**
Primary Contact E-mail:
Ian.Williamson@vmcenter.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

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

Mission: The mission of the Veterans Multi-Service Center is to provide services, programs, opportunity and advancement to Veterans of the U.S. military and their families.

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): Chester County, Philadelphia, Montgomery County, Bucks County, Delaware County, Central PA, Southern New Jersey, and Delaware.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served: U.S. Military Veterans and their families; @3000 annually.

Annual Budget \$16,380,658	144 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
89% of budget for program expenses	13 # of Board Volunteers
9% of budget for administrative expenses	15 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
2% of budget for fundraising expenses	X # of Volunteer Hours
<small>100 % total</small>	

Top 3-5 funding sources: U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs; U.S. Department of Labor; PA Department of Military and Veterans Affairs (ALL RESTRICTED PROGRAM FUNDS); PNC Foundation; Patriot Fund.

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 Veterans Multi-Service Center (VMC) was founded in 1980 by Philadelphia area Vietnam Veterans as the Philadelphia Veterans Multi-Service and Education Center (PVMSEC). Since then, VMC's innovative programs have grown to serve over 3,000 Veterans and families annually throughout Eastern and Central Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. The Veterans Multi-Service Center's sole purpose is to "serve those who served", and the organization's vision is to continually recognize, address and advocate for the evolving needs of U.S military Veterans and their families with an unwavering commitment to service through dignified and individualized assistance and support.

VMC is the only non-profit agency in Philadelphia and the tri-state area that provides a comprehensive resource center available to all Veterans in need. VMC works closely with the veteran community, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, other Veteran focused service organizations and state and local veteran agencies to identify and address critical needs within the community and provide the most effective, comprehensive assistance to greatly improve the lives of Veterans across the region. VMC serves Veterans in Philadelphia, **Chester County**, Delaware County, Montgomery County, Bucks County, Central Pennsylvania, Southern New Jersey, and Delaware.

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Critical Veteran Issues

VMC works tirelessly to improve the lives of all Veterans in need, addressing the most pressing issues that affect the Veteran population.

- **Homelessness** - Historically, national policy failures have meant that Veterans are more likely to experience homelessness. In 2022, 21 out of every 10,000 veterans were homeless. This number is only slightly higher than the overall homeless rate of 17 out of every 10,000 Americans. VMC continues to explore effective and comprehensive ways to offer services to this growing group and their unique needs. VMC is committed to moving forward, providing a safe and caring environment and stable housing for our Veterans, as well as providing benefit support, addiction services, suicide prevention programs, food security and other critical services.
- **Substance Abuse** - More than one in ten Veterans have been diagnosed with a substance use disorder, slightly higher than the general population. One study found that the overall prevalence of substance use disorders (SUDs) among male Veterans was lower than rates among their civilian counterparts when all ages were examined together. However, when looking at the pattern for only male Veterans aged 18–25 years, the rates were higher in Veterans compared with civilians. The Veteran population is also greatly impacted by several critical issues related to substance use, such as pain, suicide risk, trauma, and homelessness. Many Veterans suffering from addiction have co-occurring Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Once referred to as "shellshock," and later "battle fatigue," PTSD can be caused by witnessing warfare or other significantly tragic or startling events. It is reported that more than 20% of Veterans suffering from PTSD also suffer from a dependence to drugs and/or alcohol. Although most cases of PTSD are a result of combat, Veterans may also develop the disorder after sexual abuse – about 23% of women Veterans have reported being sexually assaulted during their time in the military.
- **Suicide** - The U.S Department of Veterans Affairs released its 2022 National Veteran Suicide Prevention Annual Report in September. The publication analyzed suicide rates among U.S. adults and veterans between 2001–2020. According to the data, there were 6,000 or more veteran suicides per year during that period. In 2020, the suicide rate was reportedly 57.3% higher than that of non-veteran adults. America's Warrior Partnership (AWP) recently released a striking report concluding that the veteran suicide rate is over two times greater than the Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) estimates. According to AWP's findings, 22-24 veterans ages

18-64 commit suicide each day and 18-20 veterans in the same age group die per day by self-injury. Combined, this points to at least 40-44 veterans taking their lives every day.

VMC Organization

The Veterans Multi-Service Center is primarily organized around three departments, Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF), Residential Services, and Veteran Homeless Services. SSVF is a U.S Department of Veteran Affairs (VA) sponsored rapid rehousing program targeting situationally homeless Veterans. Residential Services (125 beds) provides transitional housing offering two models of care; clinical services and service intensive transitional housing.

VMC's Homeless Services division provides three Housing and Urban Development permanent supportive housing programs and a rapid rehousing program which comprise 65 units of scattered site housing; a 66-unit low-income housing facility (Edison 64 Veterans Community), and a VA sponsored Day Service Center (The Perimeter) for homeless Veterans at VMC's headquarters in Philadelphia. Additionally, the VMC offers Veteran Service Officer counseling (which aids Veterans with benefits and pension issues), a Women Veterans Center and job counseling and job placement. Transportation is provided to and from shelters, The Perimeter, and the Philadelphia VA Medical Center so Veterans can attend primary care and mental health appointments at the Medical Center. Veterans can, on a case-by-case basis, utilize VMC's transportation to access other related services and appointments.

VMC Services for Veterans

In 2022 VMC saw over 10,000 visits to the "Perimeter" where VMC provided meals, clothing, shower facilities, counseling, and connections to services for Veterans in need. In addition, all first-time clients are assessed for mental health needs by Perimeter and VA staff. Ongoing clients are continually assessed by staff and appropriate services are provided by VA Behavioral Health, Community Providers, in-house mental health staff and interns, the Addiction Recovery Unit at the VA and partnering Veteran centers. Additionally, in 2022, VMC housed 1,190 Veterans and family members across its footprint, provided services to 3,697 Veterans overall and restored a total of \$1,070,648 in earned benefits to Veterans. VMC served over 180,000 meals to Veterans and their families. A further description of VMC services include:

- Supportive Services for Veteran Families (SSVF) and Housing and Urban Development Programs (HUD); and VMC, as a Veteran Service Organization (through VMC's Veteran Service Officers), assisted over 350 Veterans with pensions and other services.
- "The Perimeter" – VMC provides a day service center for Veterans who are homeless and in shelters in Philadelphia. The Perimeter provides immediate needs such as: food, clothing, haircuts, and laundry and shower facilities to Veterans.
- Edison 64 Veterans Community – 63 Veterans permanently housed in the old Thomas Edison High School in Philadelphia. Edison High School lost more young men in the Vietnam War than any other school in the United States.
- New Day Opioid Response Team – VMC provided treatment and recovery support to 1,150 Veterans battling addiction in 2022.
- Staff Sergeant Parker Fox Suicide Prevention Program - Since the program launch in 2022, VMC has served a total of 99 Veterans; screened a total of 95 Veterans at risk of suicide, referred 15 at high risk to Crisis Treatment and 27 Veterans to Low to moderate risk treatments. Veterans accessed individual support services 242 times.
- Women Veterans Program – VMC offers programs to fit the needs of Women Veterans.

VMC Chester County

The Chester County Department of Community Development (DCD) released its 2023 Point-In-Time (PIT) count in July 2023, which reported that 436 people were experiencing homelessness in Chester County on January 25, 2023. This number represents an eight percent increase in homelessness from 2022 when the PIT count was reported at 402. Of those 436 reported homeless, 35% (141 individuals) were reported as Veterans.

VMC offers services and assistance to Veterans in Chester County through its office located at 797 E. Lancaster Avenue, Suite 12 in Downingtown, PA. Since September 2022, the Chester County VMC office has provided housing or housing support, legal aid, and employment assistance to 65 Veterans residing in Chester County. In addition, Chester County VMC aided Veterans in accessing benefits owed to them through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Between September 2022 and September 2023, VMC assisted Veterans residing in Chester County in accessing over \$1.4 million in owed VA benefits for their service.

Measuring Success

Success is measured by how many women veterans the program reaches, and the meaningful outcomes that result from the services provided. As a client-centered program evaluation is ongoing, and a critical component of improving services. The Women Veterans Program will track attendance, client satisfaction and event participation. During the pandemic, client satisfaction with accessing basic services was primarily the evaluation method. The WVP staff will also utilize surveys and continually monitor feedback. This allows the Women Veterans Programming to determine what services are best.

Representing the Veteran Community and Inclusion

Over the past 42 years, VMC has partnered and worked closely with the Veteran community to understand their unique needs. VMC's innovative programs have grown to serve veterans and families throughout Eastern and Central Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware. VMC has close to 60 staff members who are Veterans, working in every department from outreach to program administration. These Veteran staff members bring unique perspectives to the Veteran community and help VMC reflect and honor the community it serves.

The Veterans Multi-Service Center collaborates with many nonprofit and government agencies to ensure a successful path for Veterans in need. Partners include (or have included) Project HOME, Philadelphia Veteran Comfort House, Impact Services, Homeless Advocacy Project, Philadelphia Housing Authority, Pathways to Housing, City of Philadelphia's Department of Behavioral Health and Office of Supportive Housing, US Department of Veterans Affairs, US Department of Housing & Urban Development, Patriot House, Catch, the Pennsylvania Department of Military and Veteran Affairs, Heroic Gardens. VMC collaborates with local Chambers of Commerce and employment agencies across its footprint throughout Central and Eastern Pennsylvania, Southern New Jersey, and Delaware to secure long term meaningful employment for Veterans.

One of the largest providers of services to Veterans and families along the East Coast, VMC serves as the focal point for veteran programming in the region and the primary intake for homeless or at-risk Veterans in Philadelphia, VMC is an effective and qualified organization for aiding Veterans in navigating the ever-growing complex service system and VA community. VMC strives to integrate separate stand-alone programs into a comprehensive system aimed at achieving sustainable, meaningful outcomes.