

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: West Chester Dance Works

Address: 315 Westtown Rd, Ste 9, West Chester, PA 19382

Phone: 610-692-3398

Website: westchesterdanceworks.org, dianematthewsdance.com

Year Incorporated: 2002

FEIN: 30-0080438

ED/CEO Name: Diane Matthews

ED/CEO E-mail: director@wcdw.org

Board Chair Name: Donna Hymes

Board Chair Approval (check here): x

Primary Contact Name: Diane Matthews

Primary Contact E-mail: director@wcdw.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):

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:

Annual Budget \$ 291681

2 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

43 % of budget for program expenses

7 # of Board Volunteers

56 % of budget for administrative expenses

15 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers

1 % of budget for fundraising expenses

45 # of Volunteer Hours

100 % total

Top 3-5 funding sources: Program fees, Events, Concerts, Contributions

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: West Chester Dance Works (WCDW) is reaching out to you with hope and continued gratitude for your ongoing contributions to non-profits in the Chester County area. Please consider us as a candidate to receive \$5,000 in funding through a Capacity Building Grant as we enter our 42nd year with a commitment to grow during a time of exciting change for our organization. For the last twenty years, The Diane Matthews School of Dance Arts and West Chester Dance Works have

operated as two distinct businesses: a limited liability company and a 501(c)3 charitable nonprofit. A new chapter began last season, where our dance school officially operated as the school of WCDW. The organization's mission is now reaching a growing student body of dancers, 150 students and counting. Uniting the two organizations and bringing all operations under one umbrella has allowed us to dramatically increase our scope. To continue building our capacity this season, we plan to:

- Pay our increasing staff competitively and support the additional classes being offered through our school
- Execute a revised marketing strategy to increase company exposure and brand recognition post-merger
- Increase inventory of supplies to support and sustain our growing student body
- Expose elementary-aged students of the Philadelphia-based William D. Kelley Public School to our "Relevate Youth" program

Supporting our school in residence and extending our reach, particularly to underserved youth, are the initiatives that will take our organization to the next level of fulfilling its mission.



Diane Matthews, Executive Director

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Chester County Community Foundation,

West Chester Dance Works (WCDW) is reaching out to you with hope and continued gratitude for your ongoing contributions to non-profits in the Chester County area. Please consider us as a candidate to receive \$5,000 in funding through a Capacity Building Grant as we enter our 42nd year with a commitment to grow during a time of exciting change for our organization.

WCDW is a 501(c)3 nonprofit entity entrusted to provide opportunities for the discovery and development of intergenerational dancers and the pursuit of excellence while giving back to reach, teach, and enrich the artistic experience of our community. Since the company's inception in 1983, WCDW has been a minority-run business operating with a diverse leadership team that has provided opportunities for people of all ages, abilities, means, and backgrounds to receive exposure to the many benefits of dance.

WCDW works to: increase healthy lifestyles through physical activity and education, create a link between artistic expression and advocacy (particularly for underserved youth), help improve self-esteem and peer-to-peer support, and hone leadership skills with a focus on team-building. Our five performing companies bring artistic enrichment to schools, hospitals, senior facilities/nursing homes, festivals, and a variety of other venues where people may not otherwise have the opportunity to experience dance.

A recent highlight and huge accomplishment, was embarking on last season's capital campaign to repair dance studio floors and upgrade 23-year-old fading, fluorescent lighting. Through the efforts and teamwork of the board, members, fundraising team, and our community, we were able to reach our goal raising over \$26,000 and getting the needed repairs completed by the projected date of May 1, 2023.

For the last twenty years, The Diane Matthews School of Dance Arts and West Chester Dance Works have operated as two distinct businesses: a limited liability company and a 501(c)3 charitable nonprofit. The heart of the original vision was never lost, but shifting to two distinctly unique operations certainly doubled efforts and organizational functions. However, it was when our local community had difficulty distinguishing one operation from the other- "Diane Matthews Dance Works" for example, that we knew it may be time for a big change and a formal return to our roots.

A new chapter began last season, where our dance school officially operated as the school of WCDW. The organization's mission is now reaching a growing student body of dancers, 150 students and counting, many of whom have their sights set on joining our performing companies where they can engage in all the outreach we have to offer. Uniting the two organizations and bringing all operations under one umbrella has allowed us to dramatically increase our scope.

To support our growing capacity, particularly our school in residence, we plan to:



Diane Matthews, Executive Director

- **Pay our increasing staff competitively and support the additional classes being offered through our school**

We have hired five new staff members in addition to the already eight instructors we acquired from the Diane Matthews School of Dance Arts. Two new instructors were students who graduated from the school and are starting their teaching journeys giving back to WCDW. Each will be teaching two classes per week at a rate of \$25 per class. We have hired a doctoral candidate with extensive affiliations who will be teaching three classes per week at a rate of \$55 per class. We have also hired an instructor who was a touring professional and is currently enrolled in a Dance Movement Therapy program, who will be teaching two classes per week at a rate of \$55 per class. A new administrative assistant joins us as well for 10 hours per week at a rate of \$16 per hour. Contracts begin in September and end in June, with all staff members starting this September. In an effort to bring rates up to market rates, we have increased salaries about 10% this year.

Growing our talented staff will allow for more classes to be offered weekly in a variety of genres. Success will be measured primarily in student enrollment, as well as mid-year and year-end surveys gauging family's satisfaction of the teachers, classes, and styles offered. Teacher evaluations with the executive and artistic directors will also take place twice a year.

- **Execute a revised marketing strategy to increase company exposure and brand recognition post-merger (please see marketing schedule attached)**

WCDW will connect with the community biweekly via a mix of formats including brochures, posters, postcards, print ads, and digital posts. With a focus on expanding our social media presence including Facebook ads and biweekly posts, the social media budget is \$60 per week x 15 weeks totaling \$900/year. Web ads are projected at \$600/year and program ads at \$300/year. This more concentrated strategy comes at a time where the united brand needs to be made clear and recognizable.

Success will be measured in provided metric tracking including engagement rate, amplification rate, conversion rate, and overall reach. People who we make contact with, whether through registering, concerts/events, etc., will be asked "How you heard about us."

- **Increase inventory of supplies to support and sustain our growing student body**

To support the Diane Matthews School of Dance Arts in residence at WCDW, we need to ensure that we have a sufficient inventory of supplies including leotards, tights, dance shoes, company t-shirts, leggings, and all required supplies for dancers. We plan to upgrade stock with newer styles and have two of every size available, augmenting what we already have. An order will be placed at the start of the season and again pre-recital. The budget is \$1500 for the full round of supplies ordered in September, and \$750 for the pre-recital re-stocking in April.

Success will be measured by tracking sell-through rate, days/weeks on hand, stock-to-sales ratio, and other key performance indicators.



Diane Matthews, Executive Director

- **Expose elementary-aged students of the Philadelphia-based William D. Kelley Public School to our “Relevate Youth” program**

In partnership with local schools and community organizations, WCDW’s “Relevate Youth” program seeks to address barriers in youth development while affirming and building feelings of self-worth through interactive dance programs. What does it mean to “Relevate?” In ballet, the term “relevé,” literally meaning “lifted,” refers to rising up on one’s toes. Similarly, “elevate” means to raise something to a higher level or position. By “relevating” our youth in collaboration with community partners, WCDW promises to work together to help overcome the obtrusive barriers to healthy and productive lifestyles that are threatening today’s youth.

Using the powerful communicative components of dance and the physicality of the dancers as the conversation starter, students will be engaged observing the artistic expression of issues they are challenged with today, such as poor self-image, lack of confidence, feeling voiceless or isolated, being afraid. Everyone is given a voice to continue the exchange of ideas via movement and a culminating reflection. Results of this program will include having students recognize they are not alone in their feelings and insecurities, and that through support and encouragement, they can be empowered to live more confident and productive lives.

A new collaborator who is the dance coordinator at the William D. Kelley Public School in Philadelphia is facilitating an effort where 15 students from the elementary school will be bused to our studio in West Chester to participate in our “Relevate Youth” program. Where opportunities for artistic enrichment are limited to undeserved, inner-city youth, this outreach program will expose them to the many benefits of dance. Students will dance for 1.5 hours every Saturday starting mid-January through mid-June, and be featured at our year-end recital. Two instructors will be hired at \$50 per session. There will be \$100 materials budget (props, music downloads), \$50 per student costume budget, rental space usage at \$60 per 1.5 class weekly, and transportation costs at \$220 each Saturday (quote per Bargain Car, Truck & Van Rentals of Broomall, PA).

We are able to determine the impact of this collaboration through the response and enthusiasm of participants and their families in addition to surveys. We also have an activity debriefing with staff post every “Relevate Youth” engagement.

We appreciate your continued support of West Chester Dance Works, especially as we grow our capacity during this time of exciting change. If you require any further information, please call us at (610) 692-3398.

Thank you,

Diane Matthews
West Chester Dance Works
315 Westtown Rd, Ste 9
West Chester, PA 19382