

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 9/13)

- ◇ 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 grants is to **strengthen the effectiveness of NPO's serving the region**, see page 4 for more details on the areas including:
 - Mission, Vision & Strategy
 - Governance & Leadership
 - Partnerships & Collaborations
 - Operations & Technology
 - Fundraising, Development & Marketing
- ◇ Proposals submitted between **July 1 - Sept. 13** are eligible for consideration.
- ◇ Grant **awards** typically range from **\$500-\$5,000**, with monies distributed by **February**.

- Use this form @ www.chescocf.org to apply online for grants from all Community Foundation Funds.
- **Email proposals to 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 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

Date

Contact Information

Organization Name: Dr. Raymond A. Fischer
Address: 125 Bell Tower Lane
Phone: (717) 947-0075
Website: www.oxfordeducationalfoundation.org
Year Incorporated: 1994
FEIN: 23-2774066

ED/CEO Name: Dr. Raymond A. Fischer
Email: rfischer@oxfordeducationalfoundation.org
Board Chair Name: Steve Roberts
Board Chair Approval (check here):
Primary Contact Name: Dr. Ray A. Fischer
Primary Contact E-mail: same as above

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

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

Mission: The mission of the Oxford Educational Foundation is to enhance the quality of education in the Oxford Area School District (six public schools) by providing a mentoring, tutoring and classroom volunteer program for the students. The Foundation also supports professional grants for the faculty that encourage the development of innovative programs but do not replace instructional materials supplied by the school district.

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): The Oxford Educational Foundation serves students in the six Oxford Area School District's schools in southern Chester County.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served: The Oxford Educational Foundation with approximately 110 volunteers serves approximately 600 students (22-23) in the Oxford Area School District in a mentoring, tutoring and classroom volunteer program. In addition, the OEF provides competitive professional grants for faculty that will fund innovative programs. In 2022-23 sixteen faculty members received professional grants that ranged between \$250 and \$1500. The impact of these grants affected approximately 4,212 students.

Annual Budget \$ 217,431

74% of budget for program expenses
22 % of budget for administrative expenses
4% of budget for fundraising expenses

100 % total

1 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
15 # of Board Volunteers
110# of Active Non-Board Volunteers
3265 # of Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources: Oxford Area Foundation, Gene and Louise Rahll donation, CCRES, donations from OEF constituents and Oxford Area Civic Association

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: \$7500

Proposal Summary: . The grant request is fund the operations of the volunteer program which would include mentoring, tutoring and classroom volunteering. Program expenses would include telephone, postage, Randy Sebastian Volunteer of the Year Award Breakfast, mentor, tutor and student picnic, program marketing (brochures, website, facebook, twitter), payment of clearances, training of OEF volunteers and training manuals and pro ration of the Volunteer Coordinator's salary.

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.

CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION FIELD OF INTEREST & DONOR ADVISED FUND GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Oxford Educational Foundation Organizational History

The Oxford Educational Foundation (OEF) is a private non-profit community organization founded approximately 29 years ago for the purpose of assisting the Oxford Area School District. The OASD, with almost 4,000 students, is located in southeast Pennsylvania within commuting distance of cities such as Philadelphia, Baltimore, Lancaster, Wilmington and Newark. As a result, this quiet, rural region with a diverse population continues to grow.

The mission of the OEF is to enhance the quality of education in the Oxford Area School District. By generating financial support to maximize the use of community volunteers/mentors in the schools and by providing professional grants to staff for innovative programs, the OEF strives to contribute to the success of Oxford students.

The OEF came to life in October of 1994 after a year of diligent work spearheaded by John Pittenger, then a resident of West Nottingham Township and former Secretary of Education for the Commonwealth of PA. Well connected to important political and legal networks, "Pitt", as he was known to his friends, knew how to get things done.

The seed that germinated into the OEF was planted a year earlier at a Hershey, PA educational leadership conference hosted by the PA Association of School Administrators (PASA) and the PA School Boards Association (PSBA). Richard Winchester, then a school board member of the Oxford Area School District and Vice President for Academic Affairs at Lincoln University, attended these mid-week sessions.

The workshop that caught Winchester's special attention was entitled "Making an Education Foundation Work for You" – the ABC's of how to begin and operate an educational foundation in your school district. Presented by Dr. Margaret Kuypers and George Plosa, administrators in the Hatboro-Horsham School District, this seminar covered most of the nuts and bolts.

The presenters described the origins of the public school foundation movement in places like Wisconsin and Minnesota, and explained the many ways non-profit foundations could generate support for the schools. They could, of course, attract money for special purposes, but they could also recruit parents, alumni, and retired citizens as mentors, tutors and role models, especially for children at risk.

These themes resonated with Winchester. The father of two daughters who graduated from Oxford in 1983 and 1984, he was also an educator at Lincoln University and anxious to improve the educational pipeline. Fired up by this experience at Hershey, Winchester returned to Oxford and looked for allies who might help with the birthing process.

Colleagues on the school board, Nancy Andress, Bob Domzalski and Phil Leyman were early recruits. Oxford alumni and community activists, people like James Gordon, Kathy Elters, Pam Donnelly, Etha McDowell, Rowena Jenkins, and Denise Fritsch, also signed on. Together with Pitt, Winchester and Charles Lewis, the business administrator of the Oxford Area School District, these were the people who formed the "steering committee" for the OEF.

Meeting regularly from late fall 1993 through the summer of 1994, this group, under the leadership of Pitt, found others in the community to help with the labor. School superintendent Robert Meckes, assistant superintendent, Ray Fischer, former school board member Steve Roberts, and alumni Jim McLeod and Jim Herr were among them. Perhaps most importantly, Pitt persuaded Randy Sebastian, an Oxford alumnus who Pitt mentored during his high school years and steered into Harvard Law School, to lend his professional talent pro bono.

A partner in the firm MacElree, Harvey, Gallagher, Featherman and Sebastian, Randy guided the steering committee through the maze of paperwork. Between January and September 1994, OEF By-Laws, Mission Statement, Articles of Incorporation, PA Charter as a Non-Profit Corporation, IRS 501.c.3 status, and membership application were all approved. Finally, in October 1994, the steering committee went out of existence and the first annual meeting of the OEF membership elected its first Board of Directors.

The first directors elected to three-year terms were Jim Herr, Jim McLeod and John Pittenger, for two-year terms—Kathy Elters, Robert Strong, Pam Donnelly and for a one-year term Vanessa Phipps, Randy Sebastian, and Dick Winchester. These nine in the incoming weeks would appoint another six directors as stipulated by the By-Laws. Among these were Carrie Ellen Underwood, an Oxford senior. After her graduation in June 1995, she was replaced by Nile Alford, a rising junior. The other appointed directors were: Denise Fritsch, Carl Fretz, Ray Fischer, Rowena Jenkins and John H. Ware IV.

In January 1995, the Board of Directors, now at a full complement of 15, elected officers John Pittenger, President, Jim McLeod, Vice President, Denise Fritsch, Secretary and Charles Lewis was appointed as Treasurer. A generous contribution

from the Oxford Area Educational Association and a gift from John and Marion Ware established a financial foundation for the fledgling OEF.

In its first three years, with John Pittenger as President, the Foundation formed its board committee structure, hired a Volunteer Coordinator to recruit volunteers and mentors in the schools, purchased a satellite dish for use by the schools, assisted the High School in its organization of a Career Day, attended alumni reunions, and provided an OASD and OEF bi-annual joint publication of the Oxford School News.

As the year 2012 began, the Oxford Educational Foundation was the recipient of an anonymous \$1 million gift. The gift would assist the school district in expanding its educational mission and strategic plan over the next five years. It would be used to increase technology use, update curriculum resources, provide professional development for staff, replace equipment in the music department, sponsor summer art and music academies and to refurbish each school media center with books, e-books, etc. The donors expressed great enthusiasm in being able to support the important work being done in the Oxford Schools, as well as great confidence in the leadership and staff of the OEF and the OASD to successfully implement the initiatives undertaken by this donation.

In December 2012, the OEF initiated a self-assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses of the Foundation, as well as to focus on any needs. After several months, it was concluded that an Executive Director would be able to address those needs, strengthen the organization and help provide more support to the Oxford Area School District. The Board voted unanimously to appoint to this position Dr. Ray Fischer, recently retired Superintendent of Schools and charter member of the OEF.

Recently, the OEF Board of Directors began looking for new ways to support the efforts of the school district. They are currently working to expand a list of experts who can enhance education by volunteering to be guest speakers or e-mail pen pals. Entitled "OEF CAREs" (OEF Community Adults as Resources for Education) the program allows connections to be made between careers and classrooms, which in turn will expand students' thinking beyond its four walls.

The current members of the OEF Board of Directors bring backgrounds rich in engineering, business, farming, banking and education, all of which help to meet the goals of the OEF. Investing in education is a vital part of the community

Goals of the OEF according to its Strategic Plan

Focus Area #1 Increase Awareness **Goal:** Increase awareness by creating and compelling message that is delivered through diverse strategies to a community wide audience.

Focus Area #2 Increase Revenue **Goal:** Build a sustainable, diverse revenue stream in a proactive manner.

Focus Area #3 Increase Volunteerism in the OASD. **Goal:** Increase volunteer participation and utilize their talents in support of the Foundation's mission.

Focus Area #4 increase board participation. **Goal:** Develop an active and engaged board whose members are diverse across geography, ethnicity, and age along with a leadership component to cultivate a "waiting list" of potential new board members.

Key Achievements

With a strong foundation the OEF continues to build on its key achievements/accomplishments over the past 29 years by:

- Creating an Oxford Alumni data base
- Providing an Annual Report and Newsletters
- Setting up an Endowment Fund (to date, totals are over approximately \$800,000)
- Entered a relationship with the Chester County Community Foundation for training and to house about half of our Endowment funds.
- Providing teacher professional grants (since 2001, supporting innovation in the classroom with over \$306,000 in grants to professional staff)
- Strengthening mentor/tutor/volunteer program by providing over 100 volunteers
- Instituted an annual building grant to an OASD school(s) in memory of John C. Pittenger, first OEF President 1994-97
- Establishing the Randy Sebastian Volunteer Person of the Year Award in memory of Randy Sebastian
- Organizing an annual Oxford Area Education Association and Oxford Educational Foundation Breakfast (RSVP Award is awarded at this event)
- Creating an Oxford Educational Foundation website, Facebook page and (X) twitter account
- Received PA Tax Exempt status in March 2017. Renewed in 2021
- Being recognized as an Educational Improvement Organization through the Educational Improvement Tax Credit (EITC) program, which assists in the funding of AP Chemistry Project REEL, Early College Academy, Chesapeake Bay Program, Band to Orchestra Program (Strings) and Professional Grants for STEM educators.
- Organizing a mentor, tutor, student annual picnic

- Collaborated with alumni and community members to establish scholarships for graduating seniors.
- Acting as a catalyst to connect sources of funding with special needs and projects.
- Implemented a constituent data base with Little Green Light
- Updated OEF By-laws
- Updated OEF website
- Hired a p/t Executive Director

Distinctiveness regarding the OEF

Mentoring, Tutoring and Classroom Volunteers

The Mentoring and Tutoring Program serves students at the Oxford Area School District. Mentoring is provided for students who have been identified as at-risk by school counselors and teachers. Volunteer mentors meet one-on-one with at risk students weekly, either during the school day, or immediately after school. Mentoring addresses the social and educational needs across the curriculum, to improve the academic performance of the student. The volunteer tutors work one-on-one, or with small groups of students, to master the material covered in class. In elementary schools, some tutors work with every student in a class to review new material or to read, and other tutors work with the Response to Intervention students. Tutoring in the high school is provided for students whose teachers and school counselors have identified as needing additional assistance in a particular subject, and the sessions are typically one hour per week. The tutors communicate regularly with the teacher and follow the approved school curriculum. This year we have been collaborating with the Lighthouse in providing volunteers for the after-school program, specifically during Homework Help.

Professional Grants for Faculty

The OEF provides professional grants ranging from \$250 to \$1500 to the faculty of the OASD. This program was established to stimulate innovative ideas to enhance a teacher's classroom activities. These fresh new ideas and program pilots, when tied to the educational goals of the school district, are often key catalysts for student improvement and achievement. Proposals are accepted four times during the school year. These proposals are reviewed by the building administrator and district administration to ensure that they coordinate with the curriculum. They are then reviewed by the OEF Special Projects Committee to assess how it supports the mission of the Foundation, the number of students to be served, and whether it can be replicated by other teachers. In addition, the Foundation receives a proposal from each school building on an innovative project they are working on or would like to initiate. This grant is called the John C. Pittenger grant, named after its founder and first president. In the past, grants were given for creating Butterfly Gardens, STEM and STEAM Classrooms, Breakout Kits in grades 1 and 2, an anti-bullying called Rachel's Challenge, Forensic Kits to Penn's Grove Middle School to be inserted in their science curriculum. Most recently a grant was awarded for an updated sight and sound system at the grade 3 and 4 building. Since 2001, the OEF has provided over \$300,000 in professional grants to teachers.

Leaving a Legacy Endowment

In the spring of 2017, the Board of Directors of the OEF decided that a portion of the accumulated endowment funds would be placed with the Chester County Community Foundation. This decision was part of the overall Leaving a Legacy program to grow the endowment. The Board wanted all potential donors to know that the funds would be professionally managed. An additional part of the arrangement was the ability of the CCCF to provide ongoing assistance to the OEF to expand their role as a nonprofit organization. Beth Briglia, the now retired Vice President of Philanthropy Services, met numerous times with the OEF Ways and Means Committee and during several community roundtables during 2018 and 2019. CCCF continues to meet with the OEF Board to share how each Board member can play a part in growing the Foundation and the Endowment. As of June 30, 2023, the OEF has approximately \$866,000 in their Leaving a Legacy Endowment Program. The goal is one million dollars by 2026.

Educational Investment Tax Credit Program (EITC)

For the past eleven years, the OEF has been recognized as an Educational Improvement Organization by the PA Department of Community and Economic Development. Achieving this status allows our foundation to solicit and accept donations from businesses who in turn receive favorable PA income tax credits up to 75% depending on their level of donations. In the year of 2022-23, we received donations in the amount of \$27,500 from businesses which enabled the OEF to fund Project Reel which is an innovative collaboration between the Oxford Area High School Chemistry Department and Ohio State University and Early College Academy a collaboration between Cecil College and Oxford Area High School, Robotics a program in grades 2 thru 12 with approximately 150 student participating. Program. Band to Orchestra (Strings) will be added to the music program which will allow the OASD School band programs to become orchestras. Chesapeake Bay Program for students taking the

courses of Marine Biology and AP Environmental Science. Lastly, a recent program approval which will permit EITC donation to be utilized for STEM professional grants.

Purpose of Grant

This grant request is to fund our operating expenses up to \$7,500. These expenses include telephone, postage, RSVP breakfast, retreat & luncheons and program marketing, OEF's website, Facebook and Twitter and a proration of the Volunteer Coordinator's salary. The total program budget is \$ 217,431. The cost of administration and fund raising expenses is 29% of the budget. The Executive Director (Dr. Ray Fischer) and the Treasurer (Pam Mason) are accountable for these expenditures. The goal is to increase the number of volunteers to 150 by end of 2024 (presently 110) in order to provide the number of student contacts with mentors and students. The OEF's Volunteer Coordinator, collaborates with volunteers, school counselors, teachers, and administrators to identify the needs of students and match them with the most appropriate mentor or tutor. The evaluation of the 2022-23 school year found that 85% of the parents who responded to the survey saw a positive influence in crease confidence for their children in the program. Eighty-one percent of the faculty who responded saw a positive effect for the students.

Need for Funding

The Oxford Educational Foundation has updated their strategic plan which calls for increasing volunteerism especially in mentoring and tutoring. There has been regression for students due to their virtual learning. The OEF would like to fill that gap by their assistance to those students who need help. OEF volunteers will also assist students at the Oxford Lighthouse Youth Center with their Homework Help Program every Tuesday and Thursday. In addition, the OEF provides assistance through mentors to the Chester County Futures Program.

Specific Needs and Issues and Challenges to be addressed

As with any program(s) our challenging obstacle is our operating budget. We are interested in providing more grant opportunities for our teachers and train additional volunteers to assist the staff and students existing economic conditions still negatively impact low-income children within the county specifically in the Oxford Area. In 2022-23 the Oxford Area School District continued to show an increase in the number of students participating in the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program (approximately 44%) In addition test scores have been marginal but a steady increase is noted for identified students who are at risk. Our students confront diverse challenges in their quest to earn an education. A percentage of these students may lack a responsible adult role model or are unable to receive the assistance from home to help them in their educational endeavors.

Why it is important to fund now

The OEF is interested in recruiting additional volunteers in our schools. In so doing we assist in providing for their clearances and provide a training program before they begin their volunteer duties. In summary it will increase our organizational capacity in carrying out our mission and will be measured by the yearly evaluation from parents, staff and volunteers. In our recruiting efforts, the OEF continues to increase its marketing in developing volunteer brochures, Leaving a Legacy information , informational posters and tables items for School District Open Houses, Kindergarten registration, First Fridays and local festivals.

How impact and results will be demonstrated

The 2020 census shows that the percentage of residents of the Oxford Area School District over 25 years old with a high school degree is two to three percent below the U.S. average and the number of residents with a Bachelor's degree or higher is six to eight percent below the U.S. average.

The mentoring, tutoring and classroom volunteer program will continue to improve student performance in school, which will be seen by improved grades, attendance and increased character in and out of the classroom.

Each year we conduct a survey to measure the effectiveness of the mentoring and tutoring program and to learn what we can do to improve our work. The forms are distributed to parents, faculty, and mentors and tutors in the spring and analyzed during the summer. The evaluation of the 2022-23 school year found that 85% of the parents who responded to the survey saw a positive influence on the students in the program. It showed that mentoring and tutoring increases the self-confidence of the student, which often results in improved academic performance. One parent wrote, "The mentor has been a wonderful influence on my daughter. She has helped her develop a love of learning and self confidence."

The school district views the Foundation as a positive supplemental resource for its educational programs.

This data and information will be analyzed and incorporated in future program planning, and will be reported in the Annual Report which is published in October of each year.

Should you have any questions or need further clarification, please contact Dr. Raymond A. Fischer, Executive Director, Oxford Educational Foundation, at rfischer@oxfordeducationalfoundation.org or at 717 947-0075

Thank you for the opportunity to apply for a Field of Interest and Donor Advised Fund Grant!