



REQUEST FOR GRANT PROPOSALS PAY IT FORWARD FUND IN MEMORY OF RONN FLETCHER

The Chester County Community Foundation seeks grant applications from selected nonprofit charitable causes, to be considered for funding from the **Pay It Forward Fund**.

Focus of CCCF Pay It Forward Fund: To award 2 years of grant funding to a **paradigm shifting initiative** of selected Chester County-based nonprofit charitable causes, as recommended by a Community Foundation grant panel and approved by the Community Foundation Board of Directors.

Grant Award Amounts: Typically range from \$30,000 - \$50,000.
(Example: Split over two years \$30k awarded yr 1 + \$20k awarded yr 2 = \$50k).

Proposal Process:

- Grant applications, using the attached format, should be e-mailed by **May 15 at 11:59 pm** to grants@chescofcf.org
- The e-mail heading should read: Re: **Proposed Grant Requested from CCCF Pay It Forward Fund**
- Upon review of the initial proposal, a site visit may be conducted
- Grant Panel Review Committee will decide grant awards by early summer
- Grant award checks will be sent by late summer

Please note that all grant applications will be posted on the Community Foundation's website for funding consideration by additional Community Foundation Donor Advised Funds.

Questions? Please contact:
Stephenie Stevens, Grants Director & Outreach Officer
Chester County Community Foundation
28 West Market Street
West Chester, PA 19382
www.chescofcf.org
Steph@chescofcf.org
(610) 696-8211

PAY IT FORWARD FUND IN MEMORY OF RONN FLETCHER



I. PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

(One page only. This page will be shared with Grant Committee Members.)

Date: 5/1/24

Contact Information:

Organization Name-

Friends Association for Care & Protection of Children

Contact Name: David James

Address-

113 W. Chestnut St. West Chester, PA 10380

Contact Title: Development Director

Phone: 610-431-3598 x204

Contact E-mail:

Web Address: friendsassoc.org

Fax: 610-431-9768

FEIN: 23-1381006

Year Incorporated: 1939

Has your nonprofit previously applied to the Community Foundation: Yes No

Field/s of Interest:

Arts, Culture and Humanities

Environment/Animal Welfare

Health

Human Services

Education

Religion

Organizational Information:

Geographic Area Served: Friends Association serves all Chester County, PA residents.

Annual # of Clients & Description of Population Served: FY'23 we served 640 households and 1772 individuals.

Mission Statement: "Friends Association provides programs and services that prevent homelessness and promote the independence of families with children."

Organization Description:

Annual Budget \$7,706,331 (Includes pass-through rental assistance funds from the government)

90 % of budget for program expenses

20 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

7 % of budget for administrative expenses

16 # of Board Volunteers

3 % of budget for fundraising expenses

200 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers

100 % total

2000 # of Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources: ARPA: \$891,239 PHARE: \$400,000 United Way of CC: \$270,000 CC Dept. of Community Development: \$233,060 Vanguard Hometown Grants: \$50,000

Proposal Information:**Grant Amount Requested:**

Year 1 \$25,000 + Yr 2 \$25,000 =Total \$50,000 (Maximum \$50,000 Total)

II. GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Summary Description of Paradigm-Shifting Grant Purpose:

The organization's history, goals, key achievements, and distinctiveness.

Mission and History

Friends Association is one of the longest operating child welfare non-profit organizations in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and has its roots in Quaker tradition. Beginning in 1822, a group of abolitionist women in Philadelphia came together to dedicate resources to providing a home for children who had lost their parents, many as a result of being held captive and enslaved. Through the years, the organization has evolved while maintaining our focus on the protection of children and recognition of the inherent value of each member of society.

In 2010, Friends began to focus its mission entirely on ending family homelessness in Chester County.

Friends provides programs and services that prevent homelessness and promote the independence of families with children. We are unique in that we focus on keeping families together during times of crisis while connecting them with strengths-based case management and community resources. We support all families experiencing homelessness or at risk of homelessness in Chester County including single moms and dads, two-parent, multi-generational, grandparent, and LGBTQ+ families. We empower them as they build on existing strengths and skills and work together to build resiliency, stable housing, educational opportunities, and economic self-sufficiency.

2. Paradigm Shifting Funding request:

The overarching goal of Friends' programming is to make homelessness for families in our community rare, brief, and non-recurring by providing emergency housing for families who have lost their homes and through prevention programs that keep families stable while providing essential wrap-around services.

A: Community Need - Specific Chester County needs and issues to be addressed

Homelessness is a national crisis. Family homelessness is often invisible and often overlooked in strategies to address homelessness as a whole. Once viewed as episodic and situational, family homelessness has become chronic, with families accounting for 37% of the overall homeless population and 50% of the sheltered population (The Bassuk Center on Homeless and Vulnerable Children & Youth). During the January 2023 Point- In-Time Count, 436 individuals and families were experiencing homelessness in Chester County 109 of whom were children (2023 Point- in-Time Count Decade to Doorways)!

B: Paradigm-shifting impact

Friends Association has long been at the forefront of providing emergency housing, eviction prevention, and case management with the goal of ending homelessness in Chester County. Over many years of providing case management to our families, our team has noticed a lack of basic life skill knowledge, often resulting in barriers to full self-sufficiency and the ability to return to and maintain permanent housing. Many families we work with were never taught or learned the basic knowledge to manage the day-to-day tasks that life requires. This lack of essential life skills can cause families to lose permanent housing and/or employment and perpetuate dysfunction and poor health among family members. Learning these basic life skills can ensure that a family has the skills to maintain their housing and to thrive over the long term.

Our vision is simple yet profound: to empower individuals with the basic life skills they need to lead fulfilling and self-sufficient lives. Through our new innovative Life Skills Program, our goal is to equip families with essential skills in areas such as cooking, housekeeping and organization, parenting, time management, car care and maintenance, and financial management – skills that are often taken for granted but are integral to navigating the complexities of modern life. Unfortunately, many families we serve have never been exposed to these essential skills. This lack of essential skills contributes to families' housing instability as well as to poor health and well-being.

Our approach is multi-faceted, including both one-on-one coaching by the Life Skills Coach and group training, sometimes offered through partner organizations, where appropriate. We have learned that by meeting people where they are, getting to know them and allowing bonds of trust to build, we are able to facilitate the confidence to learn and employ new habits that benefit their families and strengthen their financial stability. With this in mind, all of our interaction with families is rooted in trauma-informed and client-centered practice. Development of life skills training plans will always be conducted collaboratively between Friends staff and family members.

As an example, the Life Skills Coach can help an overwhelmed mom or dad prepare a meal or clean a room, demonstrating basic skills as they work together. By working side by side with the family, the Life Skills Coach can gain insights into the family's life experience, potential trauma, strengths, and needs, while building bonds of trust that can heal the family and allow for further growth and learning. As they observe interaction between parents and children they can gently redirect and model healthy communication skills.

The Life Skills Coach will work in partnership with our case management team. Case managers will refer family members to the Life Skills Program and work closely with the Life Skills Coach in supporting the family's journey to self-sufficiency.

Friends Association partners with other organizations to leverage our capacity to support families in building life skills. We have worked with the Housing Partnership of Chester County to provide financial literacy training and with Children's Hospital of Philadelphia to offer workshops on a broad range of health and wellness topics. We will continue to seek out strategic partnerships to meet training needs as they come to light.

Our new Life Skills Program will impart practical knowledge and foster a sense of empowerment and belonging. Families will come together, supporting and uplifting one another as they embark on journeys of growth and transformation, passing skills on to the next generation and, hopefully, disrupting cycles of multigenerational poverty and disfunction.

C: Overall strategies to implement the initiative

Our goal is to recruit a new full-time Life Skills Coach responsible for developing and growing the program. This coach would be utilized with families whose caseload is open and who are currently working with our case management team. The coach will be deployed based upon family needs as assessed by the case manager.

D: Why it is important to fund this now

The number one cause of homelessness is a lack of affordable housing, particularly in Chester County where housing costs have skyrocketed in recent years. As the most affluent county in the state, Chester County does not have enough affordable or low-income housing available. Equipping families with the essential skills needed to survive and thrive has never been more urgent. We believe this essential skills training will significantly improve outcomes as we strive to support long-term housing stability for families.

3. Timetable, with anticipated outcomes and their relevance to the nonprofit's mission

We plan to hire a Life Skills Coach by late summer or early fall 2024. This coach can immediately begin working with the case management team and with the families to prepare coaching plans. With guidance from the Director of Programs, the Life Skills Coach will develop a reporting system to document coaching plans and progress. Our overall hope for the program is that while our case management team is working on the overall health of the family unit, our coach can assist one family member with life skills that benefit the entire family. Hopefully, these newfound skills will be passed on to the next generation, creating a multi-generational independent family.

4. How impact and results will be demonstrated

We maintain key metrics for all our programs and will add a category for this new program. The Life Skills Coach will report on training plan status for each family while the case management team will track and report on changes in observed skills.

Key outcomes will include:

1. Improvement of home maintenance
2. Improved parenting skills (based upon observation of parent-child interaction)
3. Improved financial management (based upon monthly review of family financial statements)