

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 Road #9 West Chester, PA 19382

Phone: 610-692-3398

Website: www.westchesterdanceworks.org

Year Incorporated: 1983

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):

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: West Chester Dance Works (WCDW) provides 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.

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

WCDW serves Chester County and the greater Delaware Valley.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:

WCDW serves community members via live performance at regional festivals, events hosted by businesses looking for our artistic contributions, and in-house performance events. The company also reaches students in various school districts, the elderly in nursing homes/senior centers, and patients in hospitals via traveling performances and educational outreach. Dancers serious about their craft and with the desire to serve the community are attracted to the mission of the company. Membership is open to anyone nine years of age and older, amateur or professional, interested in participating after acceptance through the completion of an audition process meeting all commitment criteria set forth by the artistic director. WCDW has 33 performing members and 150 students this season, and it is estimated that approximately 3,400 individuals are reached annually from the variety of engagements the company partakes in.

Annual Budget \$ 200,284.00

65 % of budget for program expenses

34 % of budget for administrative expenses

1 % of budget for fundraising expenses

100 % total

1 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

7 # of Board Volunteers

25 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers

150 # of Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources: JD2 Environmental, Philadelphia Cultural Alliance, Rachel Owen

Is this grant proposal for: Capacity Building ___ or General Operating X?

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:

One of our major accomplishments and one we plan to reprise in 2025 is our original production of "Rachel Harris, One Woman Over the Line:" a mixed-media performance of dance, visual media, traditional music, narration and vocals that premiered in 2008. This production tells the true story of a freedom seeker (runaway slave) and her pursuit of life and dignity through the Underground Railroad in West Chester. It is a moving performance that has been highly praised for its beauty and authenticity by notable members of the community, including Mary Dugan, president of the Kennett Underground Railroad Center. The Rachel Harris production has been fitted for a variety of formats, including a full professional performance, performance excerpts, a performance workshop with lecture demonstration, a master class in either modern, jazz, ballet or composition/improvisation, and a residency program of classes, workshops and performances custom designed to each group. The program has been delivered in its various formats to Henderson High School in West Chester, Downingtown High School, West Chester University, the Coatesville High School 9-10 Center, the Tower Hill School in Wilmington, DE, Bryn Mawr College and more, bringing the art of dance in a regionally significant story to over 10,000 students. For the 2025 revival, Rachel Harris excerpts will be prepared for presentation in January. The full-length concert will launch in February at Chester County's local theater, Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center. As we partner with Chester County America250 PA Commission to prepare to celebrate the nation's birthday and continue to book engagements, we look to secure funds to reach as many audiences as possible!



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 nonprofits in the Chester County area. Please consider us as a candidate to receive \$7,500 in funding as we enter our 42nd year with a commitment to revive our production of "Rachel Harris, One Woman Over the Line:" the true story of a runaway slave in Chester County.

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, woman-owned 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.

West Chester Dance Works is seeking funding to support the revival of "Rachel Harris, One Woman Over the Line," a multi-media production that presents the true story of a run-away slave and her



Diane Matthews, Executive Director

search for freedom and dignity as found in the writings of Robert C. Smedley and other period journalists. It is a moving performance that has been highly praised for its beauty and authenticity by notable members of the community, including Mary Dugan, president of the Kennett Underground Railroad Center. Originally premiering in 2008, this retelling of Rachel's story illustrates how, during a dark time in American history, many people of varying backgrounds took risks and contributed to the pursuit of freedom. This project brings history to life with a regionally significant story that engages the audience through dance, projected historical images, song, percussion, and narration. As we prepare to celebrate the nation's 250th birthday and partner with the Chester County America250 PA Commission, it is important to unify people and uplift their senses with truth-telling through art.

This production has been fitted for a variety of formats, including a full professional performance, performance excerpts, a performance workshop with lecture demonstration, a master class in either modern, jazz, ballet or composition/improvisation, and a residency program of classes, workshops and performances custom designed to each group. The program has been delivered in its various formats to Henderson High School in West Chester, Downingtown High School, West Chester University, the Coatesville High School 9-10 Center, the Tower Hill School in Wilmington, DE, Bryn Mawr College and more, bringing the art of dance in a regionally significant story to over 10,000 students.

For the 2025 revival, Rachel Harris excerpts will be prepared for presentation in January. The full-length concert will launch in February at Chester County's local theater, Uptown! Knauer Performing Arts Center. As we continue to book engagements for 2025, we look to secure funds to reach as many audiences as possible.

WCDW conducts surveys upon the conclusion of each performance/event in an effort to collect both participant and audience feedback. We track our progress through activity debriefings to review surveys, team meetings to continue brainstorming and goal-setting, and two one-on-one meetings with all artistic and administrative staff.

Below is an outline of expenses. Please see the project budget attached for greater detail.

- ARTISTIC FEES:
 - Choreographer
 - Rehearsal Mistress
 - Artistic Director
 - Dancer Fee - Tier 1 (Soloist)
 - Dancer Fee - Tier 2 (Professional Company)
 - Dancer Fee- Tier 3 (Training Company)
 - Guest Artist
- OTHER ARTISTIC FEES:
 - Storyteller
 - Vocalist
 - Musician-drummer
 - Choir



Diane Matthews, Executive Director

- TECHNICAL FEES:
 - Music coordinator
 - Audio Tech
 - Media coordinator (Power Point Op)
 - Lighting Designer
 - Videographer
 - Stage Manager/Tech Crew
- OTHER EXPENSES:
 - Costumes
 - Booking
 - Research
 - Promotions
 - Office expense
 - Administrative cost
 - Travel
 - Space usage
 - Food
 - Theater rental

Reviews of "Rachel Harris, One Woman Over the Line:"

"Their professional company's original 'Rachel Harris: One Woman Over the line,' tells the story of a West Chester area slave's travel to freedom through dance. It is a performance not to be missed! A beautiful, emotional, historical story brought to life in a very personal way. The training the participants receive is top notch, the life experiences they gain from bringing their work to the community is fabulous."

-Anonymous greatnonprofits.org

"A friend and I attended your splendid production last night, and both of us were delighted! The dancing was superb, of course, but we thought the blending of elements was so effective - the projected photos, the lighting, the music, the narration. All of it worked together, complementing the dance, to make for a moving experience. Also, speaking as one who's interested in the Underground RR from a historical point of view, I appreciated your sticking to the facts. It's a dramatic, thrilling story, needing no embellishment. Thanks, Diane, for a most impressive job! Wow!!"

-Mary Dugan, Kennett Underground Railroad Center

We appreciate your continued support of West Chester Dance Works. 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