

Date 8/12/2024

Contact Information

Organization Name: Darby Creek Valley Association
Address: P.O. Box 732 Drexel Hill, PA 19026
Phone: 484.222.2502
Website: dcva.org
Year Incorporated: 1984
FEIN:

ED/CEO Name: Jaclyn Rhoads
ED/CEO E-mail: president@dcva.org
Board Chair Name: Jaclyn Rhoads
Board Chair Approval (check here):
Primary Contact Name: Kyle Gaumann
Primary Contact E-mail: kyledcva.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

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

Mission:

Founded in 1984, DCVA is a nonprofit watershed organization dedicated to enhancing the quality of life in and around the Darby Creek watershed by restoring and protecting its natural, historical, and cultural resources.

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

The Darby Creek Watershed
Counties: Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Philadelphia
CHESTER COUNTY MUNICIPALITIES: Tredyffrin Twp., Easttown Twp.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served: 500,000

Annual Budget \$ 90660 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff 0
18.20 % of budget for program expenses 27 # of Board Volunteers
74.62 % of budget for administrative expenses 450 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
5.8 % of budget for fundraising expenses 1350 # of Volunteer Hours
100 % total

Top 3-5 funding sources: Grants, LMC-WP, EPA, Donations, Membership Dues

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: \$ 7,500

Proposal Summary:

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Provide clear, concise information. 3 pages maximum.

1. Nonprofit's history, goals, key achievements & distinctiveness

Stopping Pollution at its Source

Forty years ago, a group of concerned residents banded together to clean up the waterways in their community. Families and neighbors joined together on a few days in April to conduct a multi-community clean-up with funds provided by local stores and companies. They used the funds to buy trash bags, gloves, and other items to hand out at the clean-up. This event repeated itself the next year, the year after, and continues. In 2024 we are celebrating our 40th year of existence and our 40th watershed-wide stream cleanup. The cleanup work will never end until we can stop the source of litter pollution and other trash that destroys the beauty of our watershed, creates blockades to stream flow that can cause flooding, and harms wildlife. Not only does DCVA conduct stream cleanups, we have many years of experience planting trees to filter water, prevent flooding, and beautify our neighborhoods. We provide environmental education for children and adults, build rain gardens and downspout planters to collect stormwater and prevent flooding, monitor water quality, plus so much more. The organization has approximately 316 members, but over 1000 people come out for the stream cleanups each year. We have 3 part-time staff members and 27 board members.

To address the goal of "Stopping Pollution at its Source" in our 40th year, we aim to:

- Conduct stream clean-ups at a record 40 sites throughout the Darby Creek watershed.
- Provide native trees and shrubs to municipalities. Studies show that beautifying public spaces helps to reduce the incidence of littering.
- Provide "Take Care of Your Backyard" (anti-littering) signs to municipalities.
- Promote plastic bag banning and anti-litter/anti-dumping ordinances.

Currently, we have no funding for these activities other than our general fund, all our grant funding is supporting other projects.

The Darby Creek Watershed is in southeastern Pennsylvania--most of the 77 miles of the Watershed are in Delaware County. However, the Watershed also includes portions of Chester, Montgomery, and Philadelphia Counties. The main stem of Darby Creek originates in Easttown Township, Chester County and is joined by a number of tributaries as it flows downstream. Darby Creek flows through the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge near the Philadelphia International Airport and flows under Rte. 95 to meet the Delaware River. While trash and litter pollution blight the entire watershed, much litter and larger trash ends up in the Refuge which is a stopover for thousands of migrating song birds and waterfowl, and home to a pair of nesting bald eagles, plus turkeys, deer, and other wildlife which make the Refuge an invaluable habitat, place of respite for city dwellers, and an outstanding educational facility for children from Philadelphia and Delaware Counties.

2. Funding request

- **Description of key initiatives**
- **Specific needs & issues to be addressed**
- **Why it is important to fund this now**
- **How impact & results will be demonstrated**

Stream Cleanup: To cleanup and beautify our waterways and streambanks, and prevent litter and trash pollution from reaching the Heinz Refuge and even the Delaware Bay and Atlantic Ocean, we hope to clean up a record 40 sites in the watershed in our 40th year. The DCVA staff time required to organize these events is considerable- they register clean-up site volunteer captains, distribute gloves, trash pickers, t-shirts, and other materials to the site captains, attend as many clean-ups as possible themselves and photograph the events and the results. In 2024 we held 34 clean-ups in the month of April and plan to hold more in the Fall to reach our goal of 40 sites. Although the overall goal of the clean-ups is that one day they will no longer be necessary, we aim to expand our reach next year and clean up even more sites. Chester County Community Foundation Funds would be used to partially support the staff needed to carry out this massive cleanup effort.

Tree and Shrub Distribution: The Darby Creek Watershed is home to a population of approximately 500,000 people, with an average density of nearly 10 persons per acre. Historically, population growth and land development in the Watershed originated in the lower downstream portions of Delaware County, which includes some of the earliest settlements in the nation and spread outwardly from the City of Philadelphia. These older developments tend to be very dense and would profit significantly from additional trees. As mentioned above, to celebrate our 40th year, we hope to beautify neighborhoods and strengthen riparian buffers to protect streams by intensifying our established tree-planting program. Further, planting trees and thus beautifying spaces tends to decrease littering. Chester County Community Foundation funds would be used to purchase 100 – 150 trees and shrubs, distribute them to communities, and educate residents how to plant them, and the staff time to do this work, in association with DCVA volunteers.

Plastic Bag and other plastic bans, litter and dumping ordinances: The Darby Creek like many other urbanized watersheds has a long history of plastic and other litter and trash. According to the “Pennsylvania Litter Research Study¹” completed by Keep PA Beautiful and the PA Department of Environmental Protection, the most common items found littered alongside roadsides included cigarette butts and plastic bottles and wraps. According to Lance Butler from the Philadelphia Water Department, “Macroplastics and other submersible marine debris have been shown to ‘smother’ benthic habitats and have also been directly ingested by both aquatic and terrestrial fauna mistaking the debris as food,” “The decomposition of plastic material to particle size, known as microplastics, have also been shown to be present in the digestive systems of many fish and bird species” which may end up back to humans through the food chain.

Many municipalities are passing plastic bag bans, and DCVA aims to encourage that growing effort. Just over the river, New Jersey has a statewide ban on plastic bags, straws, and take-out containers. The City of Philadelphia has a plastic bag ban. These bans have made a huge difference in plastics floating in waterways in just over a year. Some of the townships at the head of the watershed also have plastic bag bans, and other municipalities are considering them.

DCVA will use funds from the Chester County Community Foundation to help educate the public and local elected officials by scheduling and conducting public meetings about model ordinances and how to smoothly transition their businesses and residents to a plastic bag-free future. Further, funds would be used to provide municipalities with model anti-littering and anti-dumping ordinances as dumping of trash, old tires, old appliances and construction debris is a significant problem in the watershed, particularly the lower watershed.

In addition, the funding would be used to purchase 100 sturdy, attractive anti-littering and anti-dumping signs to be placed in areas of the watershed where they are most needed. The funding would also support the staff time to do this work in association with DCVA volunteers. DCVA is in the process of creating an updated watershed management plan with the assistance of Natural Lands Trust who is evaluating ordinances in the watershed, so DCVA can promote the best models. We also hope to lay out a long-term plan to stop pollution at its source in the watershed. Funding will help jump-start and significantly support this effort

III. ATTACHMENTS

E-mail or mail this support information

1. Copy of 501 (c) (3) federal tax-exempt letter
 2. List of Board of Directors, with their affiliations
 3. Most recent annual report & financial statement, audited if available
 4. Itemized organizational operating budget with actual results for prior fiscal year & current fiscal year to date
 5. If capacity building initiative, itemized budget (including external consultant's proposal, if applicable)
 6. Current strategic plan. If your nonprofit does not have a current strategic plan, explain why.
- Use this form @ www.chescof.org to apply online for grants from all Community Foundation Funds.
 - **Email proposals to grants@chescof.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) 696-8211 grants@chescof.org with questions.



*Connecting people who care with causes that matter,
so their legacies make a difference.*



WHAT IS CAPACITY BUILDING?

Capacity building helps bring a nonprofit to the next level of operational, programmatic, financial, or organizational maturity, in order to more effectively & efficiently fulfill its mission.

Capacity building may include (but is not limited to) projects which address:

- **MISSION, VISION & STRATEGY**
Organizational Assessment - Strategic Planning - Financial Planning
- **GOVERNANCE & LEADERSHIP**
Board Development - Executive Transition/Succession Planning - Leadership Development - Staff Training & Professional Development
- **PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATIONS**
Coalition Building – Collaboration - Mergers & Acquisitions - Strategic Restructuring
- **RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT & MARKETING**
Major Gift Donor Identification, Cultivation, Development & Stewardship - Development Campaigns (Annual, Capital, Planned Giving) - Earned Income Development - Social Enterprise Feasibility & Development - Marketing, Branding & Communications
- **TECHNOLOGY & OPERATIONS**
Business Continuity Planning - Financial Management - Human Resources - Volunteer Management - Industry Certification - Risk Management - Technology Improvements