

## 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](http://www.chescocf.org)

**Date 9/9/2024**

### Contact Information

Organization Name: The Bridge Academy & Community Center ED/CEO Name: Jordan Crans

Address: 578 Olive Street

Coatesville, PA 19320

[jordan@thebridgeacademy.org](mailto:jordan@thebridgeacademy.org)

Phone: (610) 466-9505

Website: [www.thebridgeacademy.org](http://www.thebridgeacademy.org)

Year Incorporated: 2004

FEIN: 20-0881049

ED/CEO E-mail:

Board Chair Name: Ben Horning

Board Chair Approval (check here):

Primary Contact Name: Alicia Vazquez

Primary Contact E-mail:

[alicia@thebridgeacademy.org](mailto:alicia@thebridgeacademy.org)

### Organization Information:

#### Field/s of Interest:

Arts, Culture & Humanities

Environment/Animal Welfare

Education

Health

Human Services

Religion

**Mission: The mission of The Bridge is to equip youth and families with the tools necessary for academic achievement, life skills, creative expression, spiritual growth and leadership.**

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

### **Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:**

Annual Budget \$ 821,950 7 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

83 % of budget for program expenses 4 # of Board Volunteers

7 % of budget for administrative expenses 231 # of Active Non-Board Volunteers

2 % of budget for fundraising expenses 1029 # of Volunteer Hours

100 % total

**Top 3-5 funding sources: Foundations, Individuals, Annual Night of Hope Fundraiser, Businesses, Churches**

**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:** The Bridge Academy & Community Center (The Bridge) respectfully requests a \$7,500 general operating grant to help us implement our after school, evening, summer and outreach programs for under-resourced youth and their families in the City of Coatesville, PA.



## **CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION THE BRIDGE ACADEMY & COMMUNITY CENTER GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE**

### **Nonprofit's history, goals, key achievements & distinctiveness**

**History:** The idea for The Bridge Academy began in 2001. In 2002, a Board of Directors was formed, the 501(c)3 application was submitted (granted in 2003), and the search for a permanent location culminated in 570 Olive Street, Coatesville PA, where we hold programs today. Our mission is to equip youth and families with the tools necessary for academic achievement, life skills, creative expression, spiritual growth and leadership. Programs and services are free, accessible, and available to all. Today, The Bridge is open 4 days a week serving children from pre-K-12th grade, their families, and local mothers. With the help of more than 15 organizations and churches, we meet the ongoing needs of our students and their families, prepare students for educational success, and foster resiliency and responsibility, thereby empowering them to grow into contributing and independent citizens.

**Key Achievements:** Throughout 2023, 417 K-12th grade students and 75 women in Mom's Club walked through our doors and participated in our programs with support from 135 volunteers. The Bridge has also increased its focus on family units to promote stability with housing, health, support in crises and 'Bridging' our families to the most appropriate support systems for help. Finally, we proudly provided meals and crisis assistance to 172 families, serving 750 unique individuals.

**Distinctiveness:** We are grateful for the 241 volunteers, 7 full-time staff, and 3 part-time staff who create a safe and loving environment that demonstrates God's love in a relational way, supports families holistically through academic assistance and encouragement, youth development activities, and meeting basic needs. The majority of the board, staff, and volunteers reside, grew up, have family, attended school, and/or raise their families in the greater Coatesville area. The deep connection to the city and neighborhoods allows The Bridge team to develop life-long, meaningful relationships with the students, families, and individuals we serve. We are a resource hub, safe space, lifeline, and second home for so many folks.

**Funding request:** The Bridge Academy & Community Center (The Bridge) respectfully requests a \$7,500 general operating grant to help us implement our after school, evening, summer and outreach programs for under-resourced youth and their families in the City of Coatesville, PA.

**Description of key initiatives:** A community thrives when its people are hopeful about their future and a constellation of caring, competent, consistent, positive adults are available to instill confidence, motivate, shape a vision for the future, and help break the cycles of generational poverty and trauma. The Bridge's core programs and activities include: K-12th School Year Programs (After School Programs, Weeknight Gatherings), Summer Program, and Leadership Development (Mom's Club, Pointman Leadership, and WAYS).

**School Year Program:** Our **K-12th After School Program** starts in September and include after-school tutoring and age-specific evening enrichment activities four days a week for at least 30 weeks. Our current schedule is: Elementary (K-5th Grade): Monday/Tuesday 4:00 – 5:30PM and Secondary (6-12th

Grade): Monday-Wednesday 2:30-4PM. The After School Program includes healthy snacks, homework help, connection with schools/teachers, life skills, creative arts and other special opportunities including woodworking, science experiments, and t-shirt designing. We also provide access to Chromebooks for students who have assignments to complete online or practice skills with Lexia reading software or IXL math software. After the tutoring portion, students can stay for our Weeknight Gatherings. Special age-appropriate, weeknight, 90-minute programs are provided and include food, games, inspirational teaching, and arts & crafts. Currently, Elementary grades attend Monday and Tuesday evening from 5:30-6:30PM, Middle School attends Wednesday from 6-6:30PM and High School attends Thursday from 6-8PM. Weeknight gatherings are open to new students and include dinner.

**Summer Program:** The Bridge's Summer Program serves youth ages K-12 in the Coatesville Area School District. The program runs for 7 weeks and provides breakfast items and lunch daily, academic enrichment, physical activities, specialized programs, leadership development, mentorship, and recreational activities to help keep students safe and positively engaged throughout the summer. The first two weeks are planned to be overnight camp- through a partnership with The Camp at Old Mill (one week for 10-13-year-olds and the second week for 6-9-year-olds). The next two weeks consist of day camps that will daily transport K-12th grade students from the Bridge to the Camp at Old Mill. The remaining three weeks consist of daytime programs at The Bridge, various field trips, and excursions.

**Mom's Club:** Mom's Club takes place every Wednesday during the school year from 12:30-2PM for mostly low-income, single mothers. Mom's Club provides a relaxed atmosphere where they can fellowship with one another over a meal, learn new life skills, and be inspired in their faith. Free childcare is provided to ensure mothers with young children can attend. This group also has one-time events throughout the year and an annual "Women's Retreat."

### **Leadership Development Programs**

**Pointman Leadership:** During the 2022-2023 school year, The Bridge will facilitate the Pointman Leadership training at Coatesville Area School District (CASD) in partnership with The Parkesburg POINT and Providence Church Coatesville. CASD has asked our organizations to increase our presence on campus and help facilitate this program with their athletes. Pointman instruction is built on time-tested, universal principles to help students develop into more dynamic leaders. Training focuses on 8 characteristics of a servant leader: Humility, Diligence, Conviction, Optimism, Integrity, Courage, Discipline, and Loyalty. The goal is to directly impact CASD school climate and learning loss.

**WAYS:** The Bridge has also launched Ways of Women and Ways of Gentlemen in the CASD district, beginning with Caln Elementary (5th grade students) and Scott Middle School (6th grade students). Each 6-week program includes mentors who facilitate the curriculum related to growing up, self-respect, future planning, role models, self-care, and positive relationships. Ways of Gentlemen has run several summers in a row at the Bridge. We hope to expand this program to the secondary schools (9th-12th grade students).

**Specific needs & issues to be addressed:** Most students reside in the blocks immediately surrounding our building and within walking distance. 91 % are African American and come from families that are eligible for free and reduced lunch. The youth served by The Bridge have trauma-filled home lives that include poverty, transient housing, abuse, neglect, food insecurity, and/or parents battling addiction, mental health issues, a lack of connectedness or other challenges. Through the years, we've listened, learned, and evolved our programs and services to build life-long connections and relationships, serving

as a prosocial opportunity buffering our students from the risks and harmful behaviors threatening to derail their dreams. Our desire is to create a positive atmosphere where students can focus and get the support they need to achieve academic success.

**Why it is important to fund this now:** Our leadership development and social service programs provide a safety net for our youth and families to navigate challenging life circumstances with encouragement and support. Chester County, despite its wealth, faces significant disparities. The ALICE Report highlights that 23% of households struggle to meet basic needs, with Coatesville seeing a 65% rate of households experiencing poverty or meeting the ALICE threshold. We hope to empower families to break the cycle of poverty and trauma by offering support to prevent crises and promote long-term stability. Our integrated approach addresses the growing mental health challenges among community members, as evidenced by the latest Coatesville PA Youth Survey, which shows many students struggling with school commitment and mental health issues.

- 57.6% believes the things they were learning in school as important for later in life.
- 37.4% did not feel safe in school.
- 22.5% did not feel that they had opportunities to talk to a teacher one-to-one.
- More than half, or 52.9%, said that teachers did not praise them when they worked hard in school.
- One fifth of students had a diagnosable mental disorder and as many as one third demonstrated signs of depression.

**How impact & results will be demonstrated:** We value the voices, experiences, and perspectives of our program participants and believe the best program design emerges when it meets the needs of those being served. Qualitative and quantitative data is collected to monitor program quality, satisfaction, impact, and enhance program effectiveness. Our evaluation plan ensures we remain responsive to the needs of the students and families, focuses on continuously improving, and aligns with our program objectives.

**At the end of the project period, we survey our students to assess changes in attitude, behavior, and skills in the following areas:** Better attendance rates, increased confidence & academic skills, higher motivation to succeed, increased caring relationships with concerned adults, improved academic performance, improved socio-emotional, decision-making skills, leadership skills.

**We track the following key performance indicators:** Attendance rates, grades, goal attainment, completion of college prep activities in timeline, and self-report improvements in their confidence, skills, and behaviors to build resilience for life beyond high school.

**We anticipate the following impact:**

1. IMPACT #1: 80% of participants in the Beyond the Bridge program will report increased awareness of post-secondary options (i.e. career pathways, post-secondary education, workforce development options).
2. IMPACT #2: 80% of participants in the Beyond the Bridge program will report an improved sense of confidence in their academic skills and motivation to succeed.
3. IMPACT #3: 80% of participants in the Beyond the Bridge program will feel hopeful about their future.

