

I. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION  
GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

One page only.

Date 9/9/24

Contact Information

Organization Name: Gemma Services

ED/CEO Name: Kristen E.M. Gay, Ph.D.

Address: 512 W. Township Line Rd.,

ED/CEO E-mail: info@gemmaservices.org

Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462

Board Chair Name: Nina V. Rogers

Phone: 610-825-4440 ext. 3206

Board Chair Approval (check here):

Website: www.gemmaservices.org

Year Incorporated: 1859 (date of founding of Silver Springs – Martin Luther School). Gemma formed in 2019 by merger of Silver Springs and theVillage.

Primary Contact Name: Lynn Unipan, MSW, CFRE

FEIN: 23-2300184

Primary Contact E-mail: Lunipan@gemmaservices.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

Arts, Culture & Humanities

Environment/Animal Welfare

Education

Health

Human Services

Religion

Mission: Guided by the vision of a world where every person knows they matter, Gemma Services' mission is to accompany people of all ages through life's challenges using individualized, data-informed support.

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

Gemma primarily serves the five-county Greater Philadelphia region (including Montgomery, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, and Philadelphia counties), and in one program, other counties in PA and the State of Delaware.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served: Gemma Services assists more than 3,000 youth and families each year from throughout the Southeastern Pennsylvania region and surrounding counties who are facing emotional and behavioral challenges.

Annual Budget <u>\$50,366,609</u>	<u>364</u>	# of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>87.3</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>13</u>	# of Board Volunteers
<u>10.4</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>250</u>	# of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>2.3</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>1376</u>	# of Volunteer Hours
<small>100 % total</small>		

Top 3-5 funding sources: Gemma Services' programs are supported by a mosaic of funding that includes reimbursements from public sources, payers with whom we contract, which account for approximately 95% of our funding. These include Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) that manage Medicaid dollars, the Department of Human Services, School Districts, Pennsylvania Department of Education, and others. To fully cover the costs of the services we provide, we rely on charitable donations from individuals, foundations, corporations, and organizations.

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

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: \$5000 \_\_\_\_\_

Proposal Summary: Gemma Services respectfully requests a \$5,000 grant from the Chester County Community Foundation to support general operating expenses for vital behavioral health, prevention, and education programs we provide to youth and families who are navigating life's challenges.



September 9, 2024

Chester County Community Foundation  
c/o Kevin Baffa, Grants Administrator  
28 W. Market Street, Lincoln Biography Building  
West Chester, PA 19382

Dear Members of the Board of Trustees:

We write to you today from Gemma Services, a local nonprofit dedicated to providing vital services for more than 3,000 youth and families each year through a continuum of behavioral health, child welfare, prevention programs, and a k-12 special education school. We partner with youth and families as they navigate life's challenges to help them build upon their strengths, learn new skills, heal from traumas, and reach for bright futures. Gemma Services respectfully requests \$5,000 for General Operating expenses to support these vital programs.

**History, Goals, Key Achievements & Distinctiveness**

Guided by the vision of a world where every person knows they matter, Gemma Services' mission is to accompany people of all ages through life's challenges using individualized, data-informed support. With three locations in Greater Philadelphia (Plymouth Meeting, Southwest Philadelphia, and the Mt. Airy section of Philadelphia), Gemma assists more than 3,000 youth and families each year through mental health, child welfare, prevention, and education programs.

Gemma was formed in 2019 by the merger of two long-standing Philadelphia-area nonprofits: Silver Springs – Martin Luther School and theVillage (formerly Presbyterian Children's Village). Each of them was founded in the 1800s as orphanages and evolved through the years to meet the growing needs of their communities. Today as one organization, Gemma represents 300+ years of service to youth and families facing extreme challenges in the Greater Philadelphia area.

Recent accomplishments we are proud to share include:

- Since expanding Martin Luther School's (MLS) licenses from k-8 to include grades 9-12, the school has grown each year by one grade. We welcomed our first class of 12th graders this school year and are excited to celebrate the first graduating class in 2025. Curriculum expansion continues to build up high school academic and extracurricular programming. Additionally, we added inter-scholastic athletic teams and to now be participating in the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association (PIAA), fielding several middle and high school sports teams.
- In our prevention programs, we expanded our newest program —theFamily Support Program (FSP) — beyond Philadelphia into Delaware County. FSP is made possible by the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) and is a no-cost program that helps families with children ages 2-5 years old to identify and build upon their strengths, expand problem-solving, and develop strategies to meet their goals.
- We are implementing a robust Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) initiative with organization-wide goals, strategies, targeted outcomes, and measures, including staff trainings and Board and Staff led committees working to ensure that Gemma lives into our value of being a community that values diverse perspectives and is as inclusive as possible.

**Main Campus** 512 W. Township Line Rd.  
Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462  
610.825.4440

**Mt. Airy** 7301 Germantown Ave.  
Philadelphia, PA 19119  
267.297.5170

**Preheim Center** 6517 Chester Ave.  
Philadelphia, PA 19142  
215.730.2240

- Finally, we have completed a two-year strategic visioning process during which members from all parts of the Gemma community participated in envisioning the ways that Gemma can accompany even more individuals and families in more ways into the future. We developed a new vision, mission, set of values, and tagline for Gemma that reflects our “Why” — “Because You Matter.” Gemma’s vision is of a world where every person knows they matter, a vision that informs our mission of accompanying people of all ages through life’s challenges using individualized, data-informed support. Our subsequent strategic plan defines a focus on being an employer of choice, specific areas of growth, innovations we are pursuing, and areas of work that will continue to expand our impact. As requested, this Strategic Plan is attached.

### **Key Initiatives & Issues to be Addressed**

Our requested grant from the Chester County Community Foundation would support general operating costs related to the vital programs that Gemma provides for children, youth, and families facing difficult challenges. Our programs include:

- a 24/7/365 psychiatric Residential Treatment Program for youth ages 6-14 years old who are experiencing significant emotional and behavioral difficulties that presently make it unsafe for them to live in a family setting, the majority of whom have experienced significant traumas such as abuse or neglect,
- a special education Approved Private School (Martin Luther School) for students in grades K-12 who are referred to us from more than 45-area school districts, including many children and teens who presently reside in Gemma’s Residential Treatment Program. Students referred to Martin Luther School are determined to need an intensive, holistic educational program that includes core academics and addresses students’ significant social, emotional, behavioral, and learning needs, and
- a range of “Community Based Programs” through which our mental health and child welfare professionals assist youth and families in their own homes, schools, and other community settings. These programs include Adoption and Permanency Services, Intensive Behavioral Health “wrap around” support in school, Applied Behavior Analysis services for youth diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorders, Foster Family Care, Family Based Mental Health Services, a Family Empowerment Center, a Family Support Program, and Outpatient Mental Health Services in two locations in Philadelphia as well as via Telehealth.

Most of the youth and families we assist are from low-income families and communities of color. For these families, effective interventions can be difficult to access. These families often experience barriers to accessing support, such as difficulties with transportation, financial challenges, job-related challenges, technology access, and more. Families often face high levels of community stress and the services that Gemma provides are vital support.

The majority of youth who participate in our programs have experienced traumas commonly considered to be Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs). Examples of ACEs are abuse, neglect, violence, exposure to drug abuse, parental mental illness or incarceration, and more. Consequences of ACEs have been found via research to increase risk of suicide and mental health diagnoses, violence, substance abuse, and more. Societal impacts include increased costs on the mental health, healthcare, and criminal justice systems. Intervention during childhood and adolescent years is essential to mitigating these long-lasting effects. Gemma’s services are critical for youth impacted by traumas, providing a crucial safety net of support and behavioral health care that accompanies families in their path to healing.

### **Impact and Results**

More than 3,000 youth and families participate in Gemma's 10 programs each year. They are primarily from throughout the five-county, Southeastern Pennsylvania (SEPA) region, including Chester County. The children and teens, and their families, whom we assist are grappling with the impacts of the children's emotional and behavioral challenges and, in many cases, myriad other struggles the families are enduring. During our 2023-2024 Fiscal Year (July 1, 2023-June 30, 2024), Gemma assisted 17 youth and families from Chester County through our programs.

To measure our outcomes, we track the number of children and families served in each program, how they are referred to us, and their progress in achieving their individual goals. Each of Gemma's programs has specific measures to assess children's and families' success. For example, in our K-12th grade special education school (Martin Luther School), children's progress is measured against defined goals in their Individual Education Plans (IEP) around academic progress and growth in social and emotional skills. In our behavioral health programs, our clinicians measure improvement in children's distress using various tools such as depression and behavioral inventories, all rooted in evidence-based practices.

Finally, in our Residential Treatment Program, we conduct an Aftercare Study in which we assess children's functioning as best as possible for up to three years after discharging from the program to assess the long-term positive impact of our program on youth's lives. In this study, we contact parents/guardians of youth discharged from our program to a family setting at regular intervals for up to three years to assess if the youth are "At Home," "In School," and "Out of Trouble." In this past year, approximately 90% of youth who participated in our residential program discharged to a less restrictive setting. Over many years, we have found that approximately 75%-80% of the youth remain in that same level of setting (i.e., a family home) for the period of time that we track them.

### **Need for Funding**

Gemma Services' programs are supported by a mosaic of funding that includes reimbursements for vital behavioral health, child welfare, and educational services provided for youth and families who are at-risk. Approximately 95% of our budget is comprised of reimbursements from public sources, including Behavioral Health Managed Care Organizations (BH-MCOs) that manage Medicaid dollars for counties, the Department of Human Services, Pennsylvania Department of Education, and school districts, for example. We rely on charitable donations from individuals, foundations, corporations, and organizations to assist us with covering the full costs of providing our services, for completing new projects, and launching capacity building initiatives. We are thankful to a supportive community of donors and philanthropic partners for helping Gemma to fulfill our mission.

We would be pleased to welcome any representatives of the Foundation for a site visit to one of our three locations to see first-hand the programs we are asking you to support. Should you have any questions, wish to schedule a visit, or need additional information to fully consider this request, please contact Lynn Unipan, Chief Development and Communications Officer, at 610-825-4440 x3206 or [Lunipan@gemmaservices.org](mailto:Lunipan@gemmaservices.org). Thank you for your consideration and we look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,



Kristen E.M. Gay, Ph.D.  
President and CEO

*Thank you for  
your consideration!*



Lynn W. Unipan, MSW, CFRE  
Chief Development &  
Communications Officer