

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: 11.24.24

Contact Information

Organization Name: **West Chester Area Senior Center**
Address: **530 E. Union Street, West Chester, PA 19382**
Phone: **610-431-4242, ext. 106**
Website: **www.wcseniors.org**
Year Incorporated: **1980**
FEIN: **23-2149355**

ED/CEO Name: **Kim Andrews, Interim Exec. Director**
ED/CEO E-mail: **kandrews@wcseniors.org**
Board Chair Name: **Stacey E. Fuller, Esq.**
Board Chair Approval (check here):
Primary Contact Name: **Bernadette Walsh**
Primary Contact E-mail:
bernadettew@wcseniors.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

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

Mission: The West Chester Area Senior Center enriches the lives of senior neighbors through friendship, activities, education, and nourishment.

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): Primarily West Chester, PA, and surrounding townships in Chester County.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served: Located in the Borough of West Chester, WCASC serves about 2,000 older adults annually ranging from 60 to 100+ years of age. Of these seniors:
* 45% self-report as low income (but our estimate is higher at 60-70%)
* 30% are nutritionally insecure due to low income, medical condition(s), or inability to shop or prepare food.
* 35% have ambulatory challenges; * 40% live alone and lack family support; * 65% are female; 35% are male.

<u>Annual Budget \$ 944,637*</u>	<u>4</u>	# of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>85</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>16</u>	# of Board Volunteers
<u>10</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>350</u>	# of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>5</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>13,608</u>	# of Volunteer Hours
<u>100</u> % total		

(*See Financial Statements, Statement of Activities, FYE 6.30.24)

Top 3-5 funding sources (2023-24): (1) Lasko Family Foundation; (2) Wentworth Association Fund for WCASC, a Fund of Chester County Community Foundation; (3) Phillies Charities

Is this grant proposal for: Capacity Building or General Operating

If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is: **N/A**

Mission, Vision & Strategy Governance & Leadership Partnerships & Collaborations
 Fundraising, Development & Marketing Technology Other: _____

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: \$ 10,000

Proposal Summary: WCASC respectfully requests a general operating grant of \$10,000 to help seniors overcome threats to their well-being and independence through a robust network of programs, including meal programs, group fitness classes, health and wellness education, digital literacy sessions, and more.

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

Since 1975, the West Chester Area Senior Center (WCASC) has been serving an ever-growing diverse population of older adults, ages 60 - 100+. These individuals are intent upon 'aging in place' while staying as healthy, active, engaged, and independent as possible. Most WCASC members reside in West Chester and the surrounding townships in Chester County. A significant percentage are low-income and live alone with no family support. While the annual membership fee is \$48 for an individual and \$68 for a household, providing access to all activities, many cannot pay due to limited resources. WCASC does not collect fees from these individuals, making the Chester County Community Foundation's support crucial to our mission.

- For the ninth consecutive year, WCASC earned a **Gold Seal** designation from "Candid," a respected organization that collects information about nonprofits and recognizes those that meet and exceed a list of standards, goals, and benchmarks. The **Gold Seal** puts WCASC in the top .5% of nonprofits.
- For the seventh straight year, WCASC was named a **Top-Rated Nonprofit**, an endorsement given to a distinguished few based on positive reviews on the "Great Nonprofits" website.
- For the second straight year, WCASC was named a "Nextdoor" **Neighborhood Fave** both at WCASC and at each of WCASC's two "Second Reading" used bookstores in West Chester, which are operated 99% by senior volunteers and support the Center's programs and services.

2. Funding request

a. Specific Needs & Issues to be Addressed and Why it is Important to Fund this Now

WCASC is pleased to have this critical opportunity to describe how general operating funding from the Chester County Community Foundation will empower 2,000 older adults to overcome threats to their well-being and independence through a robust network of programs featuring best practices delivered by WCASC's small staff and team of over 300 volunteers. These threats include:

- 1) **Social isolation**, which is linked to a higher risk for a variety of physical & mental conditions.
- 2) **Falls**, which can result in serious injuries such as broken bones or head or brain injuries.
- 3) **Food insecurity** due to a lack of resources, which can force seniors to choose between buying groceries and paying for medications and other basic needs.
- 4) **No support network** or sense of community to rely on, especially during difficult times.
- 5) **Little or no digital literacy or access**, which frustrates seniors' ability to access health & social services, and other needs including groceries.

Recognizing that the Chester County Community Foundation is a catalyst for change, WCASC respectfully requests **\$10,000** for general operating support. WCASC will use the grant to overcome the threats to seniors' well-being and independence. For instance, grant funds will increase food security by providing more healthy nourishment to vulnerable seniors; improve digital literacy and technical knowledge by providing more education to seniors in need; increase knowledge of fall prevention and overall wellness by enhancing information shared and demonstrated through fitness classes and nutrition and health education programming; and bolstering a sense of social connectedness through more and improved Enrichment Programs aligned with seniors' interest.

b. Description of Key Initiatives & How Impact and Results will be Demonstrated

A description of key initiatives is set forth below:

1) Daily Congregate Breakfast And Lunch Meals (MON. TO FRI.): Breakfast and lunch are served in our welcoming Center, offering socialization and decreased isolation. Breakfast is free and includes coffee, breakfast sandwiches, cereal, and fruit. Lunch is a hot meal provided for a voluntary \$2 donation, although many are unable to pay. These meals are seniors' primary source of daily nutrition.

Year	# of Breakfast & Lunch Meals Served
2023-24	18,942
Calendar Year 2023	13,998
% increase	35%

2) Corner Cabinet Food Distribution (1 DAY/WEEK): The weekly Corner Cabinet Food Distribution Program serves about 425 seniors/month, with an increase of 20% in the recent past. Each week, older adults' shop' free of charge and receive about 50 lbs. of food (fresh fruits and vegetables, proteins, non-perishables, well-balanced frozen meals, and personal and household supplies) and, if needed, pet food. The program's success is due largely to the dedicated volunteers who help sort and shelve the food and even assist members as they shop by bagging food and assisting them to their vehicles or the Chesco Connect bus, a popular mode of transportation for our members.

From July 1, 2023 to June 30, 2024, the Corner Cabinet Food Distribution Program accommodated about 5,000 visits. It provided 168,844 free meals in addition to the meals served through the Breakfast and Lunch Meal programs. Food access throughout the Mid-Atlantic region of the United States, including Pennsylvania, continues to be of great concern. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, prices of healthy foods increased significantly during the past two months. Fruits and vegetables increased by about 4%, as did food prices away from home. The cost of meats, poultry, fish, and eggs also increased. Unsurprisingly, the number of meals served and distributed at WCASC continues to rise.

Year	# of Meals Distributed via the Corner Cabinet
2023-24	168,844
Calendar Year 2023	133,000
% increase	26%

3) Group Fitness Classes (MON. TO FRI.): Multiple levels of daily exercise classes are focused on improving strength, fitness, balance, fall prevention knowledge, and overall well-being. Classes are led by a highly skilled instructor trained and certified to address individual needs.

4) Nutrition & Health Education (MON. TO FRI.): Nutrition and health education occur daily thanks to many community partners. For instance, students from local universities, including West Chester Area University and Villanova University, and practicing healthcare professionals, conduct health screenings and present on topics such as healthy eating, fall prevention, sun protection, physical therapy, self-defense, and more.

Year	# of Fitness Classes; and, Nutrition & Health Education Presentations	# of Attendees
2023-24	925	8641
Calendar Year 2023	826	7209
% increase	12%	19%
Note: The same seniors may participate in multiple activities.		

5) Technical Assistance / Digital Literacy (MON. TO FRI.): WCASC, 5 computers with internet access and a printer are available for seniors to use all day in our Activity Center. For those who need assistance, including help with their own devices (cell phones, laptops, tablets, computers, etc.), an expert is available, free of charge, 3 days/week to meet one-on-one with older adults. These digital literacy sessions are popular, especially as accessing electronic health records, scheduling vaccinations, and shopping becomes increasingly tied to technology. The use of computers in the Activity Center continues to grow, which indicates that WCASC's older adults are able to use the technology when it is made available to them.

Year	One-on-one digital literacy sessions	Members Using WCASC Computers
2023-24	1003	899
Calendar Year 2023	1038	0
% increase	-3%	89800%
Note: The same seniors may participate in multiple activities.		

6) Enrichment Programs (MON. TO FRI.): Current Events, Book Club, art and language classes, crafts, and intergenerational activities promote a sense of community and decrease social isolation. An activities

calendar appears in the monthly newsletter, available in hard copy and via the website, www.wcseniors.org. Daily Facebook posts list activities, lunch menus, and special programming.

WCASC is committed to literacy, both digital and traditional. WCASC's Activity Center contains a lending library of fiction and nonfiction books meticulously organized by one of our members and volunteers. Members are welcome to donate and borrow books. Also, WCASC operates two local "Second Reading" used bookstores – one on Church Street in the Borough of West Chester and the other on South High Street in West Chester. Proceeds from the bookstores, operated 95% by senior volunteers, support our programs and services.

Year	# of Members Participating in Enrichment Programs
2023-24	7,408
Calendar Year 2023	6,945
% increase	6%
Note: The same seniors may participate in multiple activities.	

7) Counseling and Informational Assistance (MON. TO FRI.): WCASC provides referrals and special assistance with Medicare, PA MEDI, free tax filings, and more. Private meeting rooms in WCASC’s facility are ideal for these purposes. Free tax preparation and filings, provided in partnership with AARP’s Tax-Aide Program from February through mid-April, are extremely popular.

Year	# of Older Adults Receiving Counseling & Informational Assistance
2023-24	1,427
Calendar Year 2023	1,505
% increase	5%
Note: The same seniors may participate in multiple activities.	

c. Demonstrating Impact and Results

WCASC uses quantitative and qualitative information to monitor and evaluate its programs, perceived benefits, and even enjoyment in the eyes of seniors. Quantitative data, including attendance, meal counts, participation in specific activities, and volunteer hours, is collected by the electronic “Co-Pilot” system. As seniors arrive at WCASC, they “check-in” on the computer in the reception area and record the various programs/activities they will participate in during the day. We can gather data for specified time periods, certain programs or activities, and specific attendees and have often adjusted programs offered and scheduled to meet evolving needs. On occasion, we offer brief written surveys.

Qualitative information is collected through regular interaction between seniors, their families, staff, and volunteers. In addition, whether staff or collaborative partners lead programs/activities, we often do on-the-spot check-ups with any group after an activity or educational program to see what was helpful. Most participants are candid, and usually, the topics and presenters that help seniors the most are those that seniors have suggested.

CONCLUSION

The West Chester Area Senior Center is thankful for this opportunity to request \$10,000 from the Chester County Community Foundation for general operating support. This funding will significantly enhance the well-being and independence of seniors, thereby enriching their lives through friendship, activities, education, and nourishment. We appreciate your thoughtful review of this proposal and value our mutual interest in making a positive difference in the lives of families and individuals in Chester County.