

**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 9/7/25

Contact Information

Organization Name: Thorncroft Equestrian Center
Address: 190 Line Rd. Malvern, PA 19355
Phone: 610-644-1963
Website: www.thorncroft.org
Year Incorporated: 1983
FEIN: 23-2218431

ED/CEO Name: Tiffany Meyer
ED/CEO E-mail: tiffany@thorncroft.org
Board Chair Name: Andrew Goodman
Board Chair Approval (check here):
Primary Contact Name: Tiffany Meyer
Primary ContactEmail:tiffany@thorncroft.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

<input type="checkbox"/> Arts, Culture & Humanities	<input type="checkbox"/> Environment/Animal Welfare	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education
<input type="checkbox"/> Health	<input type="checkbox"/> Human Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion

Mission: Thorncroft's mission is to develop the physical and emotional well-being of all people regardless of their individual challenges. We are committed to personal growth and education in an equestrian environment of respect, love, and inclusion.

Geographic Area Served: Chester County and surrounding areas

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served:

Annual Budget \$ <u>\$1,621,250.00</u>	<u>13</u> # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>67.23</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>15</u> # of Board Volunteers
<u>20.63</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>100</u> # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>8.91</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>11,000</u> # of Volunteer Hours
<small>100 % total</small>	

Top 3-5 funding sources:

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: Attached



Thorncroft Equestrian Center Grant Proposal Narrative

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

Thorncroft's Mission is to develop the physical and emotional well-being of all people regardless of their individual challenges. We are committed to personal growth and education in an equestrian environment of respect, love, and inclusion.

Thorncroft Equestrian Center, established in 1969 is one of the longest running and largest therapeutic riding centers in the United States. Our PATH (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship) Premiere Accredited Center serves approximately 300 riders each week and over 400 people annually, providing therapeutic and equine-assisted activities that support the growth of children and adults with cognitive, emotional, and physical disabilities. Through the shared experience of horseback riding, Thorncroft helps people grow as individuals and as a community, learning to celebrate the unique abilities of all people. Thorncroft offers skills and experiences that cannot be provided through traditional educational methods, therapeutic settings, or recreational opportunities available in the community.

The story of Thorncroft began in 1969 with one therapeutic rider, Marge Harry, whose inspiring equestrian journey of growth led to the expansion of the use of horsemanship to help those with specialized needs reach their full potential and promote acceptance and inclusion within the community. For over 54 years, Thorncroft has been at the forefront of research in hippotherapy and innovative approaches to special education. Our highly qualified staff, instructors and loved ones witness the progress of our riders' physical, cognitive, and psychosocial well-being, celebrating individual accomplishments and milestones that were once thought out of reach.

Current Programs, Activities and Services Provided:

Thorncroft provides various sub-programs and activities that fall under the umbrella of the Therapeutic Horsemanship Program. These programs are intended to cater to the unique needs and goals of our riders, support partnering organizations, and promote inclusivity in our community. We customize both mounted and unmounted lessons for each rider to facilitate their personal growth journey. Our programming is diverse and designed to accommodate the

broad range of abilities and requirements of our riders, while also complementing the existing services available to the community.

Mounted Weekly Lessons Program

Of the approximately 300 riders served every week, over 50% have a diagnosed special need. Riding lessons take place in a mainstreamed environment without separation between those with and without special needs...everyone rides, learns, and grows together. Thorncroft encourages an atmosphere of respect and collaboration in the pursuit of a common passion. Riding lessons take place in private, semi-private and group settings weekly, and are tailored to the needs of the individuals. Thorncroft is proud to be a PATH Intl. (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International) Premier Accredited Center

Unmounted "Pony Tales" Sessions

Thorncroft's unmounted horsemanship lesson program "Pony Tales", is designed to meet the unique goals and needs of the participant. During these sessions participants will groom their horse, learn the basics of groundwork such as lunging and other equine assisted activities which foster cognitive, physical and emotional well-being. Pony Tales provides a therapeutic opportunity for individuals for whom traditional riding would not be appropriate. This unmounted program allows Thorncroft to expand the reach of our mission, increase our inclusivity and promote the health and well-being of equine partners. Thorncroft's unmounted program fosters the connection between horse and human, inviting the student to be an active participant in ensuring the well-being of their equine partner.

Thorncroft Adult Horsemanship Program

Thorncroft's Adult Horsemanship Program is an opportunity for individuals over 21 years of age with intellectual and developmental differences to develop skills and foster social interaction in a fun, structured, meaningful and supportive environment. Our clients will participate in

activities that will promote responsibility, self-worth and build a sense of community. These activities include barn/horse related tasks, maintaining gardens, yoga, and nature walks among other enriching activities.

Intro to Horsemanship for Military Veterans and First Responders

For over a decade, Thorncroft's Veterans Program has welcomed members of the military community, recently expanding to supporting First Responders as well. The program emphasizes the foundational principles of horsemanship and offers equine-assisted activities such as lessons

on equine behavior, herd dynamics, round penning, lunging, and riding. Through this program, both veterans and first responders can increase their emotional awareness, empathy, self-actualization, and stress resiliency. To expand the reach and effectiveness of our services, Thorncroft collaborates with various organizations, including the Chester County Critical Incident Stress Management Team and the Chester County Department of Emergency Services. Thorncroft also provides weekly lesson programs, clinics, volunteer opportunities, and outreach to allow veterans and first responders to continue their involvement and equestrian education. In gratitude for their service to the country and communities, Thorncroft offers full scholarships to all veterans and first responders who participate in the Therapeutic Horsemanship Program.

School and Organizational Partnerships

Thorncroft collaborates with outside organizations to expand the reach of our mission, increase the impact of our collective resources, and meet the unique needs of our community together. Thorncroft offers group riding experiences for schools, organizations, and residential facilities to supplement their special education and recreational curriculum. Our partners include...

- Timothy School
- The Woodlynde School
- Vanguard School
- Divine Providence
- Bryn Mawr Rehabilitation Hospital
- Special Olympics of Chester County
- Thomas Jefferson University
- Harcum College

Friends and Me: Coming Fall of 2025!

Friends and Me is an inclusive, six-week learning class for children ages three to five years old with an accompanying parent or guardian. All caregivers welcome.

For six-Fridays in the fall, our one-hour class invites young equestrians, and their adult, to learn a lesson about horses including grooming, leading, and basic horsemanship skills. Classes will invite creative activity and observation with a seasonal craft, games, nature walk, and exploratory play. On the last Friday of the sessions, families are welcome to stay for a picnic.

Our program welcomes children of all abilities who meet our enrollment requirements. Activities will be tailored to support the individual needs of each child. *Friends & Me* will aim to introduce young friends to horses and to grow the equine skills of each participant. Activities may encourage decision making, listening skills, social participation, a love and respect for animals, and a sense of responsibility.

Equine Science Club: Coming January of 2026!

Combining classroom learning with hands-on experience, Thorncroft's Equine Science Club welcomes participants to explore the fundamentals of horse care, equine health, and basic horsemanship. Sample topics include equine anatomy, equine nutrition, equine first-aid care, and grooming.

The Equine Science Club will grow the equine skills of each participant and provide exposure to new lessons on horsemanship. Activities may encourage decision making, listening skills, social participation, a love and respect for animals, and a sense of responsibility. ESC's will provide a learning environment that will support each participant in becoming thoughtful, responsible, and educated equestrians.

2. Funding Request

Our goal is to promote the physical, cognitive, and psychosocial well-being of every participant in the therapeutic riding program while fostering inclusion within our community. To accomplish our goals, we hire highly qualified instructors and staff members who are experts in utilizing specially trained horses and Thorncroft's unique mainstream approach to equestrian education to achieve the highest level of impact on the lives of our riders through their expertise. Instructors evaluate and record each rider's progress quarterly to measure the success of activities. We understand that the journey of personal growth for each rider is non-linear and lifelong, and the pace at which they grow and achieve is unique. However, we still expect to see quarterly progress in riding skills and improved quality of life as reported by the instructor and the rider/caregiver.

It is important to fund this now as Thorncroft's programming proves to be in constant demand in our community. Because of the Farm's long-standing success in our modality, we have a strong stream of admissions requests for intake. Thorncroft's Therapeutic Horsemanship Program has a positive impact on both the individual participants and the strength of our community. Through the program, riders develop physically, cognitively, and emotionally, leading to a higher quality of life. This higher quality of life includes physical and mental wellbeing, success in school, fulfilling social interactions, and more. From a community perspective, riders, volunteers, and staff without special needs learn to support and collaborate with people of all abilities, fostering inclusion and acceptance in other areas of their lives.

Progress of riders in the Thorncroft Therapeutic Horsemanship Program are documented quarterly by instructors in accordance with PATH Intl. (Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International) standards. Additionally, Thorncroft's Veterans, DEI and Continuing Education Councils are composed of both students, staff, and community members to provide ongoing evaluation and support for Thorncroft's programming in their respective areas of interest. These councils provide a voice for our students in the evaluation of our services as well as ensure our programs effectively reach the diverse community we aim to support. Internally, the information gained through the progress reports and programmatic councils will allow Thorncroft's leadership to evaluate the effectiveness of the program as well as adapt to the evolving needs of our riders and community. Externally, evidence of our program's efficacy will be used in this pursuit of future funding and to create community engagement through our outbound marketing efforts.