



I. GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

To obtain an electronic version of this application, visit www.chescocf.org

This page will be shared electronically with Grant Panel Members & Fund Advisors + posted online.

Date 1/20/2026

Contact Information

Organization Name: The Bridge Academy & Community Center, Inc. ED/CEO Name: Jordan Crans
 Address: 578 Olive Street, Coatesville, PA 19320 ED E-mail: jordan.crans@thebridgeacademy.org
 Phone: 610-466-9505 Board Chair Name: Ben Horning
 Website: www.thebridgeacademy.org Board Chair Approval (check here):
 Year Incorporated: 2003 Primary Contact Name: Jordan Crans
 FEIN: 20-0881049 Primary Contact E-mail:
jordan.crans@thebridgeacademy.org

Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Arts, Culture, Heritage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Education, Library	<input type="checkbox"/>	Environment, Animals
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Health	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Human Services	<input type="checkbox"/>	Social Justice, Civic Engagement
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Religion	<input type="checkbox"/>	If other, please describe:		

Mission: The Bridge Academy and Community Center’s mission is to equip youth and families with the resources needed for academic success, skill development, creative expression, spiritual growth, and leadership.

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): The Bridge serves youth and their families residing in the Greater Coatesville Community.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served. (Include Chester County # &/or % served.) The Bridge serves approximately 500 individuals annually in direct programs and an additional 1100+ individuals through basic need distributions and community events. All the individuals served reside in Chester County, specifically in Coatesville.

Annual Budget \$ 843,452 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff 9
78 % of budget for program expenses # of Board Volunteers 8
13 % of budget for administrative expenses # of Active Non-Board Volunteers 300
9 % of budget for fundraising expenses # of Volunteer Hours 5000
100% = total

Top 3-5 funding sources: Annual Night of Hope Fundraiser; Foundations; Individual Contributions & Communities of Faith

This grant proposal is for: Direct Service Programs & General Operating &/or Capacity Building

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

Proposal Summary: The Bridge Academy and Community Center seeks funding to support its marketing and outreach strategic interventions for 2026 including a new website and communications platform. Marketing and awareness building tools are more essential than ever with fundraising becoming very competitive as

funding opportunities contract. This is a vital tool for the diversification of funding sources and the building of support/partnerships throughout the county.

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE (CAPACITY BUILDING) THE BRIDGE ACADEMY & COMMUNITY CENTER, INC.

Nonprofit's overall aims, key initiatives, key achievements & distinctiveness: The Bridge Academy and Community Center (The Bridge) has been an important resource for youth and their families in Coatesville since 2003. The organization developed to impact and uplift youth, realizing that the community's young people did not have equitable access to educational support systems. Statistics showed overall poorer academic outcomes, and poverty levels in Coatesville were disproportionately high. The Bridge's mission is to equip youth and families with the resources needed for academic success, skill development, creative expression, spiritual growth, and leadership.

Throughout the last 22+ years, the organization has consistently supported hundreds of youths and families annually and is currently serving many 2nd generation students. Today, with a core staff of 9 and almost 300 volunteers, the organization provides residents of Coatesville with free programming, supporting families holistically through academic assistance, skill building, youth development, and meeting basic needs. Our theory of change is rooted in the belief that when youth are surrounded by caring adults and given equitable resources, they build hope, resilience, and a vision for their future, breaking cycles of poverty and trauma.

The Bridge offers afterschool and summer programs, internships, and additional resources to enhance public school education, develop leadership skills, and foster healthy relationships. These programs cater to K-12 students in the Coatesville Area School District (CASD) and the wider Coatesville community and encourage school engagement and success, promote stability within families, and offer opportunities to reduce the adoption of harmful habits and behaviors. Our students and families endure strained economic resources, a challenging urban environment, and less than ideal school support. They face threats of violence in and out of school and are surrounded by individuals with substance abuse issues. Many households struggle with basic needs - food, safety, security, and connectedness. Our goal at The Bridge is to come alongside the school district to support our students and families in a holistic and relational way.

One of the most distinct features of The Bridge is that it is a hyper local initiative that is deeply connected to the City of Coatesville. Its founders were from the community, and a majority of the staff, board members, and volunteers reside in close proximity to the organization. Many individuals see The Bridge as a second home and rely on The Bridge to connect them with other resources to address unexpected needs. The activities are shaped directly by feedback from program participants and in conjunction with those who have lived experience. The Bridge also is home to a high number of long-term volunteers, many who were former program participants.

Description of key initiatives: The Bridge's core programs and activities include K-12 Academic Enrichment Programming (After School Programs, Weeknight Gatherings, Summer Programming), Specialized Programs (Mom's Club, Pointman Leadership, Ways of Women/Gentlemen), and Foundations & Futures.

K-12 Academic Enrichment Programming:

Our **K-12 After School Program** begins in August with a Back-to-School Block Party. At this community-wide event, we pass out approximately 600 filled bookbags, meet and connect with families in the community and gear up for the school year. At this event, we actively begin registering families in our after-school tutoring programs and evening programs. Our school-year programs start in September and include after-school and evening programs four to five days a week for at least 30 weeks.

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. The Bridge separates ages to ensure quality instructional time for students. Older students have the opportunity to serve as volunteers with younger peers when appropriate. Our desire is to create a positive atmosphere where students can focus and get the support they need to achieve academic success.

The quiet learning space allows students to receive one-one-one tutoring from staff and volunteers in subjects they are struggling with. 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. This access to Chromebooks

and one-on-one assistance is especially helpful for our cyber students, many of whom lack a quiet space with strong Wi-Fi at home and an adult who can sit and help them through classes. Recently, our academic specialist has been incorporating mindset practices and stress-reducing strategies with our younger students to instill positive approaches to conflict, overwhelm, and frustration. Through parental permission, we are allowed to speak directly with teachers to better understand each student's situation and personalize their tutoring time. Staff often participate in IEP and other parent- teacher meetings for the students.

After the tutoring portion, students have food, games, inspirational teaching, and arts & crafts. Secondary weeknight gatherings have open enrollment- allowing additional students to participate who may not engage in the academic portion.

The Bridge's **Summer Program** serves youth ages K-12 in the Coatesville Area School District. The program runs for 9 weeks and provides breakfast and lunch daily, academic support and a variety of enrichment, leadership and recreational activities to help keep students safe and positively engaged throughout the summer. Two weeks consist of youth leadership and internship training and development. Two weeks are planned to be overnight camp- through a partnership with The Camp at Old Mill. One week is for 10-13-year-olds, and one is for 6-9-year-olds. The remaining five weeks consist of daytime programs at The Bridge Academy and Community Center and various field trips and excursions. Day time summer programming consists of academic enrichment, physical activities, lessons, specialized programs, leadership development, mentorships, and STEAM opportunities.

The Bridge provides **Electives** throughout the school year to provide small group settings where students can learn unique skills, foster creativity, and develop leadership skills. Electives include cooking, art, wood burning, videography, hair braiding, robotics, mechanics, equestrian programs, and more.

Specialized Programs:

Mom's Club is held at The Bridge every Wednesday during the school year from 12:00-2PM with most of the women served being 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 periodic events throughout the year, and an annual "Women's Retreat."

Pointman Leadership Training is facilitated during the school year at Coatesville Area School District (CASD) in partnership with The Parkesburg POINT and Providence Church Coatesville. CASD asked our organizations to increase their presence on campus and help facilitate this program with their athletes. Pointman Instruction directly impacts the school climate and learning loss and is built around time-tested, universal principles that help develop dynamic personal leaders. Training focuses on 8 characteristics of a servant leader: Humility, Diligence, Conviction, Optimism, Integrity, Courage, Discipline, and Loyalty.

The Bridge has also launched **Ways of Women** and **Ways of Gentlemen** within the school district, beginning with Caln Elementary and Scott Middle School. Each is a 6-week program with a curriculum related to growing up, self-respect, future planning, role models, self-care, and positive relationships.

Foundations & Futures:

The Foundations & Futures Program provides basic needs, mental health resources, leadership development, and engagement activities to support not just youth, but family units that find themselves in challenging situations. The Bridge acts a resource hub for youth and their families in the community and has seen how taking an integrated approach built on a foundation of trust leads to longer term positive outcomes. Programming includes support to stabilize crisis situations - rent, utilities, 1:1 coaching and more; food, pantry/household items, and basic needs distribution; and resilience/leadership training - financial literacy, SEL learning, physical and spiritual health. Beyond that, the program addresses critical needs by conducting intake assessments, offering referrals, and maintaining consistent communication with participants to ensure they receive the support they need daily.

FUNDING REQUEST:

Specific needs & issues to be addressed: Supporting The Bridge's capacity building initiatives - website, grantmaking, marketing and communications infrastructure) is of vital importance as the organization continues to advance its mission in Coatesville, serving hundreds of youth and their families annually.

This year alone, The Bridge will provide programming to an estimated 350 low-income, at-risk youth living within the Greater Coatesville Area and 80 more local women via our monthly Mom's Club. An additional 1,100+ youth will be served via community outreach events (Back to School Book Bag Event, Holiday Donations, Winter Coat distribution, etc.). Approximately 95% of students served come from low-income, single-parent households and most reside in the blocks immediately surrounding our building and are minority youth; 91% are African American, 2% Latino, and 7% Caucasian. Additionally, many youths 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.

Over the last decade, it has become clear that The Bridge's infrastructure would not facilitate the growth necessary to meet demand and provide the high level of support and services to participants. The organization has been searching for a new physical place, located in the heart of Coatesville, with parking and ADA accessibility. In the fall of 2025, the search culminated in the purchase of St. Cecilia's school and rectory located on E. Lincoln Highway in the heart of Coatesville. There is much work to be done, but the location and the vision for the space are inspiring. This funding request is targeted at updating our website and holistic communications platform. Within the year, The Bridge will commence a capital campaign to fund the renovations of the new facility. A vibrant, clear website and communications structure is imperative not only for the campaign, but to remain relevant with all funding resources. Additionally, it will create a comprehensive platform for program participants to access critical information about services. Fundraising in general is more competitive than ever, and The Bridge aims to showcase its unique services in the best light possible, attracting community partners and funders that are dedicated to this work and passionate about investing in Coatesville; all while providing efficient communication to the families and youth are at the center of this work.

Why it is important to fund this now: Funding this capacity-building effort now is critical because The Bridge has reached an inflection point in its growth and community impact. Demand for its services continues to increase, yet outdated digital infrastructure limits the organization's ability to communicate effectively with families, funders, and partners, and to compete for sustainable funding. A new website and strategic communications platform will immediately strengthen The Bridge's visibility, credibility, and fundraising capacity, enabling it to tell its impact story with clarity and reach new audiences. This investment will yield long-term returns by supporting diversified revenue, stronger partnerships, and more efficient outreach- allowing staff to focus resources on direct services for youth and families. Capacity-building at this moment ensures The Bridge can scale responsibly and sustain its mission in a rapidly changing funding and communications landscape.

How impact & results will be demonstrated: Supporting The Bridge enables the organization to continue providing programs and services for free - creating a safer and healthier community in the city of Coatesville. The Bridge evaluates its program's impact by administering post-program surveys and tracking student attendance, retention rates, academic achievement, and graduation rates. The Bridge is committed to ongoing reflection, review, and regularly monitors participants and activities to ensure that services are of high quality, and that student and family needs are being met. Most importantly, The Bridge is an active member of the Coatesville community. As a result, they are serving in the same neighborhood where staff, board, and volunteers live and work. Working alongside their neighbors, The Bridge is impacting the community in profound ways, and the expanded space will enhance that work. The new facility will be a true hub of services, a community center, and a representation of the thriving, healthy Coatesville in which it is located. This particular project's success will be evident through the public website that will be designed and implemented for all to see, an increase in the number of grant applications applied to, and the effectiveness of communications within the network of participants.

Bridge Capacity Building Budget 2026

Website and Communication Structure

Streamlining Grant Narratives and Requests

Item	Full Amount	Notes
Website Redesign	\$10,000	Attachments include quotes from 2 different companies.
Communication Structure Advancements	\$1442	We are currently using several different tools to track attendance and communicate with participants. To streamline our systems, we are consolidating all programming into Elexio. This change comes with some additional one-time and ongoing costs and was made based on recommendations from an IT consultant. According to Elexio's cost calculator, adding all remaining accounts will increase our expenses by approximately \$120.17 per month.
Communication Structure Advancements	\$416	Our participants consistently prefer text messages over email, and texting has proven to be a far more effective way to keep them engaged. As we add more members into our unified database and expand text-based communication, we expect an increase in related messaging costs. Based on past activity and projected usage, we anticipate an additional \$416 in expenses.
Grant Writing Streamlining Efforts	\$15,000	We recently began working with a new grant writer to help streamline our narratives, strengthen project proposals, diversify revenue sources, and pursue additional funding opportunities. The grant writer's rate is \$100 per hour, and we anticipate using 10–15 hours per month. This investment will also reduce the amount of time the Executive Director currently spends on grant writing.
Total	\$26,858	<i>*Providing Requests to other Funders to hit full budget</i>