



## I. GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

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**Date** 5/27/26

### Contact Information

Organization Name: West Chester Area Senior Center  
 Address: 530 E. Union Street, West Chester, PA 19382  
 Phone: 610-431-4242  
 Website: <http://wcseniors.org>  
 Year Incorporated: 1980  
 FEIN: 23-2149355

ED/CEO Name: Leah Reynolds  
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 Board Chair Name: Loretta Rokke  
 Board Chair Approval (check here):   
 Primary Contact Name: Leah Reynolds  
 Primary Contact E-mail: [Ireynolds@wcseniors.org](mailto:Ireynolds@wcseniors.org)

### Organization Information:

#### Field/s of Interest:

	Arts, Culture, Heritage		Education, Library		Environment, Animals
X	Health	X	Human Services		Social Justice, Civic Engagement
	Religion		If other, please describe:		

**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): WCASC serves residents of greater West Chester, although we have no residency requirements and some seniors travel further to take advantage of our many programs.

#### **Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served.** (Include Chester County # &/or % served.)

WCASC serves about 800 senior neighbors each year. Most of the seniors we serve are non-Hispanic White (77%), while 10% are non-Hispanic Black, 3% are Hispanic, 2% Asian, and the rest Other or Unreported. More than a third (37%) live alone, making the social interaction we offer crucial to their well-being. While we welcome seniors of all age ranges, more than 70% of our participants are age 70 or older. More than 7% are age 90+. Two thirds of participants are women.

<b>Annual Budget</b> <u>\$1,068,268</u>	<u>4</u>	# of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>81.2</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>8</u>	# of Board Volunteers
<u>14.2</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>350</u>	# of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>4.6</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>13,600</u>	# of Volunteer Hours

100% = total

**Top 3-5 funding sources:** Chester County Department of Aging: \$109,905 ; Leo and Peggy Pierce Foundation: \$20,000; Lightening the Load: \$25,000; United Way: \$29,344

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

#### **If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:**

<input type="checkbox"/> Contingency Planning	<input type="checkbox"/> Partnerships, Collaborations	<input type="checkbox"/> Merger, Closure
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<input type="checkbox"/>	Mission, Vision, Strategy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Board Engagement & Leadership	<input type="checkbox"/>	Marketing, Communication
<input type="checkbox"/>	Resource Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	Operations	<input type="checkbox"/>	Technology
<input type="checkbox"/>	If other, please describe:				

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

**Proposal Summary:** *(a few sentences, please)*

WCASC is requesting general operating support to continue providing our wide range of health-promoting services to the growing population of seniors in greater West Chester. By focusing on the nutrition, fitness, safety, enrichment, and social engagement needs of these vulnerable, often isolated people, we build a healthier community for all.

## II. GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

*Provide clear, concise information in 1-3 pages. Please be brief.*

### 1. Nonprofit's overall aims, key initiatives, key achievements & distinctiveness

Since 1975, the West Chester Area Senior Center has been a vibrant hub for older adults, offering connection, wellness, and lifelong learning in a welcoming environment. With trusted services and enriching programs, we help adults 60+ live active, independent, and meaningful lives in the heart of our community. Ours is the only senior center in our community, serving for more than 50 years as a hub for senior health, social engagement and enrichment.

We offer a wide array of enrichment and wellness programs that help our senior neighbors stay mentally, physically and socially engaged with each other and with the wider community. Aging is not something we do alone. It's something we do **together**, with laughter, support and connection. Whether it's through a shared lunch, a chair yoga class, or personalized IT support, our Senior Center provides the meaningful experiences and relationships that help older adults thrive.

### 2. Funding request

- **What specific needs & issues are being addressed, via what programs and services?**
- **Why is it important to fund this now?**
- **How will results & impact be demonstrated?**
  
- **Additionally, for capacity building grant proposals:**
  - **How will this capacity building initiative impact your nonprofit?**
  - **How will this impact be demonstrated?**
  - **Include a description of the expected activities; timeline & costs to implement the initiative. If external consulting services are required, include the anticipated costs & expertise of the consultants to be hired. Include external consultant proposal/s if applicable.**

Most of the seniors we serve are determined to age in place while remaining healthy, active, and independent. However, a significant portion live alone, are low-income, lack family support, and face mobility challenges that limit their ability to shop for groceries or access services. Whether they live alone or not, all can benefit from the mental and physical activities and social interaction the Senior Center offers. WCASC hosts hundreds of programs year-round to benefit our members, nearly all of which are free of charge. We focus on key areas of wellness to ensure that our programs have a positive impact on our members' health. These areas include nutrition, fitness, intellectual enrichment, linkages to personalized resources in the community, and social and technological connectivity.

Our **Corner Cupboard** provides important nutrition support for more than 80 low-income seniors a week, at an average of 425 visits per month. During the pandemic, when the need for a safe haven for vulnerable seniors to access food became acute, we opened the Corner Cabinet. Since that time, high inflation and stagnant benefits have made affording healthy food a serious challenge for seniors, especially those on fixed incomes. WCASC's Corner Cabinet offers seniors weekly free choice shopping each Wednesday with access to fresh produce, protein, bread and grains, nonperishables, and well-balanced frozen meals. On average, each

senior leaves with 50 pounds of food weekly. In addition to food, we offer personal items such as soap and shampoo, household supplies and pet food (through a partnership with the Henry's Helping Paw Fund).

Our **Daily Meal Programs** provide additional nutrition support by serving breakfast and lunch are served every weekday. We offer a free continental breakfast and hot lunch, which is often the most substantial meal our seniors will eat that day. Breakfast is free, and lunch is provided for a voluntary donation of \$2. Most seniors eat for free throughout the year. The breakfast and lunch congregate meals promote socialization and friendship and help decrease seniors' isolation.

WCASC plans to expand our breakfast and lunch programs to include healthier options. This initiative aims to improve the nutritional intake of our seniors, promoting better health and overall quality of life. Many of our seniors tell us that their physician has recommended eating more whole grains, lean proteins and fruits and vegetables. To that end, we want to adapt our food programs to their needs. We also want to increase food donations from our community to ensure that every senior visiting the Corner Cabinet leaves with an array of healthy, easily prepared options for meals at home. Together, these improvements can greatly enhance the nutritional value of the food seniors access at our facility, which for many represents a substantial percentage of their overall food supply.

We provide **Information and Referral Services** to help seniors navigate the Medicare system and tax preparation, with our longtime partners AARP and PA Medicare Education and Decision Insight (PA MEDI). These services may also include connections to other needed services, such as home repair programs, utility assistance, caregiver resources, and affordable prescription programs.

The Senior Center offers 700+ hours of **fitness classes** each year to help our members stay strong and healthy. Our exercise programs are a central component of our approach to wellness for our members. We offer classes every weekday, ranging from tai chi and chair yoga to cardio interval training and strength training. Our purpose is to keep our members physically, mentally and socially engaged, and to help the seniors we serve prevent common hazards of aging, such as losing cognitive ability, fall risk and joint pain. By focusing on the four pillars of senior fitness (flexibility, strength, balance and cardiovascular health), we are preparing them for healthier aging over time.

Our staff also offer one-on-one **technology education** to help our members gain digital literacy and social connectedness. Many seniors, especially low-income seniors without the means to purchase personal computers and Wi-Fi, struggle with low technological literacy. Low technological literacy can negatively impact seniors' ability to search for medical providers, insurance information, and health education materials. The inability to access online accounts for Social Security, pension and banking can create difficulty, requiring seniors to undertake difficult in-person trips to offices with long travel and waiting times. Online access connects each user with their larger community as well, including friends and family. Learning the basics of email, texting, FaceTime, and sharing photos can help seniors remain in daily contact with those they love. With technological knowledge and Wi-Fi access, seniors can gain access to a world of free education and recreation, from online library resources to free museum exhibits. WCASC has free Wi-Fi and three computers that are available for our seniors.

Finally, our enrichment offerings are numerous and extremely popular. We continue to respond to the expressed desires of those we serve, hosting extremely popular Uno gatherings and a lively crocheting club, as well as current events discussion groups, book clubs, foreign language classes, and other groups that keep our

seniors engaged and connected to their community. WCASC is always open to establishing new groups and clubs by member request; listening and responding to our senior neighbors is central to our mission.

WCASC seeks to continue our existing programs, make strategic improvements to several programs, and launch a publicity campaign to promote the benefits of our facility to seniors who do not yet take advantage of all we have to offer. For calendar 2026, we have the following objectives:

- Hold at least 700 fitness classes throughout the year, offering a very wide range of physical activities for people at every level of fitness.
- Serve at least 400 seniors per month at the Corner Cupboard and substantially increase healthy food donations from the community to improve the nutritional value of the free food we offer to lower-income seniors.
- Continue to offer community breakfasts and lunches at a rate of about 18,000 meals annually, while also working to improve the quality of our meal offerings with a salad bar and hot, nutritious breakfasts.
- Continue to provide personalized information, referral, nutrition education and technical assistance to all of our members on an as-needed basis.
- Provide more than 250 enrichment opportunities for participating seniors, based on their expressed interests.
- Expand the number of seniors who enjoy community meals and other programs at the Senior Center. We have a major publicity push planned for the coming months across traditional and social media to inform area seniors of the many benefits of participating in Senior Center activities, including our meals. The expanded meal options will be part of the informational campaign, and we hope they will be helpful to draw more isolated seniors into our community, where they will benefit from participation in our healthy meals and other programs.

WCASC uses the Copilot database to track the data of seniors coming to visit the Senior Center and the meals that they enjoy there. We measure our meal program data using this tool, which links the data to the Chester County Department of Aging (a supporter of part of the cost of our meal programs). We can also track demographic data (such as age, gender and zip code) using this tool. We use dedicated spreadsheets to track each of our other programs, such as our fitness class attendance and participation in recreational enrichment activities. WCASC is committed to involving our members in our programming. Part of our strategy to do so involves surveying our seniors to gauge their satisfaction with our programs and their recommendations for potential new programs.

WCASC is largely a volunteer-run organization, with just four full-time staff and more than 350 volunteers. Our Corner Cupboard is run entirely by community volunteers, many of whom are our senior participants. Overall, 18% of those we serve also choose to volunteer at the Senior Center. When you visit the senior center, most of those who greet you are likely to be local seniors who enjoy the Senior Center's programs themselves.

Leah Reynolds joined us as our new Executive Director this summer and is looking forward to strengthening and expanding the services the Senior Center offers to Chester County residents. Leah comes to us with thirty years of nonprofit leadership experience, most recently as Chief Executive Officer of Kennett Area Community Service (KACS), where she led the organization through seven years of growth. She worked over this spring with the Board of Directors and other key stakeholders to create a new Strategic Plan that will determine our path forward for the next three years.