

CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET — FY2026

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

Date: 3/26/26

CONTACT INFORMATION

Organization Name:	Holding Our Pride and Equality (HOPE) Counseling Center		
Address:	213 Reeceville Rd #10, Coatesville, PA 19320		
Phone:	805-890-2289		
Website:	hcounselingcenter.com		
Year Incorporated:	2014		
FEIN:	46-2450727		

ED/CEO Name:	Dr. Lauren Lawson	ED/CEO E-mail:	laurenlwsn4@gmail.com
Board Chair:	Heather Terrible	Board Chair Approval:	<input type="checkbox"/> Check here to confirm
Primary Contact:	Dr. Lauren Lawson	Primary Contact E-mail:	laurenlawson@counselinghope.info

ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Field(s) of Interest:	Mental Health Services
Mission:	Holding Our Pride and Equality Counseling Center is a nonprofit committed to providing affirming, accessible mental health outpatient therapy services that help individuals, couples, and families build happier, more hopeful lives.
Geographic Area Served:	Chester County, PA (primary: Coatesville and surrounding communities)
Population Served:	Teens, young adults, parents, couples, families, and LGBTQ+ individuals experiencing anxiety, depression, trauma, relationship challenges, and life transitions. Approximately 100–200 Chester County residents served annually.

Annual Budget:	\$400,448 (annualized FY2025-26)	# FT Equivalent Staff:	7.5
% for Programs:	77%	# Board Volunteers:	4
% for Admin:	20%	# Active Non-Board Volunteers:	2
% for Fundraising:	3%	# Volunteer Hours:	1,560

Top 3–5 Funding Sources:

1. Medi-Cal/Carelon (42%); 2. Patient Payments/Self-Pay (34%); 3. EAP Programs/Spring Health (12%); 4. Medicaid/CCBH (6%); 5. Commercial Insurance (6%)

GRANT REQUEST

Grant Type:

X Direct Service Programs & General Operations

Grant Amount Requested:

\$10,000

Proposal Summary:

Holding Our Pride and Equality Counseling Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit outpatient mental health practice serving 100–200 Chester County residents annually. We provide individual, couple, and family therapy for teens, adults, and families facing anxiety, depression, trauma, and relationship challenges, including affirming care for LGBTQ+ individuals. This grant will fund our sliding-scale fee program, which removes financial barriers so low-income residents in Coatesville and the surrounding region can access life-changing mental health care regardless of their ability to pay.

CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION
GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Holding Our Pride and Equality Counseling Center | Direct Service Programs & General Operations | FY2026

1. Organization Overview: Aims, Initiatives, Achievements & Distinctiveness

Holding Our Pride and Equality Counseling Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit mental health outpatient therapy practice headquartered in Coatesville, Pennsylvania, in the heart of Chester County. Founded and led by Dr. Lauren Lawson, our mission is to provide affirming, accessible, and high-quality mental health services that help individuals, couples, and families build happier, more hopeful lives — regardless of their financial means.

What We Do

We offer a comprehensive continuum of outpatient mental health services, including individual therapy, couples and marriage counseling, family therapy, teen and adolescent therapy, premarital counseling, trauma therapy, anxiety therapy, depression therapy, and LGBTQ+-affirming care. We also provide clinical supervision and consultation for emerging mental health professionals, strengthening the broader behavioral health workforce in Chester County.

Who We Serve

Holding Our Pride and Equality Counseling Center primarily serves Chester County residents, with a particular focus on underserved populations in and around Coatesville — one of the most economically challenged communities in the county. Our clients include teenagers navigating adolescent mental health crises, adults managing anxiety, trauma, and depression, parents struggling with work-life balance and family conflict, couples seeking to strengthen or repair their relationships, and LGBTQ+ individuals who require a safe, affirming therapeutic environment.

We currently serve approximately 100–200 Chester County residents annually and are actively growing our capacity to meet rising community demand.

What Makes Us Distinctive

Several qualities set Holding Our Pride and Equality Counseling Center apart from other mental health providers in the region:

- **Accessibility and affordability:** We operate a sliding-scale fee structure so that income is never a barrier to mental health care.
- **Affirming, inclusive care:** We are a fully LGBTQ+-affirming practice, providing a welcoming environment for clients of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and expressions.
- **Whole-family approach:** We offer services across the lifespan — from teens to adults to families — under one roof, creating continuity of care for entire households.
- **Community rootedness:** As a nonprofit, every dollar of revenue is reinvested into our programs and mission rather than returning profits to shareholders.

2. Funding Request

What Specific Needs Are Being Addressed?

Holding Our Pride and Equality Counseling Center is requesting \$10,000 from the Chester County Community Foundation to directly fund our Sliding-Scale Fee Assistance Program. This program subsidizes the cost of therapy sessions for low-income and uninsured/underinsured clients who have been screened and determined to be unable to afford standard therapy rates.

Mental health need in Chester County is significant and growing. Coatesville, where our practice is located, has a poverty rate substantially higher than the county average, and many residents lack adequate behavioral health insurance coverage. National data from the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) indicates that cost is the single greatest barrier to mental health treatment — more than 40% of adults with mental health conditions who went without care in the past year cited cost as the primary reason. Without a subsidized fee structure, many of our most vulnerable community members — working families, young people, and adults in crisis — would simply go without care.

Grant funding directly supplements the gap between what clients can afford to pay and the true cost of delivering a therapy session. This allows our clinicians to dedicate a meaningful portion of their caseloads to clients on reduced-fee arrangements without compromising the financial sustainability of the organization.

Why Is It Important to Fund This Now?

The urgency of this funding request is driven by three converging forces: rising demand, shrinking federal resources, and a persistent workforce shortage.

First, demand for mental health services has surged, particularly among adolescents and young adults, in the post-pandemic period. Our waitlist has grown, and we are regularly contacted by community members who have been unable to find affordable outpatient care from other providers.

Second, federal and state funding cuts are reducing the safety-net resources that low-income Chester County residents rely upon. As public mental health programs face reductions, community-based nonprofits like Holding Our Pride and Equality Counseling Center become the primary access point for vulnerable individuals who fall between the cracks.

Third, CCCF's own recognition of the current climate — and its commitment to supporting nonprofits that are proactively planning and diversifying revenue — aligns directly with our request. Philanthropic funding through CCCF will allow us to serve more people now while we continue building long-term sustainability through diverse revenue streams.

How Will Results & Impact Be Demonstrated?

We are committed to responsible stewardship of grant funds and will track and report the following measurable outcomes:

- Number of sliding-scale clients served using CCCF grant funds during the grant period
- Total number of therapy sessions subsidized
- Average client-reported improvement in mental health functioning (measured via standardized intake and discharge tools such as the PHQ-9 and GAD-7)
- Client retention rate (number of clients completing a recommended course of treatment)
- Geographic breakdown of clients served, including % from Chester County

We will provide a written impact report to CCCF at the close of the grant period. We welcome site visits and are happy to share anonymized case studies that illustrate the human impact of this funding.