

CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

Date: 8/6/26

Contact Information

Organization Name: Barnstone Art for Kids
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Phone: (610)917-0140
Website: www.barnstoneartforkids.org
Year Incorporated: 2012
FEIN: 38-3872177

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Board Chair Name: Carrie Marcus
Board Chair Approval (check here): X
Primary Contact Name: Sean Halloran
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Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

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

Mission: Barnstone Art for Kids uses the power of art and community connection to foster resilience in children facing adversity. We enact our mission by providing therapeutic, mentored art programs for children and teens who have experienced trauma.

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): Participants in our programs reside in the Greater Phoenixville region, including parts of Chester and Montgomery counties.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served: Last year, Barnstone Art for Kids served 223 children and adolescents through our programs. Our signature programs, Power of Art and Emerging Voices along with their alumni components served 56 children here in the barn. Their participation reflects a value for the services that exceeds \$75,000, but no costs were incurred by any of our families. We also served an additional 19 children during our Summer programs. Of the children served in these programs, the overwhelming majority lived in the 19460 zip code. Less than 20% of our participants attended from outside of Phoenixville, and most of those came from the Spring City, Royersford, Upper Providence, Collegeville regions. Additionally, we served 148 children through our community-based On the Go programs. These programs were delivered at Barkley Elementary School, Phoenixville Area Middle School, Mom's House, and the Phoenixville Public Library. Virtually all of these participants live in our community. These demographics aside, the most defining data point for the 2025 cohort is an average ACE score of 6.35. An ACE score measures childhood trauma (including abuse, neglect, parental incarceration, or household instability) on a scale of 0 to 10. A score of 4 or higher is globally recognized as a threshold for severe trauma. At 6.35, the population served represents an extraordinarily high-risk, highly traumatized demographic. For context, this is the highest average ACE score across our entire 10-year dataset (up from 5.2 in 2024). It indicates that Barnstone's 2025 cohort was composed of youth facing intense socio-emotional adversity.

Annual Budget \$250,200

<u>70</u> % of budget for program expenses
<u>20</u> % of budget for administrative expenses
<u>10</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses
<u>100</u> % total

<u>1.75</u> # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>7</u> # of Board Volunteers
<u>35</u> # of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>1437</u> # of Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources: Detwiler Family Foundation, Barnstone Live Art Spectacular Fundraiser, PCHF, Sheila Fortune Foundation

Is this grant proposal for: General Operating ☒

Grant Amount Requested from the Community Foundation: \$ 6,000

Proposal Summary: A grant to Barnstone Art for Kids will support children, many of whom have experienced significant childhood trauma, participating in one of our signature Power of Art programs.

II. CHESTER COUNTY COMMUNITY FOUNDATION GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Barnstone Art for Kids- Proposal Narrative Responses

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

Barnstone Art for Kids is driven by an urgent call to action: addressing the escalating youth mental health crisis and the shrinking access to traditional care. In Pennsylvania, over 55% of youth experiencing major depressive episodes receive no treatment. Barnstone serves as a vital bridge in our community's behavioral health safety net, providing equitable access to preventative, creative mental health support for children who have experienced trauma and childhood adversity. Guided by our 2026-2030 Strategic Plan, our mission is to empower vulnerable youth navigating the aftermath of trauma through trauma-informed art and mentorship, fostering resilience, healing, and growth. We envision a community where all children impacted by trauma have meaningful access to these transformative tools to cultivate hope. This vision is operationally anchored by our four core values: Safety & Trust, Creative Expression, Resilience & Growth, and Community & Inclusion. These pillars serve as the behavioral foundation for all programming.

To realize these aims, Barnstone is executing forward-looking initiatives designed to scale our impact safely and responsively. A primary focus is expanding our geographic reach into adjacent, historically underserved areas, removing traditional barriers to care by meeting kids directly in their own neighborhoods. This localized expansion is supported by finalizing the "Barnstone Playbook" in Fall/Winter 2026. The "Playbook" is a comprehensive operations manual capturing our time-tested, trauma-informed protocols and curriculum delivery guides to establish organizational readiness for strategic growth. Furthermore, we are expanding our holistic support systems by embedding dedicated cohorts from *Power of Art*, our signature elementary-age program, directly inside localized partner spaces like The Heart (Ann's Heart). Outcome metrics demonstrate that participating children are actively benefiting, and families deeply value these neighborhood-based interventions.

Our evolution as a mature, data-driven organization is marked by several milestone achievements. Our recent strategic planning process involved a comprehensive retrospective review of previous goals, revealing that the vast majority were met or significantly advanced. The effort culminated in our 2026-2030 roadmap focused on expanding impact and long-term sustainability. To support this trajectory, we expanded our Program Manager role to increased operational hours, enhancing internal capacity to monitor specialized curriculum delivery. We also achieved critical governance milestones by partnering with *Quest for the Best*, a legal services non-profit who provided a proactive structural audit; optimizing our financial reporting classifications, donation transparency, and regional compliance. This comprehensive audit also reviewed and updated all of our operational processes and documentation. Finally, our community footprint was amplified by securing official status as an *SEI Cares Partner*, yielding increased corporate volunteer engagement and vital grant funding. These activities occurred alongside deepened ties with local schools, libraries, and family support non-profits.

What distinguishes Barnstone Art for Kids from traditional youth organizations is our intentional synthesis of advanced behavioral science and deep, relational community care. We deliver a disciplined, multimodal intervention deliberately engineered to build emotional resilience. Our programming is designed and supervised under a rigorous scientist-practitioner framework by Executive Director Sean Halloran, Ph.D., who holds an M.A. in Art Psychotherapy from Hahnemann University and a Ph.D. in

School Psychology from Temple University. Our clinical leadership enables us to utilize tools like the *Sanctuary Model*, an evidence-based organizational blueprint for safety rituals and emotional processing. Our work rejects rigid clinical labeling in favor of deep, healing relationships. We deliver this care at 100% no cost to families.

2. Funding Request

What specific needs & issues are being addressed, via what programs and services?

Traditional behavioral health infrastructure across our region is overwhelmed by long waitlists, prohibitive costs, and severe workforce shortages. As a result, children who have experienced Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and severe trauma are routinely left without support during critical developmental windows, allowing unaddressed psychological distress to compound.

Barnstone Art for Kids directly addresses this resource gap by providing low-barrier, preventative mental health interventions engineered to down-regulate physiological stress and build cognitive resilience. Our signature programs, *Power of Art* (for elementary youth) and *Emerging Voices* (for older youth) pair small cohorts of six children with trained adult Mentors for sustained, one-to-one relational support grounded in evidence-based art psychotherapy strategies. While it costs \$2,030 to fund a single child's participation in our year-long cohorts (delivering over \$12,000 of therapeutic value per group), we leverage highly trained volunteer Mentors to ensure this vital resource remains completely accessible to Chester County families regardless of financial circumstances.

Why is it important to fund this now?

Funding is critical at this exact juncture because the gap between youth mental health needs and clinical care capacity has reached a tipping point in Pennsylvania. Early, community-based intervention prevents trauma from escalating into severe, lifelong behavioral and physical health challenges. Preventative care is no longer just a secondary option; it is an essential frontline pillar of our regional safety net.

Barnstone is uniquely prepared to address this crisis immediately. Having recently fortified our operational scaffolding; expanding clinical oversight hours, updating internal governance, and establishing our operational Playbook, our infrastructure is primed to scale. Timely grant support allows us to convert our strategic roadmap into direct community action: launching new cohorts, placing trained Mentors in underserved neighborhoods, and eliminating financial and transportation barriers for families before crisis points occur.

How will results & impact be demonstrated?

Barnstone evaluates success through a multi-layered framework combining validated clinical metrics, fidelity tracking, and participant feedback:

- **Quantitative Clinical Tracking (Mentor Evaluation Tool):** We measure individual child progress across program cycles using our proprietary *Mentor Evaluation Tool (MET)*. Overseen by Barnstone staff, this tool tracks key indicators of social-emotional growth, emotional self-regulation, coping skills, and psychological distress reduction.
- **Program Fidelity & Program Supervision:** Under the scientist-practitioner oversight of Dr. Sean Halloran and our Program Manager, all group dynamics, curriculum delivery, and mentor

interactions undergo continuous developmental evaluation to ensure strict alignment with evidence-based trauma practices.

- **Capacity & Retention Tracking:** We monitor operational impact through participant retention rates, mentor group capacity, and neighborhood cohort expansion metrics, ensuring that every dollar invested maximizes direct service hours.
- **Caregiver Feedback Loops:** Quantitative and qualitative survey data collected from our most important stakeholders, parents and families participating in our work.