

I. GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

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Date 9/18/2026

Contact Information

Organization Name: Chester County Futures
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Phone: (610) 458-9926
Website: <http://www.ccfutures.org>
Year Incorporated: 1996
FEIN: 31-1822506

ED/CEO Name: Katie Duffus
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Board Chair Name: James Nee
Board Chair Approval (check here): ☒
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Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

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

Mission: Chester County Futures' mission is to support and connect students with opportunities, resources and mentorship to empower success in school and post-secondary life.

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): Chester County Futures primarily serves the Coatesville, Kennett, Oxford, and Phoenixville regions, with programming focused on students in the Coatesville Area, Kennett Consolidated, Oxford Area, Octorara, and Phoenixville Area school districts.

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served. (Include Chester County # &/or % served.) Chester County Futures (CCF) serves low-resourced students in Chester County, Pennsylvania, through its free Passport and Steps 4 Success programs. Students in grades 9–12 receive academic enrichment, life-skills development, and college and career guidance, while Steps 4 Success provides continued support for students pursuing college or vocational training. CCF serves students in the Oxford, Phoenixville Area, Kennett Consolidated, Coatesville Area, and Octorara Area school districts, helping reduce barriers to educational and career opportunities.

CCF serves more than 300 diverse students annually through academic enrichment, mentoring, college and career readiness, and scholarships. The organization serves students in Chester County, including those in the Coatesville Area, Kennett Consolidated, Oxford Area, Phoenixville Area, and Octorara Area school districts.

Annual Budget \$841,281

32% of budget for program expenses

61% of budget for administrative expenses

7% of budget for fundraising expenses

100% = total

3 # of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff

14 # of Board Volunteers

100# of Active Non-Board Volunteers

1,200 # of Volunteer Hours

Top 3-5 funding sources: Globus Medical – \$150,000

Switchpoint Foundation - \$70,000

Justamere Foundation- \$50,000

Depuy Synthes - \$20,000

Jennifer McNeil Foundation - \$25,000

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

If Capacity Building Proposal, the focus is:

	Contingency Planning		Partnerships, Collaborations		Merger, Closure
	Mission, Vision, Strategy		Board Engagement & Leadership		Marketing, Communication
	Resource Development		Operations		Technology
	If other, please describe:				

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

Proposal Summary: *(a few sentences, please):* Chester County Futures (CCF) seeks general operating support for its Passport and Steps 4 Success programs, which provide free, long-term academic, college, career, and personal development support to low-resourced students in Chester County. Funding will help sustain these programs, reduce barriers to educational and workforce opportunities, and ensure students have the resources, guidance, and confidence to pursue their goals and build successful futures.



For 30 years, Chester County Futures (CCF) has helped young people in Chester County see a future for themselves and then helped them get there. Founded under the Chester County Community Foundation, in 1996, CCF was created to address the growing opportunity gap between students from low-resourced communities and their more advantaged peers. Our work is rooted in a simple belief: every young person has potential, but not every young person has the same access to opportunity.

CCF provides free, long-term support to students in the Oxford, Phoenixville Area, Kennett Consolidated, Coatesville Area, and our newest site Octorara Area School Districts through two core programs: Passport and Steps 4 Success. Together, these programs provide a clear pathway from high school through post-secondary education, vocational training, and career exploration.

Passport, CCF's flagship program, supports students from ninth through twelfth grade with academic enrichment, life-skills workshops, and individualized guidance as they plan for life after high school. Students receive support with SAT preparation and test-taking strategies, college selection and applications, financial aid, financial literacy, workplace readiness, community volunteerism, and career exploration. In recent years, Passport has also expanded its workforce development opportunities through corporate site visits, college-prep planning, and visits to local colleges and universities.

CCF continues to adapt Passport to meet the changing needs of students. Recognizing racial disparities in the STEM workforce, CCF launched STEM Career Exploration in 2023–2024 to introduce students to STEM pathways and connect them with professionals working in the field. In 2026, CCF is adding Careers & Cash (CCC): Envision, a financial literacy initiative developed by Stand By Me Delaware NexGen, to help students make informed decisions about money and prepare to pursue their career goals with confidence.

These efforts are producing strong results. One hundred percent of Passport students graduate from high school on time, compared with a statewide Pennsylvania graduation rate of 87%. While high school graduation is an important milestone, CCF's goal is to help students understand their options and feel prepared to take their next step.

That support continues through Steps 4 Success, which CCF launched in 2016. Steps 4 Success works with students as they transition into and through college or vocational programs, providing scholarship assistance, individualized advising, mentoring, and connections to internships and other opportunities. For students who are the first in their families to pursue college or vocational training, having someone to help navigate applications, financial challenges, academic decisions, and career opportunities can make a significant difference.

CCF recognizes that college is not the only path to a meaningful and successful future. For students interested in other options, CCF provides information about trade and vocational



programs and workforce development opportunities. Our goal is not to direct every student toward the same outcome, but to make sure every student has the information, support, and opportunity to make an informed decision about their own future.

Funding Request and Community Need

CCF is seeking general operating support for Passport and Steps 4 Success to sustain the staff, programming, and resources that make this continuum of support possible. Flexible funding is especially important because it allows CCF to maintain the quality and consistency of both programs while responding to the individual needs of students.

Across Chester County, access to out-of-school learning opportunities varies widely. Students from higher-resourced families may have access to tutoring, test preparation, college counseling, professional networks, enrichment activities, and other experiences that help prepare them for life after high school. Low-resourced students may have the same talent and ambition but fewer opportunities to access those supports.

Many of the students at CCF serve face barriers such as cost, transportation, limited academic enrichment, and a lack of access to college and career guidance. Some will be the first in their families to pursue college or vocational training and may not have someone at home who can help them navigate the process. These challenges can affect more than academic progress; they can also influence students' confidence, sense of belonging, and belief in what is possible for their future.

CCF helps level that playing field by providing consistent, relationship-based support throughout high school and beyond. Passport gives students the tools and experiences to begin planning for their futures, while Steps 4 Success helps them stay on track once they begin college or vocational training. Together, the programs address both the practical and personal barriers students may face.

The impact is often best captured in the words of the students themselves. One recent CCF student shared, "The program helped me overcome my biggest challenge: believing that going to college is achievable." For CCF, this is at the heart of the work. A student may have the ability to succeed but need someone to help them recognize that possibility, develop a plan, and keep moving forward when challenges arise.

Funding this work is especially important now because preparing students for success requires more than a single intervention. Students need opportunities to explore careers, build financial knowledge, develop life skills, gain exposure to college and the workforce, and have trusted adults they can turn to throughout the process. General operating support allows CCF to provide that consistent foundation through both Passport and Steps 4 Success.



Results and Impact

CCF measures success not only by whether students participate in its programs, but by whether they are better prepared to make informed decisions and achieve their goals. For Passport, CCF tracks student participation and progress, with high school graduation as a primary outcome. The program's 100% graduation rate demonstrates the strong results of its sustained support.

CCF also tracks students' engagement with academic enrichment, college and career preparation, financial literacy, STEM and workforce exploration, advising, and other program activities. Through Steps 4 Success, CCF monitors students' continued engagement in post-secondary education or vocational training and their use of advising, mentoring, scholarships, internships, and other resources.

Ultimately, CCF's impact is both personal and long-term. Students gain academic confidence, practical life skills, self-advocacy, problem-solving skills, and the confidence to pursue ambitious goals. They gain access to opportunities that may otherwise be out of reach and, just as importantly, develop a stronger sense of belonging and belief in their own potential.

When students succeed, the impact extends beyond the individual. They are better positioned to contribute to their families, workplaces, and communities and to become the next generation of professionals, leaders, and role models.

For three decades, Chester County Futures has worked to make sure that a student's circumstances do not determine how far they can go. General operating support for Passport and Steps 4 Success will help CCF continue providing the consistent, high-quality support students need to graduate high school, pursue college or vocational training, explore meaningful careers, and build futures defined by choice, stability, and success.