

I. GRANT PROPOSAL SUMMARY SHEET

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Date: 09/14/2026

Contact Information

Light House Rehabilitation Center d/b/a Lighthouse Vocational Services

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Year Incorporated: 1975

FEIN: 23-1973053

ED/CEO Name: Gerard McMullen

ED/CEO E-mail: garymcmullen@lighthousevoc.org

Board Chair Name: Landis Zimmerman

Board Chair Approval (check here): ☒

Primary Contact Name: Nicole Twyne

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Organization Information:

Field/s of Interest:

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

Mission: The mission of Lighthouse Vocational Services (Lighthouse) is to promote growth, opportunity, and hope for persons with disabilities based on Christian values and principles. Lighthouse accomplishes its mission by providing high-quality, person-centered programming including vocational services, educational enrichment, and community integration experiences. The driving force of the organization is the belief that God created each individual with value and a purpose for life.

Geographic Area Served (If not all of Chester County, specify primary Chester County regions served): Chester County

Describe Population Served & Annual Number of People Served. (Include Chester County # &/or % served.) Lighthouse focuses on the needs of people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD), autism, and mental health conditions and supports students aged 14 to older adults. Lighthouse offers a variety of onsite, community-based, and online opportunities, helping participants gain skills, explore interests, and prepare for sustained employment. Lighthouse serves approximately 275 participants annually and currently serves 26 individuals in Chester County.

Annual Budget \$ <u>5,469,550</u>	<u>59</u>	# of Full-Time Equivalent Paid Staff
<u>80</u> % of budget for program expenses	<u>10</u>	# of Board Volunteers
<u>12</u> % of budget for administrative expenses	<u>19</u>	# of Active Non-Board Volunteers
<u>8</u> % of budget for fundraising expenses	<u>615</u>	# of Volunteer Hours

100% = total

Top 3-5 funding sources: Edith L. Trees Charitable Trust, Vanguard Charitable- The Stabler Fund, High Foundation

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: \$ 5,000

Proposal Summary: (a few sentences, please)

Lighthouse is requesting \$5,000 for general operating support to extend employment services to more individuals with disabilities in Chester County. As of 12/31/25, 605 individuals with disabilities in Chester County do not have access to services, and 316 of those individuals are in the emergency category, which indicates critical need for services.



II. GRANT PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

NONPROFIT OVERVIEW

Overall Aims:

Founded in 1975, the mission of Lighthouse is to promote growth, opportunity, and hope for persons with disabilities based on Christian values and principles. The driving force of the organization is the belief that God created each individual with value and a purpose for life. Lighthouse focuses on the needs of people with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD), autism, and mental health conditions and supports students aged 14 to older adults. Lighthouse stands as a beacon of hope for individuals with disabilities, who have been historically marginalized by society, as the Lighthouse staff advocate for their inclusion as valuable members of the workforce and of society at large.

Lighthouse has nearly 70 staff serving approximately 275 individuals with disabilities per year, demonstrating significant growth beyond pre-pandemic numbers (160 participants per year as of early 2020). While primarily serving Lancaster County, PA, Lighthouse extends services to individuals in three additional PA counties: Chester, Lebanon, and Dauphin.

Lighthouse provides individuals with disabilities with access to customized training and vocational experiences focused on helping them meet measurable goals, increase their independence, and improve their quality of life. Lighthouse's goals and programs derive from the overall mission to equip, support, empower, and integrate people with disabilities into the community, so they can earn higher paychecks, increase their self-confidence, enhance their social skills, and become better citizens.

Key Initiatives:

Lighthouse offers a variety of onsite and community-based services that meet the needs and goals of individuals with differing levels of ability.

1. **Small Group Employment** provides a coach to support two or three individuals, called Mobile Work Crews, as they work for partnering businesses.
2. **Supported Employment** secures job placement and provides one-on-one coaching at the site of the job to help the individuals have strong beginnings in their careers.
3. In the **Student Transition Program**, students between the ages of 14-21 gain valuable work experience through job shadowing and work-based learning experiences.
4. **Vocational Training** is an onsite program focused on training participants for the labor market. All participants are paid at least the minimum wage.
5. In **Community Partnerships**, small groups of participants volunteer at local nonprofits and churches through Lighthouse's extensive partner network.
6. **Strengthening Pathways Adult Training** is an onsite program that offers diverse adult education opportunities for the enhancement of individuals' skills and quality of life.
7. **Without Walls Virtual Learning** extends adult education opportunities to individuals remotely.
8. **STEPS** (Shining Through Every Person's Success) is a unique, hybrid program that gives individuals access to both life skills training and paid work opportunities.

Key Achievements & Distinctiveness:

With over 50 years of service to those with disabilities, Lighthouse has a long history of making a positive impact on the people and communities it serves. Lighthouse has been recognized by the Office of



Developmental Programs (ODP) as a leading organization in the region and industry. Amid the pandemic, ODP recognized Lighthouse as a regional trailblazer in making virtual learning available quickly and spanning different interests and skills. In 2025, Lighthouse was recognized by the Pennsylvania Senate and The House of Representatives and received official citations celebrating 50 years of excellent service. The documents recognized Lighthouse for its leadership in the community, its expansion of programs over the years, and its significant contributions in improving the quality of life for individuals.

Below are some of Lighthouse's practices that showcase its uniqueness:

1. **Range of Services and Clientele:** The wide range of programming offered is unique for the region Lighthouse serves. It is rare for similar organizations to offer programs such as Strengthening Pathways Adult Training, Without Walls Virtual Learning, STEPS, and the Student Transition Program, which has a low government reimbursement rate.
2. **Subsidized Rate:** Lighthouse provides significant financial assistance to those without traditional Medicaid financial support. Lighthouse is one of the only providers in the region to even extend access to these individuals, many of whom are from the Amish and Mennonite communities. Individuals are billed at a subsidized rate of less than 30% of the program rates, and Lighthouse fundraises to cover the remaining 70% of their costs. Approximately 15 people receive this support annually.
3. **Transportation Access:** Lack of access to transportation is one of the most significant challenges for individuals with disabilities, and it hinders their success in acquiring and maintaining sustained employment. To meet this need, Lighthouse has a fleet of nearly 30 vehicles to transport individuals to its location and to community-based employment and volunteer opportunities each week. Lighthouse vehicles travel over 4,000 miles every week.
4. **Partnerships and High Acceptance Rate:** Lighthouse partners with approximately 200 businesses across Southeastern PA, making internships, volunteerism, and paid work opportunities possible for program participants. Lighthouse also partners with the Office of Developmental Programs (ODP) and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) and accepts a high percentage of client referrals from these entities, demonstrating a significantly high rate of access.

FUNDING REQUEST

Description:

In Chester County, Lighthouse serves individuals through Supported Employment, a personalized program that assists those who are ready to seek work in the marketplace. An Employment Specialist works one-on-one with individuals to perform job searches, fill out applications, and practice mock interviews. Employment Specialists work with individuals for up to 24 or 48 months, through multiple service phases, including job development, placement, maintenance, job stabilization, case closure, and, if needed, extended services. Throughout these phases, Employment Specialists provide one-on-one training at job sites, helping individuals gain and maintain natural supports with work supervisors and other employees until they are stabilized in Competitive Integrated Employment and no longer need coaching support from Lighthouse staff. Through this program, Lighthouse serves a high number of individuals with mental health conditions. Approximately 75% of individuals in Supported Employment have mental health diagnoses.

Two Employment Specialists currently serve 26 individuals in Chester County. Many individuals have excelled at their placements and no longer need Lighthouse support. Other individuals still receive support, and staff work closely with them to find jobs that align their needs with those of employers. Lighthouse partners with many local businesses to provide paid work opportunities for individuals. In Chester County, these businesses include Herr's Factory, Dollar Tree, Forge Hill Farms, Penn DOT Photo License Center, Northbrook Marketplace, and Giant stores.



Lighthouse is requesting \$5,000 for its Supported Employment program in Chester County. Funds will help Lighthouse extend access to more individuals in need of services. Currently, two individuals are on Lighthouse's waiting list for services in Chester County. Lighthouse expects more referrals to come in throughout the year.

Need/Importance of Funding Now:

People with disabilities are underserved in Pennsylvania and across the nation. As of December 2025, 11,462 individuals with IDD in PA were on a waiting list for services. Of the total individuals, 4,216 were at risk and needed services immediately; 4,980 would need services within 2 years; and 2,266 would need services within 5 years. An additional 2,528 individuals were waiting for autism programs (PA Waiting List Campaign). As of 12/31/25, 605 individuals with disabilities in Chester County do not have access to services, and 316 of those individuals are in the emergency category, which indicates critical need for services.

Employment and community engagement statistics for individuals with disabilities demonstrate the significance of this need. Nationally, during 2025, only 22.8% of individuals with a disability were employed, much lower than 65.2% of individuals without a disability who were employed (Bureau of Labor Statistics). Factors that contribute to unemployment are the limitations of a person's disability, social stigma and employer discrimination, and lack of access to vocational training, one-on-one support, and transportation. All of Lighthouse's program participants are considered low-income individuals even if they live with their families or in residential homes.

Impact:

The goal of the Employment Services program is to improve economic freedom and quality of life for individuals with disabilities, by helping them obtain sustainable employment in the community. Access to employment gives individuals the opportunity to contribute meaningfully to their communities and to become more self-sufficient.

Individuals in Chester County have already been positively impacted by the Supported Employment program. One individual from Parkesburg had a traumatic experience in late 2024 and reached out to Lighthouse staff for support in finding employment in 2025. She was initially hired by a grocery store in their floral department, but the job did not end up being the right fit. Lighthouse staff advocated for her by speaking to the store manager and HR, and they were able to find another job in the store that aligned better with her skills. The individual loves her job and has gained independence and confidence through her employment.

In Fiscal Year 2026 (through June 30, 2026), Lighthouse served 57 individuals in Chester County. Fourteen of those individuals were placed in Competitive Integrated Employment and no longer need support. In Fiscal Year 2027 (through June 30, 2027), the expected outcomes for Supported Employment in Chester County are to serve 30 individuals and to partner with at least 12 job sites.

The program's success is measured by the total number of individuals served and the total number placed in Competitive Integrated Employment. Success is also measured on the individual level, through goal setting, implementation, and documentation completed by staff. Progression for the job seeker in Supported Employment is measured as they complete the various job phases. As needed, Lighthouse's Employment Specialists adjust job searches and job retention plans to help individuals achieve employment success. Additionally, individuals served by Lighthouse attend quarterly and annual meetings which include their family members, Lighthouse staff, Support Coordinators from their respective counties, staff from their residential homes (if applicable), and other support team members. The goals, needs, and progress of each client are assessed during these meetings, and adjustments are made to support their continued optimal growth. Skill development is tracked and documented in participants' Individualized Support Plans (ISPs).