

F.M. KIRBY FOUNDATION SOLICITATION EVALUATION FORM

DATE: April 21, 2020

REQUEST DATE: April 14, 2020

Last grant acknowledgement: Yes

Program Area: Human Services

APPLICANT:

Cornerstone Family Programs
80 Washington Street
Morristown, NJ 07960

CONTACT: Ms. Patrice Picard, Executive Director

PHONE: (973) 288-9249

PAYEE OTHER THAN ADDRESSEE:

AMOUNT REQUESTED: \$150,000 **NATURE OF REQUEST:** For general operating support

GRANT HISTORY

LAST GRANT DATE: 9/16/2019

LAST GRANT AMOUNT: \$150,000

FYE DATE: 12/31/2018

AFS DATE: 5/14/2019

2015	\$170,000	9/14/2015	Toward the Morristown Neighborhood House Preschool Program and After School Program for Kindergarten through 8th Grade-\$70,000
2016	\$150,000	9/12/2016	Toward the Morristown Neighborhood House Preschool Program and After School Program for Kindergarten through 8th Grade-\$70,000
2017	\$150,000	9/15/2017	Toward the Morristown Neighborhood House Preschool Program and After School Program for Kindergarten through 8th Grade-\$70,000
2018	\$150,000	9/17/2018	
2019	\$150,000	9/16/2019	

KMK endorsement received.

JFT COMMENTS: The FY18 audit was completed on 5/14/19. Due to early submission, we are using the same audit as last year to process this request, and those comments are within the 2019 EF. They began financial modeling related to revenue loss from program closures when the COVID-19 was declared a pandemic. FY19 budget actuals look to be positive, with a \$35K surplus. The FY20 operating forecast projects a \$212K deficit (after adjustments but most likely still to change). "Proceeds from the sale of the Elm Street building were invested in T-bills with one maturing at the end of March. The Board approved moving that investment into a money market account to be used as emergency reserves." There are positive developments in State Reimbursement for childcare, County Reimbursement for the adult day program and possibly their other county-funded programs, and loans applied for through the Families First Coronavirus Response Act (FFCRA), the CARES Act (for nonprofits) and the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP).

SDK, JJK, and I visited the Morristown Neighborhood House (NABE) in early February. Obviously, this was prior to the COVID-19 crisis, and it was an enlightening and inspirational visit.

APPLICANT: Cornerstone Family Programs

Ayo Wilson (COO and EVP as of 1/3/19), who joined us throughout, is a competent leader, and I'm sure the Senior Staff, along with Board of Cornerstone, will weather the storm. I bring up the visit because we witnessed so many of the NABE staff who are critically impacted by the pandemic and many were likely part of the ALICE population (81% of staff make \$40K or less per year) in the first place. Cornerstone has been proactive in helping staff qualify for the many leaves they are eligible for under the FFCRA. We delved into preschool expansion at the visit, and it's noted that they could "experience challenges getting classrooms ready because of bans on construction." Another challenge may be State funding cuts for preschool expansion.

This request is very well done, with a comprehensive update on response to the COVID-19 crisis. They continue to offer services for their programs (preschool, afterschool, youth, and senior) either virtually (good job on their website to provide information on download instructions as well as resources available, including free food in Morristown and free Wi-Fi) or by phone support. They have teamed up with the Community Food Bank of NJ and Calvary Baptist Church to distribute food boxes as, when open, they feed 300 children each day.

Though Cornerstone is uncertain of future developments (as are all), they did include information on preschool, afterschool/teen, senior and caregiver, and programs "Going Forward with hope and possibility." The NABE has become Cornerstone's shining star after "saving" the establishment in late 2013. The Board is strong, and leadership has taken required steps to address critical challenges at this time. I recommend the budgeted \$150K.

JJK COMMENTS: The request here captures an organization that appears to have acted quickly, decisively, and comprehensively when Covid-19 became declared a pandemic. Families losing jobs. Staff furloughed. Seniors and caregivers stressed. Female veterans, stress. Afterschool to help reset. Teens. Cancelled gala. Summer camp. At the same time, the request also revealed to me the very cruel ways this crisis puts certain populations in a vise grip. The very people who are more likely to be laid off right now or work constrained are the very people who might lean most upon Cornerstone program. I think too about the female veterans in the Operation Sisterhood program, who, after readjusting to civilian life, are now inundated with talk about "frontlines" and "wars" and "personal protection equipment" and are not able to come together in person and support one another. I think too of the teens the NABE serves, who had a safe and positive environment in which they could grow as individuals and are now unable to celebrate milestones of young adulthood with their peers.

Summer camps as of now are still planned; I sincerely hope this helps NABE children re-establish a sense of normal after a stressful spring.

Under these circumstances, Cornerstone has done an admirable job of still trying to get resources to families virtually or by phone. It's good to see there are a number of means of getting food to clients, including Interfaith Food Pantry.

I really appreciate the point JFT makes about the NABE staff. It's easy to just think of the families served, but the NABE staff is just as likely to be feeling pinched right now. It sounds like they are actively helping staff apply for unemployment and seek out other protections and resources.

APPLICANT: Cornerstone Family Programs

I too was impressed by Ayo Wilson; her resume, her poise, and her fluency with the NABE programs and services, across ages, bode well for her future there. I hope they can hold on to her, as she should be a great candidate for the top position here.

I recommend the budgeted \$150K. The Neighborhood House is just that: a home that brings together neighbors in communal care for their children and one another. I look forward to when neighbors can be together again.

SDK COMMENTS: Looks like they may have been a little slow on the PPP application. Important, timely investment in our Morristown-based community and in line with our target.

DISPOSITION:

- Declination
- Hold for review on/about:
- Approval for: **\$150,000**
- Hold for Board Review
- Insert Information:
- Other:

Initials: *AW* Date: *4/21/20*
Check #: _____ Date: _____