

Barclay Friends Proposal to Friends Foundation for the Aging (FFA)

I. Executive Summary

Barclay Friends requests \$25,000 to help us strengthen our gardening program for the benefit of residents. As we continue to work through the challenges of the pandemic, our program will offer opportunities for residents to garden in safe and accessible spaces made possible by the initial support of FFA in 2020. With pandemic restrictions beginning to ease, we anticipate more opportunities for this program to flourish for residents. We are also pleased to offer a new garden area for employees and the outside community. This extension of the program will offer 18 raised garden beds for gardening by staff and outside community gardeners.

II. Barclay Friends History and Background

Barclay Friends is a non-profit community for older adults and an affiliate of Kendal. Quaker values are reflected in the manner of care we provide. Since 2000, we have provided a gardening therapy program to instill a sense of purpose and enrich lives through activities around flowers, gardening and access to nature.

We continually work to improve diversity at the board and leadership staff level. Our direct care staff represent a diverse racial, ethnic and cultural backgrounds including white, African Americans, Africans, and Jamaicans. Our board and leadership team do not fully reflect this diversity; however, we are actively examining ways to begin to positively impact equity, diversity and inclusion at all levels of our organization through a series of facilitated conversations to develop ways to address prejudice and biases in our organization.

A new partner this year, the West Chester Green Team, is dedicated to helping fellow neighbors in our community who have varying economic means and are facing food insecurity; their members are passionate about the benefits of gardening and are committed to environmental protection.

During this year, we will examine whether the gardening program can serve as a catalyst to increase diversity, equity and inclusion on our campus by helping diverse groups work together in new ways around a common cause – growing fresh produce in gardens.

III. Project Details

Problem/Need Statement

Barclay Friends requests support of our gardening program for the benefit of residents, staff members, and members of the outside West Chester borough where we live. First and foremost, skilled nursing and personal care residents will be offered varied opportunities to garden, arrange flowers, or to simply enjoy the natural world both indoors and outside. The program helps increase socialization, productivity, education about the natural world, and a sense of pride in accomplishing tasks.

Support from Friends Foundation for the Aging will help us continue our program for residents in personal care and memory care as pandemic related restrictions begin to ease. All of our residents in skilled nursing, personal care and memory care will benefit from the gardening

program including planting seeds, growing vegetables, floral arranging, and viewing the activities in the employee and community gardens.

For the past few years, we have provided garden space for employees to grow their own fresh produce to take home and enjoy with their families. These gardens have provided a source of pride among our staff, especially for some individuals who lack space to have gardens at their homes or for those that have never gardened before. To help improve and continue this program, we are establishing 10 new gardening beds for employees so that they may enjoy gardening through the season. Our goals will be to strengthen employee involvement in gardening to benefit staff morale and increase economic means through fresh food.

In addition, we have entered an arrangement with a local non-profit called West Chester Green Team dedicated to providing community gardens throughout the West Chester area. All the local community gardens are at capacity due to demand, and a waiting list has formed in the borough of West Chester. Due to concerns around the economic crises caused by the pandemic, the mission of the non-profit is to also address food insecurity. We have agreed to dedicate space for the wider community to use garden plots at Barclay Friends to garden. The community gardens will be located adjacent to the employee gardens, and representatives from the community gardens have offered to provide guidance to employees as they establish their gardens.

Finally, our hope is that the addition of opening our community to outside neighbors will offer opportunities for residents, staff and the wider community to collaborate in new and meaningful ways around gardening.

Actions

The following activities our program will offer will help ensure a robust program with opportunities for residents, staff and the greater community to garden in a safe, accessible spaces.

- **For residents**
 - Floral arranging and seed planting activities to promote socialization and enjoyment
 - Resident choice in growing herbs, fruits, vegetables, or flowers
 - Musical performance for residents in late summer by Green Team community volunteers
 - Fresh herbs will be used in the dining program for residents with training of kitchen staff by Green Team volunteers
- **For community volunteers and Barclay Friends employees:**
 - West Chester Green Team will provide mentoring and education on gardening topics for Barclay Friends employees and community volunteers with an opportunity to practice what is learned. A dedicated representative of the Green Team will be stationed at Barclay Friends to provide on-going support.
- **For residents, employees and outside community:**
 - Enjoyment of raised garden beds accessible to residents, staff, and community volunteers in various gardens in our campus
 - Development of opportunities for camaraderie and collaboration amongst everyone
- **For the greater Chester County community:**
 - Harvesting and donation of fresh produce grown for donation to local food banks

Partners

The West Chester Green Team was formed in 2019 as an alliance of four environment-related interest groups in West Chester. The Green Team speaks to how people can live their daily lives in a green and sustainable manner. Barclay Friends is one of the new locations for community gardens in the borough, and we look forward to this new collaboration.

Unfortunately, we cannot predict when we will be able to fully engage with some of our other partners once again due to the pandemic. In the past, Barclay Friends has successfully partnered with other organizations to enhance gardening support for residents. Partners have included the fourth-grade class of Chesterbrook Academy. While visits from the students were suspended during COVID-19, students and residents continue to write letters to one another as pen pals.

Barclay Friends continues to have a long-standing relationship with students of West Chester University (WCU). Each semester, nursing students practice clinical skills and help support recreational and horticultural therapy activities for residents in skilled nursing. In addition, a student group of the honors college called "Travel Across Generations" visit residents regularly to engage in games and conversation. When permitted to do so, we will welcome nursing and TAG students back to help support nursing, recreational and horticultural therapy activities.

Barclay Friends has a long tradition of growing fresh produce in our food bank gardens. During the growing season, fresh produce is dropped off at the West Chester Food Cupboard and Chester County Food Bank, and we donate about 400 pounds of vegetables each year.

Outputs

The gardening program will be offered to all residents in the community (skilled nursing as well as personal care and memory care), staff and community volunteers. We anticipate completing the following outputs over the grant period:

- To promote socialization and enjoyment, all residents are encouraged to engage in weekly floral arranging and planting activities, and we expect up to 15 residents (skilled nursing and personal care) to actively participate at any given time. Personal care and memory care residents will be using the raised beds made possible with the support of Friends Foundation for the Aging in 2020. Skilled nursing residents will be engaged in activities located in the recreation area and gardens surrounding the skilled nursing area.
 - Activities for Barclay Friends residents will include:
 - Education classes on gardening topics with an opportunity to practice what is learned
 - For personal care and memory care residents, enjoyment of five raised garden beds in personal care and memory care that are accessible to residents who use walkers or wheelchairs with resident choice in growing herbs, fruits, vegetables, or flowers
 - With support from residents, we will harvest and donate at least 400 pounds of fresh produce to local food bank.
- To complement our gardening program, we will complete construction of a total of 18 raised garden beds in Sydney's Garden, our garden closest to the entrance of Barclay Friends
 - Ten (10) employees of Barclay Friends will garden through the growing season in 2021

- Eight (8) beds will be used for community volunteers of the West Chester Green Team through the 2021 growing season
- Greet Team will provide education sessions for employees and community volunteers on gardening topics will be provided with an opportunity to practice what is learned
- Volunteers will educate dining staff on use of herbs to enhance residents' dining experience

Outcomes

The wonderful thing about gardening is that anyone can enjoy this practice at any level of ability. Anecdotal evidence already demonstrates that people engaging in this type of therapy enjoy the socialization and take pride in the seeing the results of their activities.

We will collect testimonials to capture ways the program has improved participants' lives (residents, employees, and community participants). To measure outputs, we will track the number of people who participate in gardening activities to know whether the outputs were attained. We will use a questionnaire to measure the effectiveness of the program for staff and community members. Our hope is to measure an increased sense of community belonging and morale among staff members. Using this data, we will be able to report on the level of involvement and benefit to the employees, community volunteers and residents over time.

There is already evidence to support benefits of the use of therapeutic gardens for older adults, according to an overview published in *Psychiatry Investigation* 2012 June 9(2); 100-110. In the article, the authors describe how horticultural therapy has been shown to help residents learn new skills and regain lost skills; this type of therapy can help improve memory, attention, sense of responsibility and social interaction with few to no adverse side effects. It has also been found to reduce stress, increase calm, and foster a sense of accomplishment and improved self-esteem. For older adults with dementia, gardening has been reported to improve sleep and cognition and reduce agitation. We will build upon this research to also include the benefit of helping our employees and members of the outside community. For our employees and outside community members, they may also be encountering food insecurity issues which may be addressed.

During this grant, our primary outcome will be to help improve the overall Barclay Friends' community by expanding the reach of our gardening activities. We seek to not only help improve the well-being of residents, but also employees and volunteers from the West Chester borough and build collaborative relationships between these groups. All will enjoy fresh produce and will enjoy the comradery created because of the collaborative efforts around gardening. As the program develops, we will examine whether this program may serve as a catalyst to increase diversity, equity and inclusion on our campus by helping diverse economic groups work collaboratively.

Sustaining Program

There are many benefits of the gardening program, and we will financially sustain this program throughout Barclay Friends by identifying other methods of support by philanthropy. We are fortunate to have philanthropic individuals and foundations that value the importance of this program for older adults. We will continue to work with philanthropic partners in the upcoming year and beyond to realize the goals listed in this proposal.

Sharing of Results and Replication

Barclay Friends will share the results of our work on our webpage and Facebook page. We will also include information in updates shared through electronic means (through an e-blast update). We will also share the progress with our program with our Kendal affiliates through our inter-affiliate update.

Fit with Foundation Values

Barclay Friends shares values that the Foundation uses to inform its grantmaking. Barclay Friends is aligned with Quaker values and practices. Our Board includes 30% representation of Quakers. All staff receive mandatory annual training on Quaker values and practices, covering each of the testimonies (simplicity, peace, integrity, community, equality, and stewardship) and reviewing how these values are reflected in the daily life and work of our community.

The program requested here falls under the testimonies of community and equality. Through gardening, we seek to connect with all members of Barclay Friends – residents, staff, and the outside neighbors. By bringing all these groups together around gardening, we hope that we may have a positive impact on the community by breaking down some of the differences that separate us, whether economic or otherwise. We will keep in our minds and actions how this program may help us advance equality that we seek – in diversity and inclusion.

Since 1994, Barclay Friends has been an affiliate of The Kendal Corporation; Kendal is a non-profit organization that develops and operates Quaker communities for the aging and provides education and advocacy services for older adults. Barclay Friends does not receive financial support from Kendal, but we do receive technical assistance and shared services in areas such as human resources, health administration, fund raising, and group purchase discounts.

Our horticultural therapy program will not only serve older adults in our care, we will also serve our employees who desire to garden as well as potentially food insecure individuals who live in the borough of West Chester. Horticultural therapy has been a practice for many years and is offered in various health care and rehab settings; it has been shown to be an impactful way of improving people's health and well-being. Recognizing the benefits, Barclay Friends has created a unique and impactful program for long-term residents by having a full-time horticulture therapist on staff. We are one of a few long-term communities to make such an investment in garden spaces and horticulture therapy programming. Our horticulture therapist, Cheryl Bjornson, has been a member of the Barclay Friends team for eight years, and is passionate about working directly with residents. She has the full support of the recreation team, including Recreation Director Elsabet Haile.

Budget and Timeline

<u>Total project/activity budget:</u>	\$53,000
Personnel:	\$48,000
Program Supplies:	\$5,000
(soil, plants, seeds, equipment for employee beds)	

Sources of other funding for project/activity (pending and received with dates): \$53,000

Friends Foundation for the Aging (submitting request)	\$25,000
Willistown Meeting Trust (request to be submitted)	\$3,000

Wilmington Trust/M&T (request to be submitted) \$25,000

Timeline

The program will be in use throughout the growing season this year. We plan to wrap up the growing season by November 2021. All programs for residents, staff and the outside community will take place through the spring, summer and fall to ensure a successful program.