



Center in the Park

Report to the Friends Foundation for Aging
Grant Agreement – Phase II Executed
October 19, 2021

1. What problem were you addressing? What solution did you propose to address it?

LGBTQ older adults encounter a complex array of social, emotional, and physical health needs that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated. Senior centers like Center in the Park (CIP) provide access to programs promoting physical, social, and emotional wellness for LGBTQ older adults who experience health disparities and isolation at disproportionate rates compared to heterosexual and cisgender peers. CIP received funding to support the second year of strengthening the presence and involvement of LGBTQ people. The grant title, “Pride in the Park: Advancing LGBTQ Inclusion at Center in the Park,” speaks to an event. However, CIP addresses more than just the creation of one event by the activities associated with LGBTQ and ally community engagement and the LGBTQ Advisory Group’s role. The Pride in the Park event itself has sparked the building of a more inclusive programmatic space.

2. What actions did you take? What worked and didn’t work toward your objectives?

Center in the Park experienced some reticence on the part of some older adults due to COVID-19 as they were uncomfortable being in groups in public which weighed into our discussions about our event – and certainly also in our greater programming over the past year. Despite the challenge, we took steps to grow our Pride in the Park Advisory Group to reach a height of 8 individuals. The Advisory Group has settled in on wanting to have the event in Vernon Park. Both the Pride Group as well as allies have been instrumental in the planning and execution of a great event that was intergenerational. Multiple diverse and local performers participated, and numerous LGBTQ organizations were tabled.

3. How did you measure success – both quantitative and qualitative? Please include numbers and demographics of people touched by the work.

CIP celebrates success in several ways. First, our 50+ older adult program participants closely reflected the diversity of CIP’s clients (69% identifying as women; 31% as men; 81% African American; 17% white; 2% other races). We also had over 20 younger individuals representing different generations (20somethings to 80somethings) as part of the volunteer crew and those representing the LGBTQ community. For the second year in a row, CIP increased the knowledge of all staff in LGBTQ cultural competency, earning the SAGE Cares Platinum Level certification (SAGE = Services & Advocacy for GLBT Elders). Further, CIP continued to implement LGBTQ data collection and shared it with our primary funder, Philadelphia Corporation for the Aging. We are proud to report the growth of the Advisory Group, which is now meeting regularly to develop programming beyond the scope of the annual Pride in the Park event. Plus, we now firmly believe that we have again further enhanced Center in the Park’s visibility with LGBTQ communities.

Selected unsolicited testimonials shared with CIP staff:

“I am happy that CIP is choosing to represent the LGBTQ community through Pride in the Park.”

“I was very entertained by the program.”

*To the program director, Ms. Keyerra Charles, from the Pride in the Park Advisory Group:
“Never forget how much you do and never forget how much it matters. In gratitude for your contributions to our community. We will never forget your support.”*

4. How did partnerships/collaborations enhance or challenge the project?

CIP's pivotal collaboration with the LGBT Elder Initiative (LGBTEI) at William Way Community Center (WWCC) was critical to the success of the two years of the project. CIP and the LGBTEI have deeply collaborated in the past with a history of mutual organizational trust coupled with the LGBTEI's expertise with outreach to LGBT older adults. In addition to WWCC, other organizations including Mazzoni Center (for LGBTQ health), Bebash – Transition to Hope (formerly known as Blacks Educating Blacks about Sexual Health Initiatives), Philadelphia Department of Public Health, Aging and Diverse Homecare Services, and the House of Ferragamo, a Ballroom culture organization. These organizations' presence in our Pride in the Park event has fostered stronger relationships between staff of both CIP and those representing the other engaged entities.

5. Include a budget and actual for the project during the reporting period.

Please see page 3.

6. What conversations have you had on how to sustain the project after the grant, and do you have plans to share your results with other organizations?

CIP has created a new Self-Directed Volunteer Team for LGBTQ programming to continue the Pride in the Park event but also, more importantly, to develop a calendar of LGBTQ-inclusive programming (social, wellness, medical, mental health) at the Center. The group's goal reflects that of CIP's leadership: to make Pride in the Park a standing event and to improve the recruitment and retention of CIP's LGBTQ members. Over the past year, CIP has presented best practices and lessons learned related to collaborating to create inclusive environments for LGBTQ older adults at both the American Society on Aging and the National Council on Aging's national conferences. Results were also shared with stakeholders and funders through inclusion in CIP's annual report.

7. Feedback on your interaction with FFA would be helpful. How have we helped? Made it harder? What else can we do to facilitate your work?

FFA has been incredibly helpful in providing comfort and guidance as we brainstormed our plans for this grant project. We appreciated connecting with the foundation to share our progress and positive feedback. We also are grateful for the funding source for this hard-to-fund project.

8. Additional comments

The project went so well, we feel, that we are confident the program will be annualized, and our efforts to become more LGBTQ-inclusive are well on their way to institutionalized success. We believe this project was key to our connections and visibility within Germantown. Although overall, the feedback has been positive from the CIP community, we did receive some negative comments for initiating Pride in the Park.





**"Pride in the Park": Advancing LGBT Inclusion at
Center in the Park
Project Budget-Year 2**

Budget Category	Justification	Budget	Actual
Personnel			
Health Promotion Coordinator (project coordination)	2.5% effort based on annual salary of \$41,820 + Fringe (reflects salary increase and increased percentage of effort to 7.5% to reflect increased time spent on the project)	1,260	4,256
Executive Director (project oversight)	1.25% effort based on annual salary of \$89,175+ fringe	1,345	1,050
Director of Grant Research & Development (evaluation/reporting)	1.25% effort based on annual salary of \$65,600+ fringe	930	930
Consultant			
LGBT Elder Initiative	LGBT Advisory Committee co-facilitation, planning, outreach, and coordination in collaboration with CIP HP coordinator.	2,000	2,000
Training			
SAGECares LGBT Cultural Competency Certification Continuing Education	Online training for new CIP staff and continuing education for staff who previously completed training. 24 staff @ \$39/person (over-estimated, cost was lower than expected due to staffing levels)	940	194
Other Costs			
Volunteer Advisory Committee stipends	5 volunteers x \$250/volunteer to offset time = \$1,250; CIP will carry over \$250 from current grant toward this expense and is requesting new funds to support 4 additional volunteers. (reflects additional volunteer Advisory committee members)	1,000	1,600
Workshops (TBD virtual/on-site)	4 workshops @ \$500/workshop for speaker stipend, program materials, giveaways, supplies. (postponed this facet of the program, reallocated to Director of HP)	2,000	0
"Pride in the Park" Community Engagement Event (TBD onsite/virtual)	Includes costs for speakers fees, promotional items, advertising; refreshments (reallocated to volunteer stipends)	2,000	1,445
FRIENDS FOUNDATION TOTAL		\$11,475	\$11,475
Overhead (Admin; IT, utilities, accounting, maintenance)	10% of total project budget (in-kind)	1,147	1,147
		12,622	12,622