



3635 Quakerbridge Road, Suite 16, Hamilton, New Jersey 08619  
Phone: 609.393.9922 ~ Fax: 609.586.1919

**Proposal:** Interfaith Caregivers of Greater Mercer County is seeking \$15,000 from Friends Foundation for the Aging for continued support of the Neighbors Helping Neighbors program which addresses the health and well-being of homebound elderly and adults with disabilities, focusing on underserved and minority populations, through the use of volunteer caregiving services.

The need to serve the elderly homebound has not characteristically changed but continues to increase as the population ages. This need is worsened by economic pressures placed upon family caregivers who are balancing employment and living expenses with the financial and time demands of their caregiving duties. Our solutions remain fundamentally unchanged, as we have experienced positive results with our current models in place. We will apply the cultural lessons of recent months to increase the levels of trust and acceptance in diverse communities and will continue to reflect critically on our strategies as we carefully measure our growth and community impact.

We will seek to be rooted within existing community resources to understand the services already available to residents and assist in the identification of how our efforts can have the most impact. An example of this is our evolving approach to assisting the people of East Trenton in their quest for transportation. Our model calls for a volunteer to use their time and vehicle, and incur fuel expenses to take a neighbor to the doctor. While there are many in this area who want to help, few report having access to all three of these needs to share with another. Through conversations, we are gathering information to determine barriers to existing methods of transportation, such as TRADE (Transportation Resources to Aid the Disadvantaged and Elderly), to see how our volunteers can assist with the coordination and scheduling of this service.

Our efforts in the Spanish-speaking community are in the early stages as our staff member has been in place for a short two months. With a similar, strategic approach and the welcome we have already received into the Hispanic community, the potential to assist many more people is both exciting and necessary.

At this time, we know of no changes in funding for the Neighbors Helping Neighbors (NHN) program, or any of our programs. Our partnering organization list continues to grow through the efforts of our busy community engagement schedule. As of early September, organizations that serve the needs of the Spanish-speaking community are included on our list to visit.

We measure the impact our services have on the community throughout the year, using qualitative and quantitative, formal and informal, methods. Monthly, we capture volunteer activity, giving Group Leaders and Volunteers alike the opportunity for feedback (though they can call, email, or visit at any time). Quarterly, we hold meetings for our volunteers with an educational topic and a discussion of current issues. We communicate with our member congregations and community-based organizations on a quarterly basis providing updates and the opportunity for a needs

assessment. Care Receivers are provided an in-home visit, establishing a relationship with a staff member or group leader at the beginning of their time with us. They are encouraged to call or write to us if there are any questions, issues with their volunteer, or have any additional needs. Both volunteers and care receivers are given a mixed-method annual survey to complete based on standards provided by AmeriCorps Seniors regarding their experiences.

The need for our services is increasing. The calls from the community are despairing. ICGMC is expanding and diversifying our volunteer base to serve more people. Growth is necessary if we are to honor our commitment to the homebound community. As we undertake this growth, it is with a careful eye toward sustainability and the preservation of resources.

For almost 30 years, ICGMC has been supported through a variety of government agencies, corporations, private foundations, individual donors, and fundraising events. With each dollar allotted to our programs, we work to make sure our investors know the tremendous impact that has come from their donations. Carefully spent on strategically planned initiatives, our conservative budgeting practices lend themselves to creating a big impact with a comparatively small amount of money.

The heart of our sustainability plan exists within the quality of the investment one makes when giving to ICGMC. While we will continue to seek new funding sources, expand our existing grants program, and maintain an active and diversified fundraising schedule, the quality that will see our agency through the next 30 years is the solid investment made on one of the most unifying tasks of humanity – caring for another.

**Please see NHN Program Budget attached.**