

Q&A Fall 2024

**Caldwell U** Cougar Techies- I don't see anything on the YMCA site that mentions older adults or technology. Perhaps they don't differentiate members by age. What do you do when a younger person comes for tech support? Only 1% low income? How many hours does a student need to put in for the \$1900 stipend? How many seniors are involved? NO RESPONSE

**IFCGMC**—how is it that your income exactly matches expenses? NO RESPONSE

**Connectedly**- how is it that expenses exactly match income?, no response to Q6 & 7

Thank you for catching a budgeting error our eyes missed! There was a budget gap of \$24,500 on the version we originally submitted. We've updated the budget with additional revenue from a new Penn Nursing Collaborative and the balance will come from individual contributions. Please see attached (posted)

As for questions 6 and 7...

Question 6: Connectedly is incredibly grateful for the generous support of FFA and we appreciate the streamlined reporting and proposal process. We did not include anything else regarding the project since it was a three-page limit and felt we covered everything.

Question 7: FFA could be helpful to Connectedly by keeping us informed of all grant opportunities that Susan and the Board hear of.

"Excellent question. On the FY24 Actuals, the revenue we received from contracts and grants for this program was less than expenses by \$5770. We were able to allocate this amount needed to meet expenses from unrestricted individual and board contributions. It doesn't always work out so neatly!

The FY25 budget includes 7,500 from contributions to balance projected revenue and expenses. Throughout the year we continue to pursue new direct funding for this program (along with our other programs) and if we are able to secure enough to meet actual expenses, the contributions would be allocated elsewhere to where it is needed.

If there are additional questions about our budget and reporting process I would be happy to talk by phone next week." Wanda Kraybill, finance.

**Chandler Hall**- what is your implementation plan? How will you attract and compensate students? How will their time at Chandler Hall integrate with their studies? Do you run into Labor issues if students get neither credit nor compensation?

**What is your implementation plan?**

Both Bucks County Community College (BCCC) and Chandler Hall will be assigning an individual staff member to coordinate the process. Both organizations are currently in the process of identifying who that person will be. John Whitman will be meeting with them in the next two weeks to review the entire grant and set expectations for their efforts in assuring a successful program. Once the grant is approved (I am a positive thinker!) they will work together to establish process and policies.

This will include:

- Creating a process for recruiting students,

- Formalizing a screening process for all applicants,
- Create a process allowing the college to formally recognize students participating in the program,
- Create a process at Chandler Hall to identify best opportunities to effectively utilize students from BCCC.
- Secure approval from the leadership at both BCCC and Chandler Hall to implement the program
- Start with a limited number of students to test the process and make any needed refinements before expanding

**How will you attract and compensate students? How will their time at Chandler Hall integrate with their studies?**

Based on preliminary discussions with the Dean of Bucks County Community College, the goal is to identify one or two students to coordinate the recruitment of students to this program. This student coordinator position will be a paid position and could also include some level of tuition support from the college. The goal is to recruit students from various majors where their involvement with residents of Chandler Hall will complement their major areas of study. For example, art majors providing art classes to residents or coordinating art projects with resident assistance and support (for example, painting a wall mural) Music students would be recruited to conduct performances at Chandler Hall and/or provide music instructions to an interested resident. Identifying a music student to coordinate a choir that would include both residents and staff. BCCC also has a photography and video major. The goal is to hold a photo contest for the students to take pictures of resident/ resident with staff/ residents with residents... etc. ... all designed to show a positive side of aging.

**Do you run into Labor issues if students get neither compensation or credits?**

The student coordinator will be compensated but the volunteers themselves will not. However, I am working with the Dean at the college to provide recognition for participating students in the form of credits or other academic recognition. As such, there should be no Labor Issues from this program.

**I see no provision for materials yet there seems to be an art component. How will this be supplied?**

Chandler Hall will provide art materials as needed as an in-kind contribution for this portion of the program.

**Friends Homes** – will your resident donors continue to donate, what other efforts to build the fund? Do you have a resident’s association?

Great questions! These answers may be longer than you initially hoped for, but I wanted to take the time to provide proper context that you may find helpful:

- Rather than leaving the responsibility of fundraising for employee scholarships solely to our residents, our Philanthropy department handles most of those efforts. I worked with the two residents who funded the scholarships distributed earlier this year, and I have already started educating existing donors about the scholarship program. I am also now mentioning it as one of our main philanthropic priorities to new residents during their move-in orientations.

- The idea of sustainability was of primary importance while developing this scholarship program. We did not want to provide scholarships for our team members just this year but rather build a program that could continue to support their educational pursuits. With that in mind, my conversations with our donors earlier this year centered around setting up sustainable endowed scholarship funds. The donors also decided to use a smaller portion of their donations for immediate needs, enabling us to distribute four scholarships this past Spring. Unfortunately, at the moment, the amount set aside by the donors outsize the amount the scholarship endowments will be able to support in the next few years.
- Friends Homes has two active resident associations, one at our West campus and one at our Guilford campus. Some of our residents, especially former educators, have been vocal advocates of our scholarship program, and the resident associations have been highly supportive of starting this program. Our West Resident Association treasurer even serves on our scholarship task force.
- A significant long-term advantage in favor of the sustainability of this program is that donations to our Employee Scholarship Fund are tax-deductible. Like many other communities, Friends Homes has an annual Employee Appreciation Campaign led by our two Resident Associations. Unfortunately, because this campaign does not fall under our 501(c)(3) nonprofit EIN, those donations are not tax-deductible. Although we try to educate residents and donors about this, every year, we have some who initiate Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCD) from their IRAs to support it. Of course, donors cannot send QCDs to support efforts other than those of a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, so I have to call to ask how they would like us to handle their QCD check.
  - Before the scholarship program was in place, donors had two options: we could redirect their gift to our Resident Financial Assistance Campaign (RFAC) or send the check back to the IRA custodians/administrators. Since many of them already support our Resident Financial Assistance Campaign, they often asked us to return their QCD check for the Employee Appreciation Campaign rather than redirect it.
  - After starting the scholarship program, we have been able to offer the Employee Scholarship Fund as a third option for donors who need to redirect their QCDs, and *every donor* I have called in the last four months about this issue has decided to redirect their QCD check to the Employee Scholarship Fund instead of asking us to return it.
- As mentioned above, we have already seen additional donations to our endowed Employee Scholarship Fund from donors who want to support team members at Friends Homes. Although they will help build up the program in the long run, these gifts will not significantly affect the amount we can distribute next year. We feel that support from Friends Foundation for the Aging would substantially impact our ability to build momentum for next Spring.

**Kings Bay-** is this an Adult Day Program or a program that meets in the daytime? What geographic area is served? How will you address language differences? What specific need/problem is being addressed?

**Is this an Adult Day Program or a program that meets in the daytime?**

Our program for deaf and hearing-impaired adults is an adult daycare program.

**What geographic area is served?**

The program serves participants from all of Brooklyn, NY.

**How will you address language differences?**

Most participants and staff communicate through ASL. However, a few participants and staff utilize RSL.

**What is the specific need/problem being addressed?**

The deaf and hearing-impaired seniors program addresses a range of complex challenges faced by older adults who are both deaf or hearing impaired and living in underserved, low-income communities. These individuals are often "doubly disadvantaged" due to a combination of age-related and disability-related barriers. One of the most pressing issues is profound social isolation. Many struggle to maintain relationships and participate in community activities due to communication barriers, which often lead to loneliness, depression, and mental health decline. This isolation is compounded by the fact that virtually all participants are illiterate, which significantly impacts their ability to access important information about services, benefits, and healthcare. This illiteracy poses a critical challenge, as many rely primarily on sign language and struggle with reading or writing, making it difficult to navigate daily tasks independently.

Additionally, deaf and hearing-impaired seniors face significant challenges in maintaining self-sufficiency. Everyday tasks such as managing mail, attending medical appointments, and renewing critical entitlements like Social Security, Medicaid, and other benefits become overwhelming without access to specialized resources. Communication barriers exacerbate these difficulties, particularly when dealing with service providers, healthcare professionals, and government agencies. Many older adults in this community lack access to interpreters or accessible communication methods, leading to miscommunication, particularly in medical settings. This is particularly concerning given the high rates of chronic conditions, such as diabetes, among this population. These seniors often face difficulty managing their diabetes due to communication barriers with healthcare providers, limited health literacy, and reduced access to vital information about managing their condition. Those participants who have already joined our program have successfully lost 7-12 lbs and were able to lower their a1c levels while participating.

Struggles with retaining and renewing entitlements, such as health insurance, food stamps, and housing support, are also common. The complex paperwork and follow-up required can be nearly impossible without assistance, resulting in the loss of essential services. Economic disadvantage further compounds these barriers, with many deaf and hearing-impaired seniors living below the poverty line. This program aims to tackle these multifaceted issues by offering sign language interpretation, workshops on self-sufficiency, healthcare navigation, entitlements support, and social activities to reduce isolation and increase access to necessary services. Through these efforts, the program will significantly enhance the quality of life for these seniors, providing them with the support they need to thrive.

**How many people (seniors) would participate in this program?**

Currently the program serves about 50 deaf and hearing impaired individuals.

We are hoping to make this program self-sustaining within the next few years. If the Medicaid/Medicare reimbursement rates remain constant [although this has been a challenge], we should be able to add an additional 15 participants yearly. If the reimbursement rates remain constant, we should make the program virtually self-sustaining and become much less reliant on foundational funding for direct program-related expenses.

**NJAAW** - Where is indication of member centers' support of this effort?

Cathy is correct. The NJ Division of Human Services has about 140 centers listed. However our mailing list, as Cathy mentioned, included professionals in the senior "services" field that may not fall under the "senior center" definition. There has been a lot of conversation of what a "senior center" is. Is it a building? Is it a program? In recent years and especially after Covid, municipalities have increased their offerings for recreation and socialization to their older adults residents via their Parks & Rec departments. Our mailing list includes those professionals. It also included AAA directors and professionals that either run or work closely with Senior Centers.

In my work with the NJ Recreation & Parks Association since 2020, senior center professionals have supported the idea of having a state senior center association. I have also been involved with NRPA and presented at their 2022 national conference a session on senior centers. While NJRPA and NRPA (National Recreation and Parks Association) have done a good job at including professionals in the aging field, there is still a lot of support lacking for these individuals. That is what we are hoping to accomplish with this revived state association.

I will also assist with posting on the website, providing links to grants, funding available, training modules and webinars (my goal is to host a quarterly webinar via Zoom with hopefully one being in person), links to other associations that can provide support like NJAAW, NJRPA, NCOA, etc.

Feel free to reach out if you have any other questions. Thank you for your consideration. Anahita

**Trinitas** – Have they considered monitoring equipment that would send data back to the program? Self-monitoring and reporting seems less likely to be successful. Even with old technology, data has been transmitted back to medical offices for many years. Now there are a lot more options and since 2020 Medicare pays for some of them.

I know they looked into it when we received a telehealth grant a couple of years ago but I believe at the time it was when we were merging and had to wait for approved RWJBH vendor.

That was with Lucy. I can ask Amanda about it. Thanks!