

Q&A Spring 2025

FSA- will MHS staff be invited to attend in 2025? *They are considering sending one of their staff members this year. We have not heard a final determination.*

FHRC- Can you partner with MCCC or another provider who help people get citizenship already? Are participants compensated for participating (comp time)? How many of those eligible are interested in participating? Is it even possible in this climate?

1. Can you partner with Montgomery County Community College or another local program that already helps people on the path to citizenship?

A. Montgomery College operates a well-established Citizenship Preparation Program, supported by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), and has partnered with organizations such as Catholic Charities' Immigration Legal Services to help lawful permanent residents prepare for and apply for naturalization. We plan to reach out to Montgomery College's Office of Community Engagement, specifically Karla Silvestre, Director of Community Engagement, to explore a potential partnership or referral process. This may include coordinated programming or access to existing class offerings

2. How many of the eligible staff are interested in pursuing this at this time? A. We have identified 47 eligible employees who meet the general criteria for the Citizenship Program. However, we have intentionally delayed rolling out the program to staff until funding is confirmed. This ensures we are prepared to deliver a sustainable and well-supported initiative. Once funding is secured, we will assess employee interest through internal surveys and host informational sessions to guide participation. Our preliminary discussions with employees have revealed 10 candidates ready to begin on day one.

3. Is it even possible in this climate?

A. Implementing a Citizenship Program is both feasible and beneficial, even in today's evolving immigration climate. The initiative focuses on lawful permanent residents (LPRs) – individuals who are legally eligible to pursue U.S. citizenship. This population remains a priority in federal naturalization efforts, as evidenced by USCIS's continued grant funding for programs like Montgomery College's. To proactively address potential concerns and ensure compliance, Friends House will:

- Connect participants with trusted legal professionals who can offer confidential, up-to-date immigration guidance as needed.*
- Implement strict privacy and confidentiality protocols to protect employee information and mitigate concerns related to enforcement.*
- Foster a supportive community environment that empowers participants, reduces fear, and reinforces the value of lawful naturalization. By focusing on lawful, eligible applicants and implementing strong support measures, the Citizenship Program at Friends House is both responsible and realistic in today's environment.*

Faith Journeys- are you familiar with Quaker Speak and the programs at Pendle Hill and FGC? How are diverse voices and beliefs being represented?

Yes, I am very familiar with the Quaker Speak videos. When they first came out and Jon Watts was the producer, I showed some to my meeting. We also purchased the DVDs for the first series -- which of

course now are antiquated. I used one of the videos when I gave a workshop on the ARCH book, Quaker values and end of life decision making. I no longer remember which one it was. I am sorry.

In addition, a clip from one of the videos Jesse and I made (access to all were sent to Quaker Speak for possible use) was used in a Quaker Speak Video. You can find it in season 8, dated April 29, 2021. I was never informed that the video was used, but someone told me about it and I was glad they were useful.

If the unasked question behind the first question is "How is your proposal different?" I would say that the videos we make focus more on the unique journey of one person. Many of the Quaker Speak videos I have seen are about Quakerism in general. For example, I include a link to Arthur Larabee's 9 Core Quaker Beliefs Quaker Speak video in the email I send out to new visitors who have agreed to be contacted. Other videos are interviews with individuals that embody a "type" for lack of a better term. A gay Quaker, a black Quaker, a young quaker etc. Still others show how a Quaker is living out their leading. All of them are short, which has tremendous advantages in some settings. However, I believe that the longer documentary type videos I hope to make will demonstrate Quakers and their faith journey in a holistic and nuanced way. I think that films like these will not only be interesting now, but will serve the place that Quakers' journals served hundreds of year ago -- a full picture of how someone lived out their Quaker beliefs.

As for Pendle Hill, I have attended weekends there (decades ago -- when my husband became ill, and my children were growing up, I no longer had time or funds to attend) I remember attending a Quaker Buddhist weekend, a weekend on Thomas Merton and one by Peter Elbow about writing. I listen to the podcast The Seed: Conversations for Radical Hope.

I have attended FGC the Gathering twice. For the one at Niagara university, I clerked the committee that organized the "field trips" including Underground railroad venues in our area, re-enactments of a Frederick Douglas speech, and other things of interest to Friends in our area. I took one online poetry class through FGC recently, and while I enjoyed it, it didn't really speak to my condition at the time. The presenter was good and my friend Cai Quirk did the tech and they did a good job.

As to diverse voices and beliefs being presented, Jesse and I will both emphasize that we want to film anyone who is part of the meeting regardless or maybe because of their divergent views or life journey. However, our emphasis is on capturing the faith stories of elders in the meetings, not looking for a particular type of person to fill a niche.

Because the suggestion was made in Farmington meeting, we would also be delighted to film younger, diverse youth in the meeting interviewing and talking with elders in the meeting. That said, in our interview process with the meeting as a whole or a committee, we will certainly ask about voices that aren't being heard in the meeting and that should be.

But in the final analysis, because we are offering a service, I do not feel we can control which people are chosen.

I hope these answers are satisfactory and that if you have other questions, I'd be happy to try and answer them.

Lutheran Settlement – will people still have access to 1-1 meetings? Can you give 1 sentence descriptions for the direct care staff? It sounds like you are switching from the Enhance Wellness program to your own design, yet the training and fees are still in the budget-clarify. Is your IRS 501c3 status currently active?

Yes! Members will still be encouraged to take advantage of 1:1 meetings with our Community Wellness Advocate (formerly called EnhanceWellness Health Coach). In addition, we've noticed that many members prefer informal and group learning; therefore, we plan to increase both the number and variety of opportunities to learn in a group setting, including classes and workshops with outside experts, support groups, peer learning groups, and public health presentations.

The key staff members for this program include our Director of Community & Health Programs, Center Activities Coordinator, Community Wellness Advocate, Volunteer Manager, and Community Wellness Manager.

- a. Director of Community & Health Programs: As the Director of The Center, the Director of Community & Health Programs will supervise the Community Wellness Advocate and provide direct oversight of the program.*
- b. The Center Activities Coordinator: The Activities Coordinator will work with the Community Wellness Advocate to schedule health and wellness activities supportive of members health and wellness goals, including everything from cardio drumming classes to mindfulness workshops.*
- c. Community Wellness Advocate (formerly called EnhanceWellness Health Coach): The Community Wellness Advocate will facilitate 1:1 and group opportunities to engage in health and wellness-related activities, including classes, workshops, individual goal-setting sessions and check-ins, and peer learning groups. The Community Wellness Advocate will also provide mobile support and advocacy, visiting members in their homes and at hospitals and rehab facilities as-needed.*
- d. Volunteer Manager: The Volunteer Manager will recruit volunteer experts to lead health and wellness related activities requested by members.*
- e. Community Wellness Manager: The Community Wellness Manager functions as The Center's primary Social Worker. The Community Wellness Manager will collaborate with the Community Wellness Advocate to help members address ongoing health and wellness issues, including everything from managing difficult family dynamics to hoarding to challenges navigating the healthcare system.*
- f. In addition, our Deputy Executive Director will provide supervision and oversight and our Center Office Manager will provide administrative support for this program.*

We plan to continue using the EnhanceWellness model as the foundation for our health and wellness activities. While our program is evolving, we still find the motivational interviewing techniques, availability of validated assessment tools, and technical assistance provided by EnhanceWellness extremely useful. In this next phase of our program, we plan to offer a hybrid model that incorporates the elements of EnhanceWellness that resonate most with our members (e.g. motivational interviewing)

while removing or minimizing the elements that have historically created barriers to participation (e.g. requiring that all participants use the Health Action Plan template).

Our 501c3 status is still in effect! Our DBA name is Lutheran Settlement House; however, we're listed as Lutheran Social Mission Society DBA Lutheran Settlement House. Here's our page on [Candid](#). I'm also attaching our 501c3 letter, in case it's helpful to have on-hand!

JFS/Abramson – How often will the group meet, and how many sessions? *The group would meet weekly for four sessions with 8 modules. Each session would be two hours long. I see mention of referrals to the program; what about referrals out for various services? Through both JFCS and Abramsons we offer a wide range of support services focused on this population including counseling, hoarding support, medical case management and general case management, benefits enrollment, home visiting medical care, and more. Our programs working together will ensure a warm handoff to refer clients to the appropriate services. Both organizations have information and referrals services as well who can support clients in making calls to connect to services outside of ours. Is there a peer support component? Yes, there is a peer support component, and we would work on building this out throughout the program based on input from the caregivers who attend our programs. Initially we would encourage and offer spaces for meet ups for caregivers to gather and build relationships, we will also plan to have options for caregivers to share their contact information with each other to connect and support each other. Throughout the year, we will plan to be more mindful in how we can increase the peer connection within the group and potentially build more programs or spaces for this to grow.*

Mercy Care- where do you recruit volunteers? Do you ask recipients for donations? Is your IRS 501c3 status currently active? *Mercy Care for the Adirondacks, Inc.'s Federal Tax ID # is 20-8720121. Our 501(c)(3) nonprofit status is confirmed in the attached IRS tax exempt letter group ruling. Mercy Care is listed in the attached Catholic Directory if you scroll down to the very last page, you will see Mercy Care for the Adirondacks listed in the Diocese of Ogdensburg under "Institutions located in the Diocese."*

We are blessed that neighbors here in our Adirondack and North Country communities look to Mercy Care to help coordinate their efforts, provide them with training and support, and offer opportunities for volunteers to find fulfillment in contributing meaningful service to others. Mercy Care consistently recruits volunteers throughout the year, as the needs of our Care Receivers become more complex and the older adult population in our area continues to increase. Our efforts center on raising awareness of elder neighbors' needs. We emphasize "Friendship Volunteer," suggesting equitable relationship between the Elder Care Receiver and their Volunteer Friend.

Mercy Care's Volunteer Recruitment Strategy:

- *Ambassadors – Current Volunteers (more than 100) – word of mouth*
- *Mercy Care Website home page features "Request Services" and "Volunteers"*
- *Press Releases / Media Coverage*
- *Community Engagement Events – Annual Education Forum, Spirituality Retreat*
- *Mercy Care Age-Friendly Education Events and Workshops – open to all community members*
- *Four members of Mercy Care's Board of Directors also serve as Mercy Care Friendship*
- *Volunteers--peer to peer volunteer recruitment.*
- *Volunteer Brochures - widespread distribution.*

- Social Media
- Pastor Letters with Church Bulletin Draft Copy
- Annual Friendraising Event
- Quarterly Friendship Newsletter
- Annual Mercy Care Newsletter

We do not solicit our Care Receivers for donations. Our services are provided free of charge and are freely given by our kind and generous Volunteers. We do, however, often receive positive feedback from Care Receivers such as a handwritten thank you note, and sometimes, with a donation enclosed. Over the past year 33% of our Care Receivers have made a contribution to Mercy Care.

NJAAW- will this group engage in advocacy? Is there a reason not to organize under the NJAAW 501c3? Was this proposal AI generated? *Yes - we foresee them engaging in advocacy, especially as NJ begins to adopt a multisector plan for aging (an effort I am involved in). Senior center directors will be key in sharing information, helping collect data and distribute surveys, and speaking on behalf of NJ's older adults. I do not think the previous association was registered as a 501c3 as I cannot find it listed anywhere. We believe that by obtaining that tax exemption, it will ensure sustainability by allowing it to apply for grants. No, I did not use AI.*

Starve Poverty- are there opportunities for collaboration with Habitat for Humanity? Can you explain the difference between program manager and program administration? Are there recipients who are not Christian? Do you have a board of trustees- what is their make-up? What's with the skull and crossbones?

1. Are there opportunities for collaboration with Habitat for Humanity? Yes. Starve Poverty already collaborates with Habitat for Humanity. In our grant application, we mention that Starve Poverty is part of a Causeway CAREs collaboration called Project Home Repair, which helps to streamline resources and obtain supplies at the best cost. Habitat for Humanity is part of the collaboration, too. Causeway CAREs (including Starve Poverty and Habitat for Humanity) meets on a monthly basis to discuss which jobs each organization is tackling and offer suggestions. We work as a team to provide safe and adequate housing for the community.

2. Can you explain the different roles of program manager and program administration?

Starve Poverty's part-time program manager is described in the program budget. He works 2 days a week

and splits his time between the food pantry and home repair programs. For the food pantry, he recruits, trains and supervises volunteers, makes certain that donated products are reported and stored correctly, coordinates with the local farms, bakeries and grocery stores that donate food to Starve Poverty weekly or monthly and orders needed food from the food bank (Fulfill). Several times a month he drives to Fulfill for food pickup or organizes volunteers to do this. For the home repair program, he attends meetings with

Causeway CAREs, reviews applications for repair work, interviews and vets the neighbors who have requested home repairs, orders and purchases the materials, performs the repairs and oversees the repairs when they are performed by volunteers or paid contractors.

The \$8,000 in program administration is 6.7% of Starve Poverty's budget. Program administration includes supplies, postage and the printing of weekly food pantry menus. In the spirit of congeniality and

friendship, we offer coffee, cups, creamer and spring water to our neighbors while they wait at the food pantry, but none of these items are available from the food bank.

3. Are there recipients who are not Christian?

Yes. Starve Poverty's services are open to anyone who needs them, regardless of religious affiliation. The only criteria is need.

4. Do you have a Board of Trustees? What is their make up?

Yes. Our Board roster is attached. Currently the Board is comprised of 6 White men and 1 White woman. We are working to add diversity to our Board, while reflecting our local community. Barnegat Township is 85% White, 7% Hispanic, 4% two or more races, 3% Black and 1% Asian.

5. Please explain the skull and crossbones icon associated with your website.

The skull and crossbones represent disease or death. We use this icon because we wish to “starve poverty to death.” Our goal is to eradicate poverty, one family at a time.

The icon is very popular with younger folks and not very different from icons and tattoos we see among our Latino neighbors. Within our own community, we find the skull and crossbones is not considered offensive because of the heritage of Barnegat Bay being a hideout for pirates some centuries ago. The local community still has a Pirate Days Festival each year. The history of pirates in our community did not influence our choice of this logo, but it may explain why it is so readily accepted in our own community.

Rise-shouldn't senior hours be during the day? *That is a great question — we should definitely survey our seniors and ask what they prefer.*