



Thank you for applying to the Greater Harrisburg Foundation, a regional foundation of The Foundation for Enhancing Communities. Tell your story clearly and concisely. Attachments are required; follow all directions. Failure to answer questions, utilize this template, or attach required documents will disqualify your application. **Answer all questions using information that applies to the project seeking support of grant funds.** Contact Jennifer Strechay, Program Offer for Community Investment, at [jstrechay@tfec.org](mailto:jstrechay@tfec.org) or 717-236-5040 with questions.

## **APPLICANT PROFILE**

### **Applicant Organization Name**

Dauphin County Library System

*Provide your organization's name as currently recognized by the IRS*

- Check box if the Applicant Organization Name above is a "Doing Business As" name and the provided 501c3 letter states a different name. To be recognized by the "Doing Business As" name, attach ONE legal document using the provided name. If not provided, TFEC will utilize the 501c3 name.**
- Check box if the Applicant Organization uses a Fiscal Sponsor and provide name here**

### **Name, Title, Email, Phone of Executive Leader**

Karen Cullings, Executive Director, [kcullings@dcls.org](mailto:kcullings@dcls.org), 717-234-4970

*All contracts and notifications of grant status will be addressed to the individual provided here*

### **Applicant Organization's Physical Address**

101 Walnut St., Harrisburg, PA 17101

### **Applicant Organization's Address for Mailed Communications**

101 Walnut St. Harrisburg, PA 17101

*All contracts and notifications of grant status will be sent to the address provided here*

### **Name, Title, Email, Phone of Contact Completing Application**

Kirsten Hubbard, Grant Writer, Ghost Writer LLC, [DoingWhatMatters@GhostWriterQuill.com](mailto:DoingWhatMatters@GhostWriterQuill.com), 717-420-6558

*If application questions arise, this individual will be contacted by TFEC staff*

### **Organization's Mission Statement**

Dauphin County Library System (The Library) builds community and transforms lives by connecting people, ideas, and opportunities.

### **Organization History (Do not exceed this page)**

Harrisburg Public Library was founded in 1889 as part of an emerging progressive movement that valued free, democratic access to and exchange of information. Sara Haldeman Haly, heiress of a prominent Harrisburg family, left a sizeable bequest and her estate donated her extensive riverfront garden to The Library. The Library opened in 1914 with 10,000 books and 5,000 cardholders. Since that time, and in every era, The Library has been responding to community needs, ensuring equalizing access to books and media, and adapting to remain relevant. In 1925, a childrens room was added; 1970 saw the introduction of books on cassettes; and VHS joined the collection in 1983. Internet access became available in 1995; DVDs premiered in 2001; and eBooks appeared in 2011.

The Library now has grown to eight libraries in Dauphin County with millions of resources, touching more than 97,000 households with well over a million items borrowed per year. In addition, The Library partners with other organizations to extend its reach in the community with off-site programs at senior living facilities, in prisons, at homeless shelters, and at day cares. In the current pandemic, The Library continues to respond quickly, adapting to online community programming, implementing curbside pick-up service, retraining more staff to assist with online resources, and making Zoom available free of charge to the community. As we prepare for continued outreach in the post-pandemic world, we pay special attention to programming that addresses existing community needs – like early childhood education – that have been exacerbated by the pandemic.

## PROJECT PROFILE

### Project Title

Stepping Stones to Milestones

*Project Title must match title listed throughout application and online.*

### Project Areas of Focus

UPSTREAM GENERAL

*Choose UPstream General if your project utilizes upstream strategies but is not principally centered upon the categories below. See the grant guidelines for additional detail.*

### UPSTREAM: FOCUS AREAS

*Choose an UPstream Focus Area (if your project is principally centered upon one or more of the categories below). Please select only those area(s) that apply to this project. See the grant guidelines for additional detail.*

<p><b>EDUCATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Programs &amp; projects that focus upon or nurture access to early childhood education</li> <li><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education &amp; development programs for children &amp; youth</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Educational programs serving adults</li> </ul>	<p><b>ENVIRONMENT &amp; PARKS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Environmental stewardship</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Horticulture &amp; the arts</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Health &amp; environment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Park beautification &amp; improvement</li> </ul>
<p><b>HEALTH</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Health &amp; human services</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cancer awareness and/or research</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Dental care for those in need</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Health &amp; human services</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> HIV &amp; AIDS</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Individuals with debilitating or terminal illness</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Individuals with intellectual disabilities</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Prevention of head and/or spinal cord injury</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Purchasing of devices that improve accessibility</li> </ul>	<p><b>HOMELESSNESS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Homelessness &amp; hunger</li> </ul>
<p><b>MENTAL HEALTH</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Counseling for children with terminally ill family members</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Guidance, counseling, or programming that includes guidance and/or counseling for youths</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Mental health</li> </ul>	<p><b>SENIORS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Programs &amp; projects serving older adults</li> </ul>

**COMMUNITIES OF FOCUS**

- Disaster relief & human services that serve the communities of Lebanon City, PA and Cressona, PA
- Programs and projects that benefit residents of Millersburg, a borough of Dauphin County, PA
- Projects to enhance Camp Hill Borough parks provided by youth organizations such as Scout programs or other youth organizations; programs & projects that focus upon or nurture access to early childhood education within Camp Hill.

**Counties to be served as part of project; check all that apply.**

- Cumberland     Dauphin     Franklin     Lebanon     Perry     Northern York (Dillsburg Area)

**Projected Number of Individuals to be served by project**

\_\_\_\_\_ Total number of ADULTS served  
\_\_\_\_\_ Total number of CHILDREN (ages 17 and under) served  
6475 Total number of ALL INDIVIDUALS served by the project

*If above data is not appropriate to project, be sure to fully state the audience type and numbers to be served in Question 2 of the Impact Narrative.*

## PROJECT SNAPSHOT

1. Capture your UPstream project and the community need it seeks to address in 200 words or less.

Life in the Capital Region, a community needs assessment conducted by TFEC, documents a lack of preschool programs. Seventy-five percent of preschoolers within Cumberland, Dauphin, and Perry Counties are without access to high-quality preschool programs. Preschool programs significantly improve literacy, language, and math skills; reduce special education placements; and increase high school graduation rates. Where preschool programs are publicly offered, they are at risk of being defunded during difficult times such as those brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Private preschool programs are difficult to find, and cost presents a barrier for many families. For every dollar spent on preschool programs, \$17 may be saved in services and benefits later in life.

Stepping Stones to Milestones offers a solution to the gap in education and respects families as primary teachers. Developed by a team of educators and librarians, Stepping Stones to Milestones encompasses four programs: three story-time programs that follow children from birth to age six, and a preschool program that utilizes the Pennsylvania State Early Learning Standards.

The programs are interactive and family-based and designed to give the needed knowledge and materials to encourage families to extend learning into the home.

## PROJECT NARRATIVE

Answer questions 2-10 clearly and concisely; no limit.

2. The GHCF UPstream grant opportunity seeks to improve our area communities by supporting existing or new “upstream” systems, interventions, programs, or projects that attempt to create positive social change by addressing a problem at its source rather than managing its “downstream” symptoms. Describe your proposed upstream project, the geographic area it will serve, and the audience to be served; state why this audience was selected. Include how/why your project is “upstream” and how your project is working to address a specific need or needs. You MUST use and complete the following statement within your answer, “Grant funds will be used to \_\_\_\_\_”.

Stepping Stones to Milestones is designed to address the documented community need for early childhood education throughout Dauphin County. Studies show children who have access to high-quality early childhood educational opportunities show improvements in literacy, language, and math skills; are less likely to need special education; and are more likely to graduate high school. Pennsylvania does not mandate school districts provide either preschool or kindergarten, so districts that struggle financially may not provide those services. And where they do exist, the programs are vulnerable to budget cuts. Life in the Capitol Region, a community needs assessment conducted by The Foundation for Enhancing Communities, suggests that 75% of children lack access to preschool. The COVID-19 pandemic is exacerbating the problem as school budgets tighten, many school classrooms remain closed, and more responsibility is laid on families to act as educators. Truly an “upstream” program, Stepping Stones to Milestones fills the gap in early childhood education services, thus supporting better long-term outcomes and supporting parents as educators during crucial early years, an emerging need that will be heightened during the pandemic.

Stepping Stones to Milestones encompasses four progressive, family-centered programs that follow children from birth through age six. It offers age-appropriate learning opportunities coupled with family tips and education that extend learning into homes. Together, the programs offer a comprehensive and cohesive structure in a familiar setting, with wrap-around materials and services. The focus is not to teach children literacy, but to teach families how to be teachers.

Educators and librarians have developed a suite of programs:

Born to Read: Birth to 18 months. This thirty-minute program introduces sounds, language, music, and rhythm.

Toddler Storytime: 19 to 35 months. This forty-five minute program builds on music and rhythm to introduce stories, singing, movement, and fingerplay, enriching language and motor skills.

Preschool Storytime: 3 to 5 years. This forty-five minute program begins basic reading skills, comprehension, and imagination.

Cruise into Kindergarten: 5 years (and up) who will be entering kindergarten in that calendar year. Moving beyond literacy, this program introduces a Pennsylvania State Early Learning Standard curriculum with STEM, animal studies, arts, and other extended learning opportunities.

Each program is family-based, with adult tips and education integrated to build the family as primary educator. Suggestions for home play, activities, books, videos, and music are provided and families are often given take home materials.

Each program is offered once per week, during six five-week sessions at each of our eight branches located throughout Dauphin County and including a location in Lower Paxton Township, Elizabethville, Millersburg, Lykens, Hummelstown, and three locations in Harrisburg.

A tracking and rewards program offers children and families incentives such as free books carefully selected to portray and appeal to the diversity of families in Dauphin County, and completion certificates as participants graduate to the next program level.

Resourced with online meeting software and other supports, The Library was quickly able to adapt the program to support online instruction and curbside pickup of learning materials during the initial COVID-19 closure. This strength will allow The Library to quickly adapt should the need arise again. Because the programs are meant to support in-home family-supported learning, the content lends itself well to such adaptations.

Grant funds will be used for planning, supplies, rewards, and staff educators to run the 960 programs that are part of Dauphin County Library System's Stepping Stones to Milestones program.

## **DATES & LOCATIONS**

3. When and where will the project take place? List dates and locations as appropriate in chronological order. State if provided dates/locations are confirmed, estimated, or to be determined.

Stepping Stones to Milestones encompasses four progressive programs that follow children from birth to age six. The programs each run six five-week sessions throughout the year and at each of our eight library branches located throughout Dauphin County. Each program runs once per week. Dates are rolling, and both dates and locations are secured.

## **ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES**

4. Does the project involve partnerships, collaborations, service, or affiliations with other organizations that will strengthen the project? If so, LIST their name(s) and corresponding role(s) within the categories below OR if this does not apply to you, state why your project is best positioned for success as a single organization.

**SINGLE ORGANIZATION STATEMENT:** Dauphin County Public Library is solely responsible for the Stepping Stones to Milestones program. While The Library relies on a wide network for many of its programs, it is uniquely structured to plan and implement the Stepping Stones to Milestones program. Childrens librarians and educators create the program, librarians deliver the program, and

The Library has the resources and physical space to support the program, as well as provide a plethora of wrap-around supports.

**PARTNERSHIPS:** *We are equally invested in providing this project and success is dependent upon all organizations and shared roles although one entity serves as the applicant for this grant. Our application includes a letter from each partner that states their role in this relationship.*

**COLLABORATIONS:** *We are working with other organizations to make this project happen, but we serve as the lead organization for this grant opportunity and our project success is enriched by, but not dependent upon, our collaborators. An additional letter is NOT required, but may help the application.*

**SERVICE:** *Our project will serve these organizations and cannot take place without their commitment to accept service. Our application includes a letter from each organization (this includes schools) that states their intent to participate.*

**AFFILIATIONS:** *Our project may be affiliated with these organizations in some way, but is not 100% dependent upon their participation. An additional letter is NOT needed.*

## COMPARABLES

5. Are other organizations in your service area providing services that are similar to your proposed project? If yes, state their names or services and explain how your project differs. If no, state NA.

We know of no other program that replicates Stepping Stones to Milestones in its comprehensive nature or in its focus on families as primary educators. There are preschools, Head Start programs, and some community literacy programs. However, barriers to those programs exist such as cost, age requirements, transportation, and registration criteria. Dauphin County Library System hosts its program in eight locations, the program is free, programs are available for all preschool age ranges, and there is no registration criterion.

## ASSESSMENT & IMPACT

- 6a. What will project success look like? Provide a brief overview of the project's key outcomes, outputs, and/or other results of success.

Ultimately, success is measured by participants prepared for kindergarten and families empowered to act as first educators. We track attendance, parents' confidence as first educators, the number of books distributed, and the number of children who complete the entire program. The Library is seeking ways to work with local schools to gather kindergarten readiness data from program participants.

- 6b. How will project success be measured and documented (i.e.: how will you know the project is successful? Are you collecting value statements, numbers served, surveys, photos, before and after images, or using other methods)?

The evaluation process will include a survey before and after each five-week session. The survey used will be the Early Learning survey generated from Project Outcome with additional questions to determine parents' confidence level with being their child's first teacher. Project Outcomes is a survey tool developed by the Public Library Association that compares the data gathered with national averages to determine if desired outcomes have been met. The surveys will be distributed

through email before and after each five-week session, with digital and paper copies of the survey available in The Library.

Also measured will be: attendance, number of incentive books distributed, and number of participants who complete the program from entry to graduation to kindergarten. Goals for 2021 will be a return to 2019 data in each category.

## **FUNDING & SUPPORT**

7. If this proposal is not funded at the level requested, will you be able to implement the project as stated? Explain as needed.

Yes, the program will continue, however the number of sessions may be affected.

8. This grant opportunity will not fund 100% of any project. Restate the amount you are seeking and describe other funding sources and amounts.

The Library seeks \$10,000 of the \$74,798 project total from TFEC's Upstream. Additional revenue of \$64,798 is being sought and includes additional grants and private donations.

9. Did the applicant organization end its most recent fiscal year with a budget surplus or deficit? If so, briefly state the amount of the surplus or deficit and state how the surplus may be used (i.e. is it earmarked for another program) and/or how the deficit may be handled.

The Library ended 2018 with a deficit of \$563,442, representing about 7% of the budget. The Library is making purposeful investments in development and fundraising to address that deficit.

## **ACCESS & INCLUSION**

10. As a community foundation, TFEC fosters a climate of purposeful inclusion that values diversity of gender, age, race, ethnicity, national origin, range of abilities, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status. Please state how your project will be made accessible to all individuals who qualify for participation in the project and describe any accommodations, modifications, technologies, or services you will offer to ensure that all eligible participants experience the best possible services or outcomes.

The Library has formally prioritized Diversity & Inclusion with this statement: "Everyone is welcome here. We're committed to: respecting the uniqueness of each individual, serving with kindness, upholding human dignity, communicating openly and often, promoting access to information, encouraging the exploration of ideas and viewpoints, reflecting our diverse community through staff and services, eliminating barriers, and supporting active minds and open hearts. How can we do better?"

The Library is committed to inclusion in physical structure, in outreach, in programming, in resources and information reflective of diverse views and experiences, and in the way we serve our community.

## BUDGET WORKSHEET

Complete the Budget Worksheet below; a Project Total is required.

ITEM OR SERVICE <i>Examples include: Contracted Services, Equipment, Personnel, Supplies; list your own as appropriate.</i>	DESCRIPTION OF ITEM OR SERVICE	REQUESTED GRANT FUNDS <i>Indicate where funds sought through this grant opportunity will be applied.</i>	OTHER FUNDING SOURCES <i>State the names and amounts of all other funding sources.</i>	PENDING, COMMITTED, OR RECEIVED <i>Using a P, C, or R, indicate the status of all funding sources.</i>	\$ TOTALS <i>Add across to provide a total for each row. Total columns as indicated in bottom row.</i>
Personnel	Planning		\$896 – private donations	P	\$896
Personnel	Program Delivery	\$5,000	\$12,600 – grants	P	\$18,496
Materials	Program Boxes – books, CDs	\$5,000	\$30,700 – grants	P	\$54,196
Equipment	Musical instruments, scarves, mirrors, iPads, toys		\$992 – private donations	P	\$55,188
Supplies	Graduation certificates and incentives – take-home books		\$19,610 – private donations	P	\$74,798
		\$			\$
		\$			\$
		\$			\$
		\$			\$
<b>TOTALS</b>		\$10,000 <b>Total: Requested Grant Funds</b>	\$64,798 <b>Total: Other Funding Sources</b>		\$74,798 <b>PROJECT TOTAL</b>



**Dauphin County Library System  
Board of Trustees  
2020**

**Board Member**

Jacquelyn Anderson (Treasurer)

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Sara Beck

Francis Chardo

Andrew Enders, Esq. (Immediate Past President)

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Christopher Wonders

**Affiliation**

Penn National Insurance

Community Volunteer

Catholic Charities

Dauphin County D. A.

Enders Insurance Associates

PA Board of Pardons

Self-Employed

Meaningful Communication Matters

Penn State Health

Communities in Schools of PA

PA Senate

Dauphin County Commissioners Office

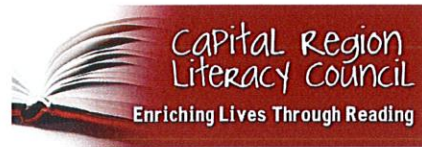
Community Volunteer

M&T Bank

American Literacy Corporation

Mowery Construction

Shippensburg University



Jennifer Strechay  
The Foundation for Enhancing Communities  
PO Box 678  
Harrisburg, PA 17010

July 17, 2020

Ms. Strechay,

I am pleased to have the opportunity to express my support for the important work of the Dauphin County Library System, specifically its work to support much-needed preschool readiness programs through its progressive program Stepping Stones to Milestones at their McCormick Riverfront Library in downtown Harrisburg, PA. Capital Region Literacy Council has teamed with DCLS to provide free children's books and gladly supports this early childhood initiative.

Committed local organization such as The Foundation for Enhancing Communities and the United Way cite access to high-quality early childhood education as a priority factor in improving outcomes for children.

Stepping Stones to Milestones enhances the existing birth to kindergarten programs offered through the Dauphin County Library System, providing home libraries, home-based literacy activities, parental supports, and progressive age-appropriate programs which follow children from the moment they are born through kindergarten.

The strengths of the free-to-community program are its early outreach – families receive a welcome package while in the hospital, accessibility – the program is offered at the McCormick Riverfront Library in downtown Harrisburg, it connects well-established programs into a cohesive early learning program, holistic support for the entire family, and its ability to be adapted to remote or hybrid programming if and when needed during COVID outbreaks or other factors

We ask that the Stepping Stones to Milestones program be fully supported with a \$1,000 investment in accessible, connected, birth-to-kindergarten programs to address the gap in early childhood education opportunities, especially for Harrisburg's most vulnerable children.

Thank You for prioritizing early childhood literacy and Kindergarten preparedness!

Sincerely

  
Joe Bedard  
CRLC Board Chair

Jennifer Strechay  
The Foundation for Enhancing Communities  
PO Box 678  
Harrisburg, PA 17010

Ms. Strechay,

I am pleased to have the opportunity to express my support for the important work of the Dauphin County Public Library System, specifically its work to support much-needed preschool readiness programs through its progressive program Stepping Stones to Milestones.

Committed local organization such as The Foundation for Enhancing Communities and the United Way cite access to high-quality early childhood education as a priority factor in improving outcomes for children. Opportunities for formal early childhood education were already lacking, with no state-mandated preschool and limited alternative programs, which has been exasperated by COVID closures and subsequent stressors on those program from reopening requirements.

Stepping Stones to Milestones formalizes, systemizes, and incentivizes the existing birth to kindergarten programs offered throughout the Dauphin County Library System to offer home libraries, home-based literacy activities, parental supports, and progressive age appropriate programs which follow children from the moment they are born through kindergarten.

The strengths of the free-to-community program are its early outreach – families receive a welcome package while in the hospital, accessibility – the program is offered at all eight libraries throughout Dauphin County, it connects well-established programs into a cohesive early learning program, holistic support for the entire family, and its ability to be adapted to remote or hybrid programming if and when needed during COVID outbreaks or other factors

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Sincerely,



Christine Waters, Owner

ACE Family LLP dba Ava's Garden Childcare

[Avasgarden.ece@gmail.com](mailto:Avasgarden.ece@gmail.com) or 717-350-9737



Jennifer Strechay  
The Foundation for Enhancing Communities  
PO Box 678  
Harrisburg, PA 17010

*We train people  
for life.*

*500 Maclay Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17110*

*phone 717 238 7318  
fax 717 238 6251  
www.tricountyoic.org*

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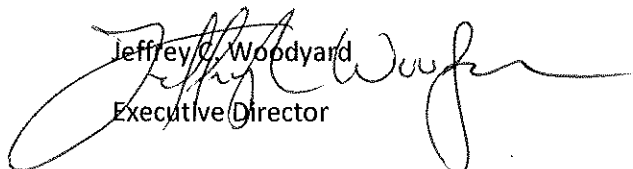
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Sincerely

Jeffrey C. Woodyard  
  
Executive Director

## 2020 GREATER HARRISBURG COMMUNITY FOUNDATION UPSTREAM SIGN & SUBMIT FORM

Provide signatures from the applicant organization, below. Both organization representatives must sign.

*By providing your original OR digital signature below, you agree that the provided information in this application is true to the best of your knowledge and may be submitted for review. Completion of this form is one component of your Complete Application.*

- |                          |                        |               |                   |
|--------------------------|------------------------|---------------|-------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>President/CEO</b>   | _____         | Karen Cullings    |
|                          |                        | Ink Signature | Digital Signature |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <b>Board President</b> | _____         | Annie Garner      |
|                          |                        | Ink Signature | Digital Signature |

### REQUIRED ATTACHMENTS TO BE UPLOADED & SUBMITTED BY 4PM ON THE DEADLINE DATE

*All grant materials must be submitted through the TFEC online application system by 4pm on the deadline date.. This grant opportunity does not utilize delivered or mailed materials.*

- Complete Application:** Applicant Profile, Project Profile, Project Snapshot, Project Narrative, Budget Worksheet, and Sign & Submit Form with original or digital signatures.
- Board of Directors List:** Professional affiliations (ie: work positions and/or titles as applicable) must be included.
- ONE, TWO, or THREE letters of support with original or digital signatures. Applicants may submit the number of letters that will best support their application.** Letters of support from the applicant organization's Board of Directors will not be accepted. Identical form letters are discouraged. A minimum of ONE letter of support is REQUIRED for this grant opportunity regardless of response to Question 4.
- If you have indicated PARTNERSHIP with or SERVICE to other Agencies as stated in Question 4, you must upload letters with original or digital signatures documenting the relationship.** A letter of partnership or service may also serve as a letter of support if support is expressly stated.
- Applicants who utilize a FISCAL SPONSOR** must include a letter signed by the Executive Leader of the Fiscal Sponsor organization indicating agreement to serve as the Fiscal Sponsor. An original or digital signature is required.
- IRS 501(c)(3) determination letter.**
- 1st Page of Applicant Organization's Most Recent 990.** If 990 is not available, upload applicant organization's most recent audit or financial statement to meet this requirement.

### QUESTIONS

If you should have any questions regarding this form or TFEC grant opportunities, contact Jennifer Strechay, Program Officer for Community Investment, at [jstrechay@tfec.org](mailto:jstrechay@tfec.org) or 717-236-5040.