



City of Annapolis

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Community Grant Application

Deadline: January 22, 2016

Organization name Center of Help, Inc.

Contact Patricia Omana Title Board President

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Federal ID # 522282782

Incorporation Date 05/12/2004 (amended) 501(c)(3) Registration date 05/14/2001

Project title Building Lives for New Americans

Project location 1906 Forest Drive, Suite 2B, Annapolis, MD 21401

Amount requested \$ 20,000.00

Other funds \$ 50,000.00

Total project amount \$ 70,000.00

Certification

"I certify that I have reviewed this application and that to the best of my knowledge and belief, all the information provided in this application is true."

Signature of Chief Executive Officer

1/20/16

Date

Print name Patricia Omana Title Board President

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Provide a brief summary of your project. Please be sure to include the following items: purpose of the project, number of people to be served, and how the city grant funds will be used.

The purpose of the City funding is to support the Center of Help (The Center)'s information, referral and assistance services. The Center promotes self-sufficiency, offers opportunities for economic advancement, and teaches essential life skills to an under-advantaged, often illiterate population, who are always eager to learn and succeed.

The objectives of the project are to:

- 1) provide general orientation to the U.S. laws and customs, connecting our families to the right resources in our community
- 2) improve literacy and other basic life skills;
- 3) provide the needed training to transition Hispanics/Latinos and other immigrants in our area to become self-empowered and self-supporting in the U.S.

It is estimated that the project will provide information, referrals and assistance services to approximately 2,000 people, including approximately 100 people per month who will receive specialized instruction in adult literacy, English, job readiness, citizenship classes and orientation, homework help for the youth in partnership with AACPS, health/medical services, nutrition, domestic violence/abuse prevention and personal finance. The Center is now certified by Maryland Health Benefit Exchange. As a result, under the Affordable Care Act, we assist our families to enroll in health coverage. One of our caseworkers attended training with the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange and became an Application Counselor. This is an important service we are starting to provide for our families, ensuring they have access to healthcare, which will improve their lives and their families as well.

The grant funds will support operational expenses such as salary, rent and others.

PERFORMANCE HISTORY

If you received Community Grant funds last year, please evaluate progress you have made in implementing those projects. Please discuss any factors that may have hindered your progress.

The Center of Help has been able to provide high quality services to Hispanic/Latinos families of Annapolis. In 2015, the Center was able to assist over 2,000 individuals of the City of Annapolis, through its Building Lives for New Americans project. In 2015, 85% of the clients we surveyed rated our services as Excellent and reported they increased their knowledge of available resources and/or received the assistance they needed. Our Homework Help and Leadership Program, implemented in 2012, proved to be a success. During the 2014-2015 school year, on average, 68% of our students improved their grades when comparing the 1st and 2nd semesters; 75% improved when comparing the 2nd and 3rd semesters and 38% improved when comparing the 3rd and 4th semesters. Furthermore, 80% of our ESOL students improved their language skills, seeing by the pre-post assessment test, feedback from volunteer teachers and students themselves. In resources and English skills, respectively.

Our Citizenship and Immigration class has helped over 15 people to become citizens in 2015, and has reached over 80 people that attended our Immigration workshops and also helped through free Immigration consultation we offer at the Center, in partnership with local Lawyers. Our Executive Director and Board worked hard on fundraising in 2015. During our Cinco de Mayo fundraising- and the Great Give 2015, we were able to raise over \$7,000. Thanks to a growing partnership with the local hospitality businesses of Annapolis, Rams Head hosted the First Noche Latina, in which we were able to raise almost \$15,000. Our 3rd Hispanic Heritage Festival was an amazing event, with over 1,000 attendees. We were able to provide information, celebrate the Hispanic culture and fundraise for the Center as well.

In addition, the Center of Help received the help of over 45 volunteers throughout 2015, which assisted us in our strategy to become more sustainable, and shows that there are many members in our community that believe in what we do, sharing their time and talents to support the families we serve.

RATIONALE (20 Points)

Describe the issue or problem to be addressed including the size and/or severity of the problem. Provide the demographic data and geographic information used to determine the extent of the problem.

There has been an unprecedented number of Hispanic immigrants to Anne Arundel (AA) County, while the total population has generally increased at a rate of 15% per decade, the Hispanic population has grown 382.8% from 1990 to 2010 (CFAA, Poverty Amidst Plenty, fourth edition, 2012). In Annapolis, MD Hispanic/Latinos represent 16.8% of the total population, comprising of over 6,400 people (U.S. Census Bureau: State and County QuickFacts. Retrieved on 12/09/2015). In AA County, while all other races combined have a median household income level of \$83,456, Hispanics/Latinos households have \$65,229 (2006-2010). Furthermore, 3.3% of all other races/ethnicity have their families living below poverty and 8.0 % of Hispanic/Latino families live in the same condition.

Moreover, 4.8% of Hispanic/Latinos are unemployed, while 3.7% of all other races/ethnicity are unemployed. In terms of health insurance, the disparity is even greater: 8.4% of all other races/ethnicity are uninsured, while 33.9% of Hispanic/Latinos do not have health insurance (AA County Department of Health- Report Card of Community Health Indicators, May 2013). Also, 32.4% of Hispanics in the County have less than a high school diploma vs. 9.5% of the general population (2009-2011 American Community Survey 3-Year Estimates, AA County).

According to the City of Annapolis, Consolidated Plan FY2011 - 2015, there is a continuing need for public service that address human services needs for city residents. As stated on this report, the City of Annapolis will continue to support services that address outstanding needs of our community that promotes families. The report specifically states that "...outstanding service needs expected to be addressed include mentoring, job skills, computer training, and information, referral, for the Hispanic community and all low and moderate-income persons."

On Consolidated Plan FY2015 - 2019, one of the annual goals of the City of Annapolis, described on the report is to provide Public service activities other than Housing, to Low/Moderate income households (page 132). Furthermore, under goal number 7, on page 133 of the report, it is stated that the City of Annapolis will "Support Vital Public Services concerned with assisting children and youth, providing persons with office skills training and job training, providing persons with information and referral and other services that promote family stability and self-sufficiency." The Hispanic population in Annapolis is hard working, proud and tradition based, but almost all of our clients are low-income, poorly educated, and speak little or no English. They are unfamiliar with the U.S. customs and laws, and are not well versed in navigating the local education, legal, health and other services.

There is a well documented need for services for this population. Center serves over 2,000 persons a year. Based on our data base, we are serving:60% women, 40% men; Age 10% under 21; 75% 22-40; 10% 40-60; 5% 60+; Ethnicity: 98% Hispanic/Latinos; 2% other; Income: 90% Below poverty level; 10% Above poverty level. Many of our clients come repeatedly to seek assistance. The high rate of repeated visits is caused by 1) a basic lack of literacy and 2) the varied nature of the problems faced by individuals who come for help. Our families are reluctant to seek out public, government-based services, and often, these services are not bilingual. The Center often receives referrals from other agencies, increasing the already high demand for services.

Our Information/Referral/Assistance and Outreach Programs bridge the language and cultural gaps faced by Hispanic/Latinos so that they can best access our local educational, medical, legal and human services, but also learn how to build problem-solving skills and become increasingly self-sufficient in the U.S. society. The proposed project creates opportunities for Hispanic/Latino immigrants, in addition to social and economic good for the community. Our services are offered in a culturally-appropriate and comfortable setting that allows the clients to learn, gain confidence and build skills so that they can become increasingly less dependent on public services. Our services are provided with a low or no cost and suppress the demand for public services; all of which create a cost savings for the public sector.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION (30 Points)

Please give a detailed description of the program or project you are proposing. Please include the group of persons you plan to serve and the number of expected participants, the activities or services you will provide and location.

Our Building Lives for New Americans project has the following objectives:

- 1) To provide general orientation to the U.S. laws and customs;
- 2) To improve literacy and other basic life skills;
- 3) To provide the opportunity for Hispanics/Latinos and other immigrants in our area to become self-empowered and self-su

The Center serves clients either

- 1) directly with walk-in assistance, information
- 2) through its educational programs
- 3) by referring to an appropriate agency. In 2015, we served over 2,000 clients. The Center helps people to find resources related to housing, legal, medical, employment, financial issues and much more. We also offer more long-lasting and specialized help in the form of weekly ESOL classes, a Citizenship and Immigration class and a Homework Help and Leadership program for the youth.

Referral/Information/Assistance services: every client fills out an intake sheet; our caseworkers evaluate their needs and takes a course of action to solve the immediate need, but also ensuring that they learn the steps to achieving self-sufficiency. One important service we are now providing to the Hispanic/Latinos residents of the City of Annapolis is access to health coverage. On September 2015, the Center was designated by the Maryland Health Benefit Exchange as an "Application Counselor Sponsoring Entity", One of our caseworkers attended training with and became an Application Counselor. This is an important service we are starting to provide for our families, ensuring they have access to healthcare, which will improve their lives and their families as well.

Our educational programs complement our assistance services. Learning English will lead to a better assimilation into the American culture. In addition, they will be well-versed in their rights, obligations and the laws protecting them.

Our Citizenship class prepares our students to become contributing, self-supporting citizens of our community, and our Homework Help and Leadership program gives our students comprehensive support they need to stay in school, succeed academically and in life.

Describe the methodology (or approach) for the proposed program/project, e.g., the procedures, tasks, techniques, or tools you will use to develop the program

COH Referral/Assistance services: every client who visits COH is asked to fill out a client intake form, which includes information on demographics, needs and personal information including family income. Our caseworkers evaluate the clients' needs, and take a course of action not only to solve their immediate need, but also ensuring that they participate in our educational classes and workshops, with the goal of assisting Hispanics/Latinos to achieve self-sufficiency. All this data is included in a database which is updated on a weekly bases. In addition, client satisfaction survey is performed with at least 80% of COH clients, and follow up calls as well. Workshops on Immigration, citizenship, finances and others are lead by specialized immigration counselors.

ESOL classes are taught by our volunteers, which are retired teachers. Pre and pos assessment of the students is performed to measure their progress. Homework and Leadership Program is coordinated by the Program Director, with the assistance of our over 20 volunteers and our partners such as Studies Groups of the U.S. Naval Academy. Program success is measured by school reports in addition to an internal pre and pos assessment to evaluate their progress with English/Reading Comprehension skills.

Explain how this proposal relates to the organization's mission, goals and/or strategic plan, and other activities planned for this year.

The Center of Help/Centro de Ayuda (COH) is a non-profit community resource and referral center assisting Hispanic families in Annapolis and Anne Arundel County, MD. Our mission is to promote self-sufficiency and the successful integration of these immigrant families into the local community and U.S. society. Basically, COH assistance services and educational programs meet the needs of our families, and help us to achieve our mission as an organization. Through our educational programs COH wants to empower Hispanics/Latino immigrants to improve their literacy skills, so they become more employable, which can solve a great range of financial issues. Our workshops intend to increase our clients knowledge in financial management, nutrition, citizenship and immigration issues.

COH referral services assist our clients to navigate the systems into place, so they can achieve a better quality of life for themselves and their families. COH strategic plan for FY 2017 is to continue offering and improving our services and educational programs, to strengthen our partnership with local agencies and other non-profit organizations, to ensure we have all the tools to serve our community. Our partnership with Opportunities Industrialization Center has improved our ESOL program. On March 2016, we will offer the Strengthening Families Program at Tyler Heights Elementary School, a program that enhance parenting skills, strengthen family relationships, to avoid future problems related to substance abuse, lack of communication and discipline in families.

In addition, COH has strengthened its partnership with Department of Social Services in Glen Burnie, Anne Arundel County Public Schools, Anne Arundel Medical Center, Midshipmen Studies Group of the U.S. Naval Academy, among others, ensuring that we assist a greater number of clients, and because we believe that is through cooperating, combining our efforts with other agencies, that our Hispanics/Latino immigrants can be better served. COH will continue its traditional Cinco de Mayo Fundraising Event in 2016, the Second Noche Latina fundraising night at Rams Head in August 2016 and host its 4th Hispanic Heritage Festival in September 2016, to ensure we celebrate the Hispanic culture and fundraise for the Center as well.

With sufficient funding, COH can continue to assist clients and institute programs that will help our Hispanic community members improve their language, job and life skills and gain the ability to solve their own problems. COH's goal is to allow Annapolis' Hispanics/Latino immigrants achieve stability and security for themselves and their families, and become employed, educated, fully participating members of society, which assists the Mayor's vision of promoting economic development in our community.

TIMELINE (10 Points)

Provide a timeline for implementation and all program/project activities for the project.

Date	Activity
05.2016	Prepare calendar for specialized one-on-one, small group training and workshops for FY 2017
07.2016	Continue ongoing information/assistance/referral and case management/Educational Programs
12.2016	Continue ongoing information/assistance/referral and case management/Educational Programs
07.2017	Evaluate programs outcomes/results; organize strategic plan for next fiscal year.

Please indicate how you have determined that the timeline is achievable.

Our referral/assistance, case management services and specialized programs are ongoing; COH does not have major interruptions throughout the year. We are constantly evaluating our successes and obstacles, and trying to find strategies to overcome any difficulties that we may encounter. The Executive Director together with the Board of Directors meets monthly, and are constantly working together to improve the Center's operations, strategies, finances, to ensure we can continue serving our families. The City of Annapolis funding would support a continuation of COH services, but also enhance those services to reach out to a broader audience and provide a wider range of learning and training opportunities for clients.

Describe the organization's ability to implement the request.

Since 1997, COH has bridged the language and cultural gaps that prevent Hispanic/Latino immigrants from accessing and participating locally available services. It has helped new mothers raise healthy babies, aided families in housing and economic crisis and solved complicated legal situations for new Hispanic/Latino residents. In the past four years it has helped people become American Citizens, learn English and support the youth with their education. COH serves as a place of safety, familiarity and understanding for many at-risk members of our community. COH staff and volunteers have long-standing and proven success in their ability to communicate with, respond to, and provide for this undeserved population.

COH, through its reputation and the trust it has built with the Annapolis community, has over 40 volunteers to assist with its programs, ensuring the COH is sustainable, which is part of our cost saving strategy. Our ESOL classes and Homework Help and Leadership program are run by our committed volunteers, with the assistance and supervision of our Executive Director. In addition, COH counts on volunteers to assist with administrative tasks such as with data entry, outreach, special events and much more.

EVALUATION (20 Points)

Clearly state the specific, goals, objectives, and measurable outcomes of the project/program.

Goals	Objectives	Measurable Outcomes
<p>Promote self-sufficiency and the successful integration of immigrant families into the local community and U.S. society</p>	<p>Help people with legal, medical, employment, housing and financial issues, through case work, workshops. Offer ESOL classes. Conduct Homework Help and Leadership Program.</p>	<p>Serve approximately 2,000 people a year. Perform client satisfaction survey. Conduct pre-post knowledge questionnaires for ESOL classes/workshops. Monitor grades, school reports, pre and post assessment to measure progress for Homework Help.</p>

Describe the impact (long-term effects) you expect will be produced by program/project outcomes.

COH offers a variety of services and programs to the Hispanic/Latino community of Annapolis and Anne Arundel County. There are a number of long-term effects that COH expects to be produced by our programs.

- Clients increase their knowledge of available human resources in our community;
- Clients increase their literacy skills, so they find better employment and achieve a better quality of life;
- Clients increase their English skills, so they become empowered to solve many of the issues related to language barrier on their own;
- Clients increase their knowledge on financial management, which can help to assist them to become self-sufficient;
- Students that participate in the Homework Program improve their English skills, are able to do their homework assignments and understand the important role educational can play in their lives.
- Clients increase their level of satisfaction so they refer COH to other people in our community;
- COH strengthens its partnership with other organizations to combine efforts to serve our community
- COH assists Hispanics/Latinos to become independent and self-sufficient, so the need for our services start to decrease over time.

BUDGET DOCUMENTS (20 Points)

Include a detailed program budget that includes expenses, city funds requested and pending sources of support. **Please use the attached Program/Project Budget Format.**

Outline the organizations plans for securing funding from sources other than those provided by the City of Annapolis and indicate how City of Annapolis' funds will be used to leverage a request for, or use of, other grant funds.

The Center of Help is continually seeking funding support for its operations and programs. In general, the Center is supported by public funds - which include local and county funding, by foundation grants and through individual and client contributions. We currently receive funds from United Way of Central Maryland, SEEDCO, AA County, Wells Fargo, The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation and the Carol M. Jacobson Foundation. In addition, we receive donation from clients and other donors. The Center has its Cinco de Mayo Annual Fundraising event. In 2015, we hosted our Third Hispanic Heritage Month Festival, which besides celebrating the Hispanic culture, we also sold sponsorships to fundraise. Furthermore, in 2015 our volunteers contributed with 2119.25 hours, which is equivalent to \$48,891.00 dollars (Federal Guidelines- volunteer time is equivalent to \$23.07 per hour)." This is an important contribution our community gives to COH, that enables us to continue providing quality of services and programs to our clients. For FY 2017, the Center of Help has applied for funds with AACounty, Anne Arundel Women Giving Together, CDBG (City of Annapolis), Community Foundation of Anne Arundel County, United Way of Central Maryland, SEEDCO. In addition, we received in the end of 2015 a \$11,000.00 donation from a private donor. Futhermore, COH will continue with its fundraising efforts throughout the year, with the support of its Board of Directors, that have worked diligently to ensure the Center has enough funds to continue providing the services and educational programs to our Hispanic/Latino community members.

The Center of Help has been creating new strategies to ensure financial sustainability. Our strengthening partnerships with local hospitality businesses in our area resulted in a fundraising night, Noche Latina, at Rams Head on Stage, Annapolis, MD on August 21, 2015. Through tickets sales and VIP sponsorships, the Center was able to raise almost \$15,000.00. The success of Noche Latina is a great first step towards making this an annual event for Annapolis. This is an important source of funding for us and we see the possibility of raising more funds every year, as it becomes an Annapolis tradition.

