



INFORMATION ABOUT THE FUND

The Berwick Health and Wellness Fund (BHWF) is the original and largest component fund of the Central Susquehanna Community Foundation. The fund, valued at approximately \$30 million, was created through the sale of the Berwick Hospital in 1999 from nonprofit to for-profit ownership. The Foundation seeks to enrich the lives of the residents of the hospital's service area by using the investments from the BHWF to promote individual and community health and well being.

The mission of the Berwick Health and Wellness Fund is to select, identify, and invest in programs and projects that improve the health and welfare of the community. The terms "health" and "wellness" are interpreted in a broad sense to include a wide variety of efforts that have an impact on the community's overall well being.

The geographic boundaries of the BHWF encompass 8 boroughs and 15 townships in eastern Columbia County and lower/western Luzerne County in northeastern Pennsylvania. Home to approximately 55,000 residents, this region is a historic intersection of once thriving iron manufacturing, anthracite coal mining, railways and canals. The diverse terrain is bisected by the north branch of the Susquehanna River and includes small cities, rural villages, new residential communities, farmlands and forest.

The 23 locales eligible to receive BHWF grants are:

Columbia County Boroughs: Berwick Borough*, Benton Borough, Briar Creek Borough Stillwater Borough. **Columbia County Townships:** Benton Township, Briar Creek Township, Fishing Creek Township, Mifflin Township, North Centre Township, and South Centre Township

Luzerne County Boroughs: Berwick Borough*, Conyngham Borough, Nescopeck Borough, New Columbus Borough, and Shickshinny Borough. **Luzerne County Townships:** Butler Township, Conyngham Township, Hollenback Township, Hunlock Township, Huntington Township, Nescopeck Township, Salem Township, Sugarloaf Township, and Union Township

**Berwick Borough is located in both Columbia and Luzerne Counties.*

Grantmaking Approach

In general, the Central Susquehanna Community Foundation favors preventive approaches and collaborative endeavors that enhance community health and wellness. Proposals receiving the most favorable review show evidence of:

- A solid understanding of community needs, current research in the field and best practices in service delivery
- A clear connection between the organization's mission and the project for which funds are requested
- Achievable outcomes and a practical plan for reaching them
- A plan to measure and validate impact of the project
- Staff and/or volunteers who will be able to undertake the project successfully
- An ability to leverage or match grant dollars from other sources
- A plan to sustain the project beyond the grant period.

Priority areas of interest. The Foundation board invests in programs and projects that promote overall health and wellness within the geographic boundaries of the BHWF. In the grant review process, priority is given to proposals that respond to one or more of the areas of need identified by a community assessment process:

- Ensuring that children are healthy and ready to learn when they enter school.
- Promoting oral health for residents who lack access to regular dental care.
- Reducing the risks of cardiovascular disease through nutrition, physical activity and tobacco-free lifestyles.
- Improving mental and behavioral health through community awareness, support and treatment.

Types of Grants

The Foundation invites requests for program support and for capital projects that include equipment and facilities. On rare occasion the Foundation may consider requests for general operating expenses.

Duration of Grants

The Foundation typically awards one-year grants. In certain cases, grants may be renewable for additional years. It is not the intention of the Foundation to establish permanent or dependent relationships with grantees.

Size of Grants

Grant size varies according to the type of project, the needs of the organization and the target population. During 2007, 53% of our competitive grants were less than \$5,000; 34% of our grants were \$10,000 or above; and, 13% of our grants were between \$5,000 and \$9,999.

Limitations

In order to be eligible to receive a grant from the Foundation, an organization must hold 501 (c) (3) non-profit status or be a governmental organization. All grants must benefit the residents and communities within the defined geographic boundaries. The Foundation does not award grants to individuals or to projects that serve an exclusively religious purpose.

Policy on Grantmaking to Religious Organizations

“The Foundation does not fund sectarian or explicitly religious activity. The Foundation welcomes religious or faith-based organizations with tax-exempt 501 (c) (3) status to apply for grants to support projects or programs that (a) broadly benefit the communities within the geographic boundaries of the CSCF; (b) do not contain explicit religious content, material or instruction; (c) serve participants without limitation to religious belief; and (d) do not promote a religious ideology.”

Objectives:

- a) Avoid blanket prohibition of grantmaking to religious organizations.
- b) Acknowledge that some faith-based organizations play a significant role in addressing human needs, and encourage them to apply for grants to support programs or projects that broadly benefit the community.
- c) Ensure that program participants are not discriminated against based on religious belief.
- d) Provide support for programs and projects but not those with explicitly religious content (materials, worship, etc.)

- e) Ensure that our grants do not support religious qualifications in the recruitment, hiring, retention or promotion of employees.

Guidelines on grantmaking for playgrounds

The Foundation welcomes requests for playgrounds and will consider a grant match up to \$10,000 if the following criteria are met:

- a) Project has community/neighborhood support.
- b) Equipment and design geared for a particular age group (for example: early childhood) and encourages physical activity and exercise.
- c) Meets current industry standards and practices for child safety.
- d) Consideration will be given to:
 - Child safety and children's physical development
 - "Sweat equity"; volunteer contributions
 - Community use; meets a community/neighborhood need – do other nearby playgrounds already exist
 - Open and available to neighborhood outside of school hours
- e) Older playgrounds in need of being replaced because safety standards/codes have changed.
- f) A project located on the grounds of a school has the support of the school administrator.
- g) Leveraged funds:
 - Evidence of community support, including some financial support/fundraising
 - Project attracts diverse funding sources including local businesses, the Parent Teacher Organization, etc.
- h) Includes a plan for regular inspection and maintenance.

Guidelines on grantmaking for vehicles

The Foundation consistently denies grant requests for vehicles and discourages funding for vehicles. However, the Berwick Health & Wellness Fund Advisory Committee may review a request for a vehicle grant and make a positive recommendation to the Central Susquehanna Community Foundation Board for approval.

Review Process

Grant proposals are reviewed by a combination of foundation staff, committees and the board. Applicants who meet the Foundation's eligibility criteria are invited to submit proposals.