

City of Burlington / 2013 CDBG Application Form

Project Name: Sara Holbrook Community Center Preschool

Project Location / Address: 66 North Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401

Applicant Organization / Agency: Sara Holbrook Community Center

Mailing Address: 66 North Avenue, Burlington, VT 05401

Physical Address: same

Contact: Leisa Pollander Title: Executive Director Phone #: 862-0080

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EIN #: 03-0179595 DUNS #: applied for

CDBG Funding Request: \$ 6,000

1. Type of Organization

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Government | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Non-Profit Organization (please provide copy of your |
| <input type="checkbox"/> For-Profit Organization | IRS 501(c)(3) tax exemption letter) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Faith-Based Organization | <input type="checkbox"/> Institution of Higher Education |

2. Conflict of Interest: Please complete and sign attached form.

3. List of Board of Directors: Please attach.

Certification

To the best of my knowledge and belief, data in this proposal are true and correct.

I have been duly authorized to apply for this funding on behalf of this agency.

I understand that this grant funding is conditioned upon compliance with federal CDBG regulations.

I further certify that no contracts have been awarded, funds committed or construction begun on the proposed program, and that none will be prior to issuance of a Release of Funds by the Program Administrator.

Signature of Authorized Official

Leisa Pollander
Name of Authorized Official

Executive Director
Title

1/4/13
Date

I. Demonstrated Need

1. Project Narrative: Provide a description of the project/program to be funded with CDBG. (Refer to NOFA for required information in this section.)

The Sara Holbrook Community Center's (SHCC) Pre-school program provides educational activities for at-risk pre-school children in preparation for their successful entry into kindergarten. The need is identified by the United Way's Community Needs Assessment, by feed-back from people utilizing the Center, and through networking with other service providers.

If we examine the number of children that qualify for free or reduced rate meals in Burlington (49.85%, BSD 2011 – 2012 annual report), the demand for affordable childcare programs clearly exceeds the programs that are available. Licensed pre-school programs like the one at the SHCC have enrollment caps that prevent them from expanding the numbers served. Affordable childcare allows low-income parents to seek and retain employment, supporting self-sufficiency efforts and modeling work habits for children.

Parents want programs that they can trust to be safe and reliable, particularly during stressful economic times when wages do not meet expenses, and the price of health care, food, gasoline and heating oil are out of the reach of many. The SHCC is a trusted part of the old north end community, its staffing and its programs are consistent, and the pre-school has a 70+ year track record of preparing children to successfully enter the public school system. Parents see the dramatic progress that their children make during the two-year program.

Because the old north end is the most "affordable" area of Burlington, in terms of rent, newly-arrived immigrants and refugees often are housed here. The SHCC has a long-standing space sharing arrangement with Vermont Adult Learning (VAL) which provides English as a Second Language (ESL) classes. Having their children enrolled in a quality pre-school program becomes a convenient and attractive option for parents as it allows them to take classes at the same time.

This is a funding priority because the pre-school supports the efforts of low-income families to move to and retain economic self-sufficiency. The pre-school program helps students overcome developmental deficiencies due to economic hardships, limited English proficiency, low-parent to child ratios, family violence and substance abuse or low emphasis on educational achievement. Curriculum is presented at both a group and on an individual level, with primary focus on promoting social development in the belief that exposure to an exemplary pre-school experience will contribute to a positive school experience. Of the 15 children enrolled **this** year, **all** are from families with incomes below the federal poverty guideline; 8 are African refugees (1 Somali Bantu 4 Sudanese, 2 Tanzanians and 1 Congolese), 1 is biracial (African American), 3 Burmese, 1 Nepalese, 1 Caucasian and 1 is from Albanian - 87% speak English as a Second Language. Some of these children present major behavioral challenges because of the significant traumas they have faced. The SHCC is requesting funding for this project in recognition that the agency is supporting some of the neediest families and children in this community. In order to continue to serve such a high ratio of refugee children and meet the needs of all children enrolled, we have had to increase staffing in order to keep everyone safe – we can't do this work successfully with minimal staffing. Current child care development adult to child ratio for this age group is 1 adult for

10 children. State licensing standards specify an adult: child ratio of 1:10; the SHCC's minimal adult: child ratio is 1 to 5; most days, it is 1 to 3.75; 2 days per week, the ratio is 1 to 3.

2. Innovation

a. What new programs and/or services will be provided as a result of CDBG assistance?

CDBG funding will not support new programming or services. In this economic climate when nonprofits have been dealing with loss of state and federal funding and reduced foundation and private donations, we are fighting to maintain existing services. The SHCC preschool operates as a collaborative classroom with Champlain Valley Head Start; this is a comprehensive service delivery system that provides an array of services to the neediest families in our community. This partnership has strengthened program quality to the degree that the SHCC was just awarded 5 STAR (highest quality) designation for 3 years (until 12/15). Previous STARS awards have been for 1 year increments.

b. How will existing programs and/or services be expanded as a result of CDBG assistance? Use actual numbers to demonstrate expansion.

Like all licensed child care centers, the SHCC is limited to the number of children that can be served by licensing regulations. The small amount of funding available through CDBG dollars does not support expansion.

c. Are there other programs in the community that address similar issues? Yes No If Yes, how is this proposal different?

Early childhood collaborative classrooms with Champlain Valley Head Start occur across a 4 county catchment area in Chittenden, Grand Isle, Addison & Franklin counties; this program is not different from the other child care services offered through other partner organizations - it is part of a big picture, delivering comprehensive early childhood services to a large geographical area, to a large cohort of low-income children.

II. Proposed Outcomes

1. How will this project/program impact individuals and contribute to the City's anti-poverty strategy?

The SHCC preschool supports objective EO-3.1: helping families access quality childcare/early education opportunities. The SHCC Preschool - indeed, all SHCC educational programming - epitomizes social and economic justice and educational parity across all income levels. Burlington is a refugee resettlement site; the SHCC's history of supporting the newly-arrived and welcoming all as valued members of our community builds a solid sense of belonging, and contributes to keeping Burlington a livable city.

The provision of quality early childhood programming is a key component in addressing the needs of people in poverty. Families cannot become self-sufficient if their hold on employment is blocked by the need for affordable, dependable childcare. The SHCC exemplifies the concept of collaboration - we maximize resources thorough partnerships to make things happen **to ensure that no one is left behind**. We, as a community cannot afford to leave anyone out of opportunities to improve quality of life, or we will all pay far into the future.

2. List your goals/objectives, activities to implement and expected outcomes (# of units, # of individuals, etc.)

Specific Service / Activity:	CDBG will pay for:	Unduplicated Total # of Households / Persons to be Served in this Service / Activity:	Unduplicated Total # of Burlington Households / Persons to be Served:	Outcome(s) to be Achieved:
Teaching geared to 8 domains of early childhood development	salaries	15	14	Students will demonstrate skill improvement in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - social emotional - approaches to learning - language development - literacy - math - science - creative arts - physical health and development

III. Experience / Organizational Capacity

1. What is your agency’s mission, and how do the proposed activities fit with your mission?

For 75 years, the SHCC has been providing an array of services to meet the needs of the community. Modeled after the settlement houses of New York City, the mission of the agency is to develop responsible and productive children, youth and families through social development, educational and recreational opportunities. The Center serves Chittenden County, with a primary focus on the north end of Burlington.

Founded in 1937, the Center primarily served the newly-arrived Irish, French-Canadian and Italian families who migrated to Burlington to work in the mills, lumber yards, quarries and on the Burlington waterfront. With the influx of new arrivals from around the world, the vision – and the work – of Sara Holbrook continues.

2. How long has your agency been in operation?

For 75 years, since 1937.

3. What programs and services do you offer?

In addition to preschool, the SHCC provides afterschool and school vacation care for 36 K – 5th graders, 6 weeks of summer day camp for 60 K – 5th graders, summer youth adventure camp for 40 5th – 9th graders,

3. Explain how the target population is selected, qualified and monitored.

Recruitment efforts are on-going thorough-out the year. The partnership with Champlain Valley Head Start necessitates a focus on:

- Low-income families (90% must meet federal poverty guidelines: family of 4 makes less than \$22,350) Income is verified via tax returns, paystubs or income verification from Economic Services.
- Children with disabilities (10% program-wide must meet this criteria; this year 33% of the 15 children are receiving special education services)
- Cultural diversity (because of the SHCC's location in the old north end, the program is within walking distance of a significant number of refugees and immigrants)

4. How do you ensure that your programs are accessible to all, inclusive and culturally appropriate?

The SHCC is an equal opportunity employer, as specified in agency personnel policies; this is indicated in all employment advertisements. The building itself is handicap-accessible. Two of the SHCC preschool staff were born and raised in the old north end. All preschool staff understand the culture of poverty, because all come from families that had incomes at or below the federal poverty guideline. Board members are recruited congruent with the individual's support of the agency's mission. Because the board is charged with fund-raising on behalf of the agency, board members are recruited based in part on the business/corporate/personal connections they may bring to build agency capacity. The staff and board includes members of the GLBT community; the Asian community is represented both on the staff and on the board.

5. What steps has your organization/board taken in the past year to become more culturally competent?

The Executive Director attended a symposium on cultural reciprocity hosted by UVM last spring led by Dr. Beth Harry. In June, Dr. Dan Balon from the Burlington School District led an all day staff/board inservice on racism and other "isms". Three staff attended a discussion on race hosted by the Burlington School District at Echo on 1/2/13.

V. Budget / Financial Feasibility

1. Project Budget

Line Item	CDBG Funds	Other	Total
salary	\$6,000	\$57,500	\$63,500
benefits	\$0	\$19,000	\$19,000
Prof fees	\$0	\$1,500	\$1,500
occupancy	\$0	\$18,500	\$18,500
other	\$0	\$14,500	\$14,500
TOTAL	\$6,000	\$111,000	\$117,000

2. Funding Sources

	Project		Agency	
	Current	Projected	Current	Projected
CDBG	\$6,000	\$6,000	\$16,000	\$21,000
State (specify) child care subsidy	\$80,500	\$80,000	\$175,000	\$177,000
Federal (specify)	0	0	0	0
United Way	\$27,000	\$27,000	\$104,000	\$108,000
Private (specify) donations, special events, private foundations	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$331,618	\$332,787
Program Income	0	0	0	0
Other (specify) investment inc, rental inc.	0	\$2,500	\$7,500	\$8,500
Total	\$ 115,000	\$ 117,000	\$634,118	\$ 647,287

3. Of the total project cost, what percentage will be financed with CDBG?

$$\frac{\$6,000}{\text{CDBG Funding}} \div \frac{\$117,000}{\text{Total Project Cost}} = \frac{5.1}{\text{Percentage}} \%$$

4. Of the total project cost, what would be the total cost per person?

$$\frac{\$6,000}{\text{CDBG Funding}} \div \frac{14}{\text{\# Proposed Beneficiaries}} = \frac{\$428.57}{\text{Cost Per Person}}$$

5. Why should CDBG resources, as opposed to other sources of funding, be used for this project? CDBG monies used for this project address the needs of people living in poverty; in supporting efforts toward self-sufficiency, the program helps move people out of poverty. This program – indeed, the entire agency – has a long history of collaborating with other service providers to stretch resources and to enhance sustainability. This program is culturally sensitive and fully accessible.

6. Describe your use of community resources. Include any resources not listed in your budget.

Champlain Valley Head Start provides a 40 hour per week staff person, and manages the food service – this in-kind is not reflected in the budget. The budget also does not reflect in-kind garnered from volunteer staff or donated goods. Toys, games, art supplies and books are, in large part, donated. Area colleges provide interns. Referrals to the program are made by Vermont Adult Learning, the Burlington Public Schools, the VNA, the VT Dept. of Health, DCF, Child Care Resource, VT Refugee Resettlement, communities of faith, and others.

7. Has your organization experienced any significant changes in funding levels during the past year? Yes No

If Yes, please explain. The SHCC has experienced the good, the bad and the ugly. Last year the agency received a partial distribution of an estate from a long time supporter; that infusion of cash has been placed in reserve account, in anticipation of the initiation of a capital campaign. The SHCC requires a larger facility before we can expand any services – we outgrew our current facility eons ago. As of this writing, we are running slightly in the red for current budget - grant income and child care subsidy are at projections, but solicited contributions and holiday appeal are down from last year.

8. What cost-cutting measures has your organization implemented? This year's 8.7% spike in health care premiums necessitated the implementation of a higher cost share from employees – they are now contributing approximately 30% of cost so that the agency could maintain a quality health care package. Program supplies and staff development are currently the 2 categories that the agency is holding the line on.

VI. Community Support / Participation

1. What other organizations or key individuals (if any) have given support to this project?

Champlain Valley Head Start, Vermont Refugee Resettlement, Vermont Adult Learning, Child Care Resource, Vermont Dept. of Children and Families (DCF), ; in addition, the Burlington School District, the United Way of Chittenden County, CEDO, the First Congregational Church and the Association of Africans Living in Vermont are all partners. Two years ago, based on the mental health needs presented by some of the refugee children enrolled, the SHCC established a partnership with the Howard Center. A clinician is embedded in the classroom 1 morning per week to assist with behavioral challenges.

2. How are the community or program participants involved in decision-making and/or identifying the program need, design and/or evaluation?

Parents feedback is easily solicited on a daily basis at pick-up and drop-off times; and twice a year, their feedback is formally solicited at parent-teacher conference. The design of the program is based on their input about the needs of their children, early childhood development research and the curriculum of area schools. Their opinion of the program is expressed by the continued high enrollment, the waiting list, and the continuity of usage – the SHCC has enrolled children of parents who attended as children; parents also enroll successive children because they are so pleased with the level of service their older children received. Annually, parents complete a survey re: program satisfaction.

VII. Readiness to Implement

1. **Is the project ready to begin on July 1, 2013 and be completed by June 30, 2014?**

Yes No

If not, what are the expected start and completion dates?

2. **List any conditions (i.e., obtaining permits, availability of other funding, etc.) that may affect your ability to begin or complete this project.**

There are no foreseen conditions that would impact the agency's ability to carry out the project.

VIII. Impact / Evaluation

1. **Describe how this project will effectively measure outcomes.**

Success is gauged through results of a child development assessment that is administered 3 times during the course of the program. This assessment tracks individual children's progress in 8 developmental domains – social/emotional, approaches to learning, language development, literacy, math, science, creative arts, and physical health and development. Last year all of the children were documented skill increases in all domains.

2. **What strategies will you implement to collect the data necessary to analyze your results?**

Children are individually assessed at 3 points during the academic year – see above.

As part of the Early Learning Partnership with the United Way of Chittenden County, we also track health/social service screenings and referrals.

3. **How are clients better off as a result of your program?**

Last year, all children documented skill increases in all 8 developmental domains; all children were connected to a medical and dental home.

IX. Sustainability

1. **How will this project have a long-term benefit to the City of Burlington? If this project ends, will that benefit continue?**

The Center provides an essential service to low-income families in the Old North End, as well as to residents of Northgate, Franklin Square and Farrington Trailer Park. For 70+ years, the pre-school program has provided children with a safe, nurturing environment in which to learn new skills prior to kindergarten, as well as providing parents with resources about healthy, developmentally appropriate child development practices. Learning foundation skills helps to ensure that children are successful in school; learning about child development, nurture and care supports parents in their quest to raise healthy children. A quality pre-school program like that at the Center is an important first step in children's lives, and the children who have graduated from the Center have consistently demonstrated greater preparedness. A long-standing kindergarten teacher in the old north end has consistently commented about the high level of skill she notes in the "Sara Holbrook kids" entering her classroom! Gains made in early childhood set the stage for a successful elementary school experience. Were the preschool to fold, 15 families would lose childcare (a true detriment to maintaining economic self-sufficiency), as well as a quality early childhood setting for their children.

2. **Provide evidence of long-term support for this project.**

The SHCC has been a member agency since the United Way was founded in the early 1940's – preschool has been a funded program since that time.

3. **If CDBG funding ends, will the project be able to continue?**

The project would continue only if replacement funding can be located. In these economic times, every lost dollar necessitates an effort to find alternative funding. The SHCC has a reputation for operating on a shoestring; unfortunately, shoe strings wear out!