

CARES Act Sub-Grant Proposal – August 2020

The Zanesville Think Tank on Poverty, founded in 2017, was modeled after the Newark Think Tank on Poverty. The [Think Tanks on Poverty](#) are community organizing groups to create discussion about the root causes of poverty. They include members who have experienced barriers in obtaining sustainable, living wage jobs; food; safe and affordable housing; and accessible transportation. The Think Tanks on Poverty operate under the auspices of the Vincentian Ohio Action Network, a 501c3 founded by members of the St. Vincent de Paul Diocesan Council of Columbus.

Project Summary

Through listening sessions held in 2017-18, the Zanesville Think Tank learned that a major concern of Zanesville citizens was the difficulty encountered when trying to access and maintain safe, affordable housing. Our group solicited participation for a City of Zanesville study about residents' housing needs and concerns, met with various stakeholders dealing with affordable housing to learn about the issues, held educational events, and advocated for attention to the needs of those lacking the income to easily afford basic rent and utilities. In 2019, The Zanesville Think Tank applied for a Community Development Block Grant to fund the Zanesville Citizen Housing Connection Program (ZCHC) and was awarded \$27,600. ZCHC was formed by members of the Zanesville Think Tank on Poverty to offer outreach services to individuals struggling to maintain housing, referrals to resources to prevent eviction, education for individuals concerning tenant responsibilities, mediation for landlord-tenant disputes, and information for the city administration about data collected and barriers encountered by citizens facing difficulty maintaining housing.

With the current public health emergency, many citizens are at even greater risk of losing housing and we expect to find greater demand for services. The Think Tank participates in a Housing Coalition organized by the Zanesville-Muskingum County Health Department and maintains communications with the Unified Command, which is responding to the public health crisis. One of our members is manning a daytime respite center initiated by this group, currently located at the Vineyard Church on the west side of the Sixth Street Bridge. The respite center, primarily a service for individuals experiencing homelessness, is currently open from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. It provides wi-fi, a place to wash up, referrals to community resources, and primarily a place to retreat from outside weather. We hope to provide additional support from the ZCHC staff to the center as an additional location to make connections with citizens in need.

Because of our involvement with the respite center and the expected increased demand for assistance with housing emergencies due to displacement from COVID 19, the Vincentian Ohio Action Network is requesting an additional \$15,000 from the local CARES Act.

Budget

Free Store	
Chromebooks and related items for use in Free Store and Shelter due to limited access to services at Ohio Means Jobs and Library. Would occasionally service children.	\$1,200
Laundry detergent, dish soap, and other personal care/hygiene and cleaning items to be distributed through our Free Store.	\$1,000
Durable canopy(s) to serve carry out meals from (used to be held inside; now outside due to the COVID 19 pandemic).	\$300
Backpacks and cold weather sleeping bags for homeless individuals unable to use shelters or evicted in the colder months due to the COVID 19 pandemic.	\$500
Total For Free Store:	\$3,000
Respite Center	
Supplies to provide assistance to citizens who are experiencing poverty and homelessness during the COVID 19 pandemic: masks, hand sanitizer, soap, snacks, laundry, clothing, school supplies for children, and small grants of money for initiatives/transportation/etc. that will lead to stable housing, employment, etc.	\$4,000
An emergency fund for hotel room stays for those experiencing housing instability, gas vouchers, work items (steel toed boots) and other unexpected funds.	\$1,000
Appliances such as a microwave (\$70), crock pot (\$40), a hot plate for food preparation (\$60), etc. for preparing food for Respite Center visitors.	\$300
Chrome books for resource navigation, housing counseling, literacy activities for children, computer literacy education, tenant training, etc.	\$1,200
Cell phones (\$25 - \$40) loaded with minutes (\$35) to allow the ZCHC and the Respite Center users who need resource counseling to stay in contact with those who do not have phone service.	\$500
Payment to Vineyard Church for use of the space, including utilities, wifi, etc from March-December	\$2,000
Support for respite center coordinator/intern A stipend for the respite center coordinator/intern to track and monitor distribution of goods, engage with clients, and facilitate service delivery.	\$3,000
Total for Respite Center	\$12,000

Total Requested:	\$15,000
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Contact

Wendy Tarr, Executive Director
 Vincientian Ohio Action Network
wtarr@svdpcolumbus.org
 614-512-7106

Sarah O'Donnell, Program Development
 Vincientian Ohio Action Network
sodonnell@svdpcolumbus.org
 614-549-1759