



CATHOLIC COMMUNITY
FOUNDATION

Women's Giving Circle

Women's Giving Circle Invitation-Only Grant Application

Thank you for accepting our invitation to apply for a grant from the Women's Giving Circle (WGC), an initiative of the Catholic Community Foundation of the Diocese of Cleveland. Please respond clearly and concisely and adhere to the word limits below.

Organization Name: [House of Champions](#)

Address of Organization: 2059 W. 47th St., Cleveland, OH 44102

Organization Snapshot (75 words max)

Briefly describe your organization's mission, whom you serve, and where you serve.

House of Champions is a tuition-free afterschool program serving children on Cleveland's west side, founded in 2013 by educators from Ursuline, Notre Dame, and Most Holy Trinity congregations. Our mission is to provide a safe, nurturing environment where children develop the skills, confidence, and character needed to succeed in life. We serve elementary-aged children living at or below poverty level through academic support, social-emotional learning, and Christ-centered mentorship honoring the dignity, worth, and potential of every child.

Project Summary (100 words max)

Describe the specific project or program for which you are requesting Women's Giving Circle support.

This request will directly support our afterschool program serving high-risk students in grades 2–4 referred by educators from Urban Community, Metro Catholic, St. Rocco, and St. Ignatius of Antioch Schools. Using the evidence-based CASEL framework, students build essential social-emotional skills through small-group mentoring, academic support, healthy family-style meals, and consistent responsibilities and routines. Serving 32 students divided into four cohorts of eight across two home-like sites, the intentionally small size allows for deep relationship-building and personalized attention. The program addresses the effects of poverty, trauma, and chronic stress by fostering resilience, belonging, and hope through stable, relationship-centered care.

Community Need (100 words max)

What need does this project address, and why is it important at this time?

Children growing up in poverty on Cleveland's west side face chronic stress, instability, and trauma. These barriers significantly impact their academic success, emotional regulation, and long-term well-being. While many attend strong schools, access to consistent afterschool support that addresses social-emotional needs remains limited. The effects of the pandemic, rising family stress, and increased economic insecurity have intensified these challenges. This project is critical now because early intervention during the elementary years helps prevent long-term academic struggles, strengthens resilience, and provides children with the stability, relationships, and skills needed to thrive.

Impact & Outcomes (100 words max)

What impact do you expect this project to have? Include one or two measurable outcomes

Our program will measurably strengthen students' social-emotional skills, academic performance, and overall well-being. Using the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA 2), 90% of students are expected to score in the typical or strength range for SEL by year's end. Academically, 70% will show measurable improvement in Math and ELA scores, while 100% will receive daily nutritious meals. Current results demonstrate strong impact: students achieved an average 19-point DESSA gain, nearly four times the national SEL average, with 100% finishing the year in the typical or strength range, reflecting meaningful, life-changing growth.

Use of Women's Giving Circle Funds (75 words max)

How will Women's Giving Circle funds be used?

Women's Giving Circle funds will directly support the mission of House of Champions by sustaining our comprehensive afterschool program. Grant support will underwrite evidence-based social-emotional learning curriculum and assessment tools, individualized academic supplies and tutoring resources, safe and reliable transportation, and essential security measures. Together, these elements ensure a stable, nurturing, and secure environment where children can fully engage, grow in confidence, and thrive.

Alignment with Catholic Values (75 words max)

The Women’s Giving Circle supports projects that respect the dignity of the human person, serve those most in need, and contribute to the common good. Please describe how this project reflects these values and how its activities are consistent with the mission and teachings of the Catholic Church.

House of Champions reflects Catholic values by honoring the dignity of every child, serving those most in need, and fostering the common good. Ursuline and Notre Dame Sisters remain actively involved, modeling faith, service, and Gospel-centered love through their charism. Our nearly 300 volunteers, the majority from local parishes, serve in unity with the teachings of the Catholic Church, offering Christ-centered mentorship that reflects the Word of God in daily practice.

Partnerships (50 words max, if applicable)

Briefly describe any project partnerships.

House of Champions partners closely with four local schools—Urban Community School, Metro Catholic School, St. Rocco School, and St. Ignatius of Antioch School. All students are referred by teachers or principals based on need. This year, partnerships expanded from two schools to four, resulting in a waiting list of eligible students.

Funding Request:

Amount Requested: \$ 20,000

Total Project Budget: \$ 260,999

Signature: 

Name: Sister Mary Kay Conkey, OSU

Title: Founder and Executive Director

House of Champions
Budgeted Revenues and Expenses
Cash Basis
7/1/2026 - 6/30/2027

Revenues	
Individuals and Corporations	\$ 50,000
Grants	125,390
Net Benefit	162,000
Interest Income	10,000
Total Revenues	\$ 347,390
Expenses	
Administrative:	
Payroll	\$ 10,154
Payroll Taxes - Employer	897
Payroll Company Fees	500
Bank Fees & Service Fees	780
Accounting Fees	6,300
QuickBooks Fee	479
Office and Administrative	1,500
Total Administration	\$ 20,610
Fund-Raising:	
Payroll	\$ 47,664
Payroll Taxes - Employer	4,051
Payroll Company Fees	500
Credit Card and Processing Fees	1,800
Postage	335
Social Media	600
Software and Website	411
Total Fundraising	\$ 55,361
Program:	
Payroll	\$ 123,502
Payroll - Executive Director	54,000
Payroll Taxes - Employer	16,414
Payroll Company Fees	1,820
Social Media	1,400
Insurance	9,360
Food	3,000
Curriculum	3,500
Other Program Related	2,000
Transportation	12,375
Security	13,828
Repairs & Maintenance	7,500
Software and Website	960
Utilities	11,340
Total Program	\$ 260,999
Total Expenses	\$ 336,970
Net Operating Surplus (3%)	\$ 10,420

The organization maintains an operating reserve equal to one year of operating expenses. The annual budget includes a planned operating surplus of approximately 3% to support long-term sustainability and keep pace with projected expense growth.