

Oasis -- A Haven for Women and Children

CHPRD22-021

Executive Summary

Overall summary of the program proposed by the organization.

Oasis – A Haven for Women and Children respectfully requests a grant of \$65,000 in support of the Oasis English as a Second Language (ESL) and Citizenship program. The grant will help defray the salary costs of two full-time instructors who teach ESL and Citizenship courses.

Close to 50,000 individuals in Paterson live below the poverty line, and some 39% of residents are foreign-born. These are the individuals who use Oasis services. Some 65% of women participating in our program are Hispanic and close to one-half of Oasis staff members are Hispanic. Thus, this program aligns perfectly with the Center for Hispanic Policy, Research, and Development goals to provide programs that allow for enhanced civic participation and improved economic mobility, with a focus on the Hispanic population.

Oasis – A Haven for Women and Children, Inc. is a nonprofit 501 (C) (3) multi-service antipoverty organization located in Paterson, New Jersey. We work from a three-story community center at 59 Mill Street, Paterson. We carry out educational and social service programs that help local women enter and succeed in the workforce and help children flourish academically. We also operate a soup kitchen and provide emergency food, clothing, and social support to city residents in need.

Our mission is to change impoverished women and children's lives by breaking the cycle of poverty through compassionate programs designed to feed, clothe, educate, and empower them.

The Oasis English as a Second Language and Citizenship Program aims to provide some 185 impoverished immigrant women, the majority of whom are Hispanic, the tools they need to fully integrate into the local community, to secure economic stability for themselves and their families, and to contribute as fully integrated members of American society. The program includes two components: 1) ESL courses and 2) Citizenship courses.

Oasis offers four levels of ESL courses, Monday to Friday to 155 women, operating on the school year (September through June). We register women in August and again in January. We also offer a six-week intensive course on Saturday mornings. Courses are free (we charge a \$25 registration fee, waived if needed). We test students upon entrance and at course completion, as well as throughout the year.

Oasis offers a Citizenship course to 30 women each year, which prepares women to take the US naturalization exam. This six-week course is offered three times annually.

Unique to Oasis is that we offer women free childcare for infants and toddlers while they are in class. This removes any barriers that mothers might prevent mothers from gaining the language and cultural fluency they need to integrate fully into the community and advance economically.

Because Oasis is a full-service antipoverty agency, all participating women are offered an integrated network of resources to help them, and their families rise out of poverty. Oasis has a soup kitchen (daily breakfast and lunch) and distributes basic needs such as food pantry bags, clothing, and baby items (diapers and formulas). Our three on-site social workers offer crisis intervention, domestic violence, and other mental health counseling. We offer GED and vocational training courses, an after-school program, and summer camp for children and teens. Participating women are encouraged to use all resources.

No other agency in the area offers impoverished women and children such a comprehensive network of antipoverty services.

Oasis implements measures to evaluate all its programs, including entry and exit testing and attendance monitoring. We encourage women to move from one program into another until they gain the skills they need to gain economic independence.

The total program cost is \$237,114 for the FY22 program year (July 1, 2021-June 30, 2022). This cost includes the salaries of three teachers, administrators, and childcare workers who care for the children of students while they are in class. (Administrative and childcare salaries are prorated.) (Please note that Oasis plans to add an additional ESL teacher in the coming school year.) The total program cost does not factor in the expenses associated with maintaining classroom space.

Oasis was founded in 1997 and has been rated as a four-star charity by Charity Navigator. Oasis is funded largely by private

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individuals, foundations, and corporations, with little government support. (Some 3% of annual revenue is from the government.) A nonsectarian 501(C) (3) organization, we seek to meet the needs of the community in Paterson as they arise.

We respectfully request the support of the Center for Hispanic Policy , Research, and Development to help us serve the immigrant population of Paterson, the majority of whom are Hispanic.

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Organizational Background

Indicate a brief history and governing structure of the organization, target population(s), and services provided.

Oasis — A Haven for Women and Children is a 501 (C) (3) multi-service antipoverty organization with a mission to help impoverished women and children rise out of poverty. Private donations—individuals, corporations, and foundations—provide the bulk of our revenue; only 3% of our annual revenue is from the government. Jennifer Brady is the Executive Director, and the organization is governed by a board of directors that includes 18 individuals, all leaders in the local business, legal, and philanthropic community. We have 27 full-time staff members and 27 part-time staff (the latter include after-school tutors). Our staff is highly diverse, and close to one-half of our staff members are Hispanic. We serve a highly diverse population of women and children and are always sensitive to issues of identity and culture. Some 150 volunteers assist with our programs every week.

POPULATION SERVED

Some 50,000 people in Paterson (total population 150,000) live below the federal poverty level (\$26,200 annual income for a family of four). A significant number of low-income families survive on less than \$15,000 per year. Single women with children suffer the highest poverty rates—fully one-half of families living without a husband or father live below the poverty line, and those with children under the age of five are the poorest. Forty-one percent of Paterson's children—one in three children—are poor, and many do not get enough food regularly.

Those suffering poverty in Paterson are, in large part, Hispanic and Spanish-speaking individuals. The most recent US census data show that close to 61% of Paterson's population is Hispanic. Many of them are foreign-born individuals (close to 39 % of the city's total population is foreign-born). The largest numbers of Spanish-speaking individuals in Paterson are of Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Peruvian, or Dominican origins, although individuals from Central America and various South American regions are present as well. These individuals struggle with the English language and face issues with citizenship, cultural integration, and poverty. Nearly one-third of foreign-born individuals speak English "less than well," meaning they have little hope of economic advancement. Many live without the advantages of citizenship, often in fear.

Oasis offers education, vocational, and basic needs services to Paterson's women and children, and the majority of those who seek and receive our services are Hispanic—a fact reflecting the city's ethnic makeup. Some 65% of the women participating in our English as a Second Language classes and our Citizenship courses are Hispanic. A significant proportion of the women and children who seek and receive our basic services are Hispanic; 81% of the children in our after-school program are Hispanic as well. All our clients come from low-income SNAP-eligible households (formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, and the measure used to validate need). Most of our clients are mothers, and many of them have very young dependents, infants, and preschool-age children whom we care for while their mothers are in class (our childcare services make us unique, as described below). While most of our program participants are Hispanic, our clients represent a diverse group of individuals: some 25% come from countries of Muslim origin (Bangladesh, Turkey, and Syria), some 10% are African American, and approximately 4% are Asian and White. They reflect the diversity of this city.

*Statistics cited are derived from US Census at: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/community_facts.xhtml

PROGRAMS

Oasis was founded twenty-four years ago by two women who noticed a need: While there were several soup kitchens in Paterson, most catered to adults and not children; in some of these kitchens, children would not be served. (This remains true today.) Our founders set out to provide hot meals to the women with children being left unserved. And so, Oasis began in the foyer of the First Presbyterian Church in Paterson, New Jersey, in April 1997.

By 2007, the organization had grown and raised funds to build our facility at 59 Mill Street. With the opening of this three-story community center, housing a dining room, classrooms, and offices, we significantly expanded services to include education and vocational training.

Today we increasingly focus on 1) education and vocational programs to enable women to enter the workforce and 2) academic programs to help children and teenagers succeed in school, graduate, and go further. At the same time, we continue to operate our soup kitchen and provide impoverished city residents with emergency food, clothing, and social service support. We offer free childcare to women who study here, enabling them to gain the skills they need to raise their families out of poverty. We are the only organization in the area offering this mix of wraparound services.

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Organizational Background

Oasis programs include:

1. Adult Education: We offer high school equivalency, English as a Second Language, computer skills, and job training courses. In the past year, some 646 women enrolled in our courses (some participating in more than one class).
2. Childcare: These women's achievements would not have been possible if not for our free childcare. Our trained staff and volunteers care for our adult students' children from three months to five years of age in two age-specific rooms. This year, we nurtured 147 children while their mothers studied.
3. Youth Development: We run a highly academic After-School Academy for 124 Paterson children and an after-school program for 50 teenagers. We aim to help these children gain the skills they need to succeed in school and aim for postsecondary education . We offer Saturday art and enrichment classes for 342 children and a summer camp for 170 inner-city kids.
4. Meals and Basic Needs: We serve breakfast and lunch to program participants and women and children in the wider community . We distribute emergency food bags, clothing, baby formula, and diapers. Last year, Oasis served 115,000 hot and healthy meals and distributed over 9,546 bags of food, 1,957 clothes, 131,235 diapers, and 2,804 baby supplies to impoverished neighbors with 3,679 face masks. Please note that these numbers include pandemic relief.
5. Social Service Programs: Oasis staff includes three certified social workers who provide support and crisis counseling to our clients and community members. They provide crisis response, individual counseling, and groups—including domestic violence survivor and personal self-esteem group counseling. Our counselors are culturally sensitive and multilingual in Spanish, Arabic, English, and Urdu/Hindi (a fellow staff member speaks these languages and aids as needed). For two decades, Oasis has been a haven for women and children in need.

Some 1,000 women and children come through our doors daily. We serve them.

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Statement of Need

Must indicate why this project is necessary. Utilize facts and statistics that best support the need for the project. Assure that the program addresses the need differently or better than other projects that preceded it.

As noted earlier, close to 39% of Paterson's residents are foreign-born, and almost one-third of the foreign-born speak English "less than very well." Nearly two-thirds of the city's population is Hispanic. Close to one-third of the city's residents live below the federal poverty level.

These individuals, both foreign-born and the many born within Spanish-speaking households, suffer poverty and other social disadvantages at disproportionate rates. New immigrants desperately need to master English to function efficiently day-to-day. Many of them seek to gain the advantages of citizenship. Many need assistance to integrate more fully into the local community and American society.

English as a Second Language

Foreign-born and Hispanic individuals in Paterson are more likely than are others to be poor, unemployed, and marginalized—this in a city where some one-third of all residents live below the federal poverty line (\$26,200 annual income for a family of four). For all foreign-born residents, including Hispanics, learning English is a fundamental hurdle, but one must be overcome to ensure economic viability. The difficulties are particularly acute for women, many of whom are not literate in their first language.

Those with limited English proficiency are unable to forge vital connections to the community. They cannot report an accident or assault to the police; they cannot explain their maladies to doctors; they cannot speak with their child's teacher, or the librarian, or a landlord. They cannot access vital government services. For such individuals, daily tasks like navigating city streets or food shopping can be overwhelming. As their children learn English in school, foreign-born mothers unable to speak the language often experience a new kind of estrangement, and the parent-child dynamic becomes strained.

Finding employment is a challenge for those who speak little English; if they do find work, it is at the lowest wage level. Once they have secured a job, they are often unable to advance.

Limited English proficient mothers with young children are frequently cut off from the larger society. Available English language courses are often not compatible with their schedules; the need for childcare keeps them trapped at home. For many foreign-born women, husbands and partners limit their movement beyond the home. These women become isolated in the household, blocked off from American society, confined within the bounds of kin and family. They fail to integrate into the wider community—a situation detrimental to the women, their children, and our society.

It is a necessity for new immigrants to learn English. The cost of English classes, the burden of childcare, the inaccessibility of institutions located outside the local neighborhood all present barriers for too many women. Oasis offers immigrant women four levels of ESL classes, free, with childcare, in the First Ward of Paterson to help them master the English language.

Citizenship

A significant number of Paterson's foreign-born residents—25,000 individuals—are not US citizens. While some lack documentation, many are legal residents. Lawful permanent residents face significant limitations on their individual rights. Most frightening for many is the fact that, unlike US citizens, permanent residents are subject to deportation. Very minor crimes—even the failure to report an address change to Immigration Services—can result in deportation. Permanent residents who travel abroad risk being considered inadmissible upon their return. They live in fear of being separated from family members.

Permanent residents are denied full access to Social Security benefits, government education grants, and many social welfare programs. They face real barriers in the job market. They cannot hold federal jobs or vote in local, state, or federal elections. They cannot hold public office. While the children of citizens have automatic rights to citizenship, the children of permanent residents do not (unless they were born in the US). Permanent residents are marginalized members of society. They are reminded by the barriers they confront in daily life that they do not fully belong.

The majority of lawful residents wish to achieve citizenship but are unable to embark on the naturalization process. They cannot master the exam subject matter, which includes an understanding of US history and government. Many do not understand the

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process of naturalization, which demands a basic knowledge of how US institutions work and an ability to navigate the system. Many are merely fearful of any government procedure due to officials' negative connotations in their native land. Such barriers prevent lawful residents—who are eligible for citizenship—from gaining this privilege.

Oasis offers lawful permanent residents a Citizenship course that shepherds them through the naturalization process and helps them become US citizens. But Oasis seeks to do even more than help women become citizens.

New immigrants struggle to become integrated members of the community. They often lack the knowledge needed to navigate everyday life and access the resources they need: Too often, they have no idea of how public schools, community colleges, or government office's function. Without such knowledge, they cannot access the health care, social services, or educational opportunities they and their families need. Isolated within the family or immigrant communities, they are frequently cut off from interaction with native-born residents. New immigrants living in ethnic enclaves often have no contact with middle-class Americans, which hampers their language skills and affects their access to desirable jobs. For acculturation to occur, immigrants must be taught about American culture, systems, and beliefs. They need to be actively integrated into the larger community. They cannot be ignored, excluded, or forgotten.

It is imperative that immigrants become integrated into American civic life. Our democracy depends on it. Yet, there are no programs in Paterson that facilitate the integration of immigrants into the community. As a part of Oasis, new immigrant women become integrated into American society. Oasis's wraparound services help foster trust and mutual engagement that promote the integration of immigrants into American society. Oasis functions as a community of women, promoting the interests of the most disadvantaged women in society.

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Project Description

Lead Organization Name: Oasis -- A Haven for Women and Children

Project Title: Oasis English as a Second Language (ESL) and Citizenship program.

Program: Citizenship and Integration Program

Must provide key milestones if the agency is applying for the same program that was awarded in FY2021

Project Description:

Summarize the elements of the proposal. Provide the title of the Project and names of those that will be working on the project; provide the projects major goals and objectives; include the projects importance and its purpose; explain how the project is organized, qualifications of those involved in the implementation of the project and the importance of the project in providing the identified service; explain the broader impact of the project (i.e., how will the project results be shared with others or how will the project promote teaching, training, learning or other opportunities, how will the community/society benefit from the project).

The Oasis English as a Second Language and Citizenship Program aims to provide some 185 impoverished immigrant women, the majority of whom are Hispanic, the tools they need to fully integrate into the local community, to secure economic stability for themselves and their families, and to contribute as fully integrated members of American society .

The program provides 155 impoverished immigrant women with free ESL courses to become fully fluent in English to live and work fruitfully. It offers 30 legal residents the help they need—citizenship courses—to complete the naturalization process and become American citizens. Oasis is a full-service antipoverty agency; the program offers all women access to childcare, meals, food pantry packages, clothing, baby supplies (diapers and formulas), and psychosocial counseling to help mitigate the problems of poverty. Our integrated services ensure that immigrants learn what they need to know to successfully navigate American culture and local institutions.

We offer year-long, daily ESL classes at varying skill levels (Levels 1 through 4) to meet students' differing needs and prior proficiency in English. For some students, our instruction gives them the fluency they need to manage everyday social interactions—to shop, pay bills, speak with their children's teachers, etc. Other students use the courses to gain a level of mastery that allows them to seek and find employment. Our program gives women vital skills and allows them to become economically and socially integrated members of the Paterson community. Our ESL Program develops students' understanding of the English language (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) and reducing women's isolation and marginalization, untimely improving their lives and the lives of their children.

Some 155 women will participate in our ESL classes over the coming fiscal year . Some 65% of our students are Spanish speaking; the second largest group of students come from countries of Muslim origin, including Bangladesh, Turkey, and several Arab nations. Nearly all the women participating in our ESL courses are mothers of young children .

We offer Citizenship courses that teach women what they need to know to pass the naturalization exam and help them navigate the bureaucracy to register for the interview. Over the coming school year, thirty women will participate in three Citizenship courses and be assisted in completing all paperwork required to register for the naturalization exam. Our Citizenship courses allow women to become more fully integrated into American culture and society .

In addition, Oasis hosts an "English Café" twice weekly. This program is open to both students and the wider community; women chat informally with volunteers who are native English speakers during a one-hour session. This offers women an opportunity to practice speaking skills in a real-life conversation.

Of critical importance is the fact that Oasis is a full-service antipoverty agency. We care for the children of students while they are in class; in addition, we serve students and their children free breakfast and lunch every weekday. We have a variety of educational and basic needs services for women and children. Our three onsite social workers provide crisis intervention and counseling and

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mental health support and referrals, as needed. We offer domestic violence group support sessions in English as well as Spanish. These additional services make language learning possible for many Oasis students.

The program is supervised by Jessica Egger, Oasis Director of Education. Ms. Egger is a former Paterson District ESL teacher and holds two master's degrees in education (ESL and Supervision). Two full-time teachers teach ESL and Citizenship courses: Audrey Grier teaches ESL courses as well as the Citizenship course. Ms. Grier has been teaching ESL at Oasis for 11 years, working with all four levels. She has a master's degree in ESL Curriculum & Instruction. Emily Goldberg teaches ESL courses. She has a master's degree in ESL from Columbia University and has taught at Oasis for over three years. Evelyn Cuciti, Student Services Manager, oversees all registrations and student attendance.

Please note that Oasis is expanding our building by adding a fourth floor and extending the childcare center—will be complete in fall 2021—with additional classrooms, we will hire an additional ESL teacher.

Oasis ESL courses serve 155 immigrants every year. Learning English is vital to an individual's ability to earn a living in the US. For women, English is necessary for self-sufficiency. It is critical for mothers to be able to communicate in English with their children's teachers, doctors, and others. Without an adequate knowledge of English, individuals are left outside the community and lose the opportunity for lifelong success.

Citizenship is fundamental to the economic and social success of the community. Citizens can participate fully in the political life of the community. They are more likely to build businesses, invest in buying a home, and feel secure in American life. The Oasis Citizenship course has been successful since inception, and every student who has completed the course and taken the exam has become naturalized (many students are awaiting their interview).

At Oasis, we understand the importance of our ESL and Citizenship courses. When the pandemic struck in March 2020, our highly skilled and professional staff swiftly and successfully shifted our education programs to the virtual platform that they have continued to use throughout this school year. The teachers provide academic instruction and group and individual tutoring sessions through Zoom and Google Classroom. During this current academic year, Oasis allocated laptops to participating women, many of whom did not have computers and laptops at home. We will use this contingency plan and implement fully remote learning in the 2021-2022 school year if necessary.

The Oasis ESL and Citizenship courses contribute to the city of Paterson by giving individuals the tools they need to integrate fully and contribute fully to the life of this city. Oasis offers a unique blend of free services that reduces the barriers women too often face when they try to get the education and training needed to find employment, integrate into society, and reduce their families' poverty.

Methodology:

This section should focus on the process of implementation and it should also be able to provide implementation of the project.

English as a Second Language Program:

Our courses—based on intensive, daily English language instruction—help women gain English mastery. Our program features daily classroom instruction by two full-time ESL teachers. A cadre of steady volunteers act as conversational partners in classes and our twice-weekly English Café, a twice-weekly supplementary conversation practice program. Classes meet every day between 9:00 am and 2:30 pm. They range from 1 ½-hour to 2-hour periods.

We offer an ESL course on Saturday mornings and three six-week intensive courses in the summer.

Our program features four-course levels:

1. Beginner classes are for those who speak little or no English. These classes focus on basic conversational English speaking and reading skills for survival.
2. The second level, Intermediate, is for women who have some speaking fluency. Here the focus is on recounting personal experiences and narratives in everyday social contexts.
3. The third level, Advanced Intermediate, is for students gaining real fluency. Grammar, the use of idioms, and reading of newspaper articles are all taught at this level.
4. The Advanced course prepares women to enter the workforce or move on to advanced English programs that lead to GED coursework or college courses.

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Formal testing of students determines their readiness to move from one level to the next.

Citizenship Course:

The Oasis Citizenship course is a 6-week, five days per week course that prepares women to take the US naturalization exam.

We offer three six-week course sessions serving 30 women each year (with ten women each session). The instructor teaches American history and civics and prepares students to answer the 100 required naturalization exam questions. Working with the Oasis teacher and numerous volunteers, women practice the interview and complete and submit all required government forms. Since the inception of this course three years ago, every student who has completed the course and taken the exam has become a US citizen, for a total of 61 new citizens. Some 12 additional women are awaiting an interview.

For students who encounter legal problems, an immigration attorney at Passaic County Legal Services provides Oasis students with free legal help.

Project Goals:

Indicate the project goals.

The program goals are to:

1. Provide impoverished immigrant women the knowledge they need to integrate fully into American life and into the local community. With Oasis' help women will: gain fluency in English, participate in public life, secure economic stability for themselves and their families, gain self-sufficiency, and contribute fully as integrated members of American society.
2. Provide impoverished immigrant women with the free ESL courses they need to become fully fluent in English, so they can live and work independently.
3. Provide impoverished legal residents with the help they need to complete the naturalization process and become American citizens.
4. Foster interaction among immigrants and between immigrants and native-born residents, thereby promoting the full integration of immigrants into American life.
5. Remove all barriers that might prevent women from gaining this education and these services to achieve these goals. Oasis offers women free childcare to ensure they can attend ESL, Citizenship, and Cultural Integration classes. Oasis provides impoverished immigrants with a network of resources—including basic needs, counseling, and educational opportunities—to address the multiple difficulties poverty presents. Oasis offers all women who come through its doors, meals, food packages, clothing, and a variety of psychosocial services (offered in Spanish, Arabic, Urdu/Hindi, and English).

Project Outcome Objectives (Measurables):

Each outcome objective should be measured, evaluated and indicate the major outcome(s) each client will achieve as per their participation in the project.

Some 155 women will participate in four levels of ESL. Of these at least:

- 50% of students will advance to at least one-course level.
- 100% of students will show a 20% increase in English language proficiency.
- 50% of ESL students will attend workshops to assist with integration into the community.

Some 30 women will participate in the Citizenship course:

- 100% of course participants who take the US naturalization test and pass, becoming American citizens.

Oasis basic needs and other educational offerings:

- 100% of immigrant women participating in ESL and Citizenship activities will be assessed by an Oasis social worker in health and wellness assessments so that any unmet needs can be discussed and referrals made.

- 100% of students who need additional psychosocial help will consult with Oasis social workers and attend Oasis counseling offerings, such as domestic violence support or personal self-esteem support groups.

- 69,000 meals will be provided to hungry women and children throughout the year, ensuring that all participating women do not go hungry.

Accomplishments:

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In the current Fiscal Year 2020 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021), Oasis has accomplished the following key milestones:

ESL: Amidst the pandemic, our highly skilled and professional teachers swiftly and successfully moved the education programs online and started remote instruction through Zoom and Google Classroom. They taught classes and provided individual and group instruction.

In September, we adopted the hybrid classroom model—offering the program onsite to limited number of women and a virtual component at the same time. (Please note, we have a detailed plan complying with CDC and state regulations.) Following are our ESL accomplishments:

-A total of 72 women participated in daily courses—in-person and virtual. Due to the pandemic, we provide socially distanced ESL classes on weekdays from 9 am- 2 pm, evenings (Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday) from 6:30 pm-8:30 pm, and Saturday mornings.

-46 women of the 72-daily ESL participants actively participated in our new ESL tutoring sessions every Friday .

-100% of women at all levels reported increased confidence in their English that allows them to help their children with their classwork and homework—vital under the current conditions. Women also reported increased confidence in working with technology such as computers. (Many did not use computers before the pandemic.)

-52% of ESL students attended workshops to assist with integration into the community .

During the period, Oasis carried out 25 sessions of the "English Café." Through this program, ESL students hold informal discussions with native English-speaking women. Each Tuesday, from 1:30 - 2:30 pm, the women gather on Zoom in small groups of two or three, each with a native English speaker. They carry out conversations, practice mock "shopping" or "doctor's appointments," and other practical activities.

Citizenship: Amidst the pandemic, two Oasis volunteers started running virtual Wednesday practice sessions for students who have taken our Citizenship course previously and are preparing for their interviews. Since July 2020, ten Oasis students have earned their US citizenship, and 12 others are waiting for interview dates. (We will have data on test passing within one year.)

Grab-and-go meals and basic needs: Amidst the pandemic, Oasis pivoted—we provide grab-and-go meals and food bags, baby supplies (diapers and formulas), and psychosocial counseling the community. From July 1, 2020, to February 26, 2021, we served 43,540 hot meals and over 4,915 children's hot meals, feeding more than 12,686 families. We also distributed 9,642 food bags, 2,137 bags of baby formula and wipes, and 6,723 baby diaper bags. (Our pre-COVID averages were 69,000 meals and 2,000 food bags annually.) Thousands of families and children rely on Oasis.

Oasis looks to continue this success with the Center of Hispanic Policy, Research, and Development.

Program Target Population and Projected Number of Clients to be Served:

Indicate the target population that will receive services, the projected # of unduplicated clients that will receive services during the contract term.

Oasis will serve 155 women in its ESL courses. We will offer a total of 30 women a seat in our three sections of Citizenship courses. These two groups of women—ESL students and Citizenship students—are unique . Thus, as a whole, the program will serve a total of 185 women.

The program participants all fall below the poverty line, as evidenced by their participation in the New Jersey SNAP program (a measure used by Oasis to indicate need). Participating women are of all ages; the majority are mothers, and many have young children. Some 65% of our adult students are Spanish-speaking (an even higher percentage—81% —of the children we serve after-school are Hispanic); the remaining 25% are from countries of Muslim origin, including Bangladesh, Turkey, and several Arab nations.

Evaluation:

Explain the strategies that will be used to evaluate the effectiveness of the project and its implementation . Address benchmarks that will be identified that would guide the project to be reviewed while it's being implemented for effectiveness .

English as a Second Language:

Oasis teachers carefully monitor participation in every class, a practice fundamental to our ability to monitor program impact. When students have a prolonged absence, the Education Coordinator phones them to uncover the problem and encourage their return.

We have adopted the Ventures textbook series . At the start of the school year (and in early summer), teachers administer the

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Ventures placement test to place students in an appropriate course level. Teachers administer unit tests after completing each course unit to monitor progress in speaking, listening, reading, and writing proficiency. At the end of the year, teachers test all students to assess growth. As noted above, we expect every student to increase language proficiency by at least 20%; we expect 50% of students to jump one level each year.

Citizenship Program

The Citizenship instructor monitors attendance and contacts students who have a prolonged absence. Course success is measured by the number of women who complete the course, submit required forms, schedule an interview/exam, and pass the exam. Thus far, our completion rates are close to 100%. What is more, every woman who has completed the class and sat for the interview has become a US citizen, as noted above.

Sustainability:

Explain how the project will sustain itself with current and future funding. What plan will be implemented to assure continued implementation of the project?

Paterson is a city with almost no corporate base. This fact contributes to poverty here and makes fundraising to meet the needs of the poor here even more challenging. Oasis has a robust fundraising department who will seek alternative sources of funding to continue this vital program. We receive funding from our annual events, which secure the support of hundreds of individuals. We have a full-time grant writer who seeks funding from foundation and government sources. We will look far and wide to seek funding for this program because it is relied upon and valued by many Paterson residents.

Charity Navigator rates Oasis a "Four Star Charity"—the highest possible rating—due to our financial transparency and stellar management. Our fiscal oversight includes monthly finance committee meetings and bank statement reconciliation, and an annual financial audit by an outside reviewer.

Our funding is highly diversified, and no single source comprises more than 30% of our budget. This contributes to our sustainability. In FY2019, our revenue sources included: Foundations (27%), corporations (23%), individuals (26%), government (3%), civic/religious groups (1%), and gifts-in-kind (20%). Our board contributed some 16% of revenue, a mark of their enduring commitment. Event fundraising is a significant income source, and six annual events galvanize our supporters and help us continually identify new supporters. We spend carefully, and we run a tight ship: 86% of our revenue goes directly into programs—while we maintain a professional staff.

We have a large group of steady volunteers who plan and execute fundraising activities, bringing in many individual donors. We have a solid fundraising department that continually seeks new forms of corporate and foundation funding for our programs.

Oasis is a well-respected institution within the city of Paterson and collaborates with over 50 partner agencies. Among these is the Paterson Public School District; we are a lead agency in their federally funded effort to transform School 2 into a full-service community school.

We are a flexible agency and seek to meet the needs of the people we serve. Our ability to meet the needs of our clients is a foundation of our sustainability.

Project Timetable & Days and Hours of Operation:

Indicate the program start and end date, hours of operation and days of operation.

The program runs July 1, 2020-June 30, 2021. Classes run between 9 am, and 2:30 pm, Mondays through Fridays; Summer classes run Mondays through Wednesdays; Saturday classes are between 9 am and noon, over two ten-week sessions. Each class is 1 ½ hour to 2 hours long.

ESL Regular Program will open on September 6, 2021, and end on June 16, 2022. Courses offered are ESL 1, ESL 2, ESL 3, ESL 4, and English Café.

The Citizenship Course is a 6-week course, running 12:30-2:30 Monday through Friday. Two sessions will be offered in fall 2021, including a September-October and a November-December course; one course will be offered in spring 2022. Dates are yet to be

Oasis -- A Haven for Women and Children

CHPRD22-021

Project Description

decided.

Please note that Oasis does have a contingency plan to offer virtual classes in case we are unable to offer onsite classes . Our staff and students have the necessary technology in place for this reason.