



Allegheny County Department of Human Services

RFP Response Form

RFP for Countywide Support for Violence Prevention

PROPOSER INFORMATION

Proposer Name: Community Empowerment Association, Inc.

Authorized Representative Name & Title: T. Rashad Byrdsong

Address: 7120 Kelly Street, Pittsburgh PA 15208

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Website: www.ceapittsburgh.org

Legal Status: For-Profit Corp. Nonprofit Corp. Sole Proprietor Partnership

Date Incorporated: July 12, 1995

Partners and/or Subcontractors included in this Proposal: None.

How did you hear about this RFP? *Please be specific.* Email from DHS

Does your organization have a telecommunications device to accommodate individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing? Yes No

REQUIRED CONTACTS

	Name	Phone	Email
Chief Executive Officer	T. Rashad Byrdsong	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Contract Processing Contact	Angela DeVan	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Chief Information Officer	Marlene Davis	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
Chief Financial Officer	Marlene Davis	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
MPER Contact*	Marlene Davis	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]

* MPER is DHS's provider and contract management system. Please list an administrative contact to update and manage this system for your agency.

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BOARD INFORMATION

Provide a list of your board members as an attachment or in the space below.
See attached

Board Chairperson Name & Title: Martell Covington

Board Chairperson Address: [REDACTED]

Board Chairperson Telephone: [REDACTED]

Board Chairperson Email: martellcovington@gmail.com

REFERENCES

Provide the name, affiliation and contact information [include email address and telephone number] for three references who are able to address relevant experience with your organization. *Please do not use employees of the Allegheny County Department of Human Services as references.*

Edward Gainey – Long Time Supporter – [REDACTED]

Sam Ware – Long Time Supporter – [REDACTED]

Melvin Hubbard El – Long Time Supporter [REDACTED]

PROPOSAL INFORMATION

Date Submitted 3/4/2022

Amount Requested: \$200,000.00

CERTIFICATION

Please check the following before submitting your Proposal, as applicable:

I have read the standard County terms and conditions for County contracts and the requirements for DHS Cyber Security, EEOC/Non-Discrimination, HIPAA and Pennsylvania's Right-to-Know Law.

By submitting this Proposal, I certify and represent to the County that all submitted materials are true and accurate, and that I have not offered, conferred or agreed to confer any pecuniary

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benefit or other thing of value for the receipt of special treatment, advantaged information, recipient's decision, opinion, recommendation, vote or any other exercise of discretion concerning this RFP.

Choose one:

My Proposal contains information that is either a trade secret or confidential proprietary information and I have included a written statement signed by an authorized representative identifying those portions or parts of my Proposal and providing contact information.

OR

My Proposal does not contain information that is either a trade secret or confidential proprietary information.

ATTACHMENTS

Please submit the following attachments with your Response Form. These can be found at <http://www.alleghenycounty.us/dhs/solicitations>.

- MWDBE and VOSB documents
- Allegheny County Vendor Creation Form
- Audited financial reports or other financial documentation for the last three years
- W-9
- Strategy staffing attachments
- Stakeholder support attachments

REQUIREMENTS

Please respond to the following. **All Proposers must complete the Organizational Experience and Budget Sections. Please complete these sections only once, regardless of the number of strategies proposed.** The score from these sections will be added to the score for each strategy proposed. Each strategy will be scored and evaluated separately and the maximum score a Proposal can receive in each strategy is:

- Countywide Violence Prevention Convener (Convener) = 110 points possible
- Homicide and Data Reviews = 110 points possible
- Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Programs (HVIP) = 100 points possible
- Parent and Survivor Support = 105 points possible

Complete only the sections for the strategies you wish to propose. Strategies not included in your proposal may be left blank. Please stay within the page limit listed at the top of each section.

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A. Organizational Experience (25 points possible)

All Proposers must complete this section. Your response to this section must not to exceed 5 pages.

1. Describe your organization and any experience working with individuals at high risk of Community Violence and/or with communities impacted by violence.

CEA was founded to address the specific needs of at-risk youth and families in distressed marginalized communities. CEA's mission is to restore, reclaim and transform distressed communities through strategic planning, collaboration, advocacy, education, and training. CEA developed its own Afrocentric Paradigm. This model centers around African American culture and experience as a moral compass, viewing our people as subjects in our stories rather than victims who operate on the fringes of society. In this way CEA strengthens and nurtures the self-esteem and ethnic identify of black youth and families while simultaneously improving their abilities to reason, be attentive, and build high aspirations and resilience.

A clear understanding of the culture of underserved are key to successful outcomes. For over 28 years CEA has played an integral role in advocating for minority inclusion on development projects and workforce development and training projects in preparation for future job s in the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. Through these efforts, CEA has been able to reach youth and young adults, in ways that helps them understand the importance and value of their lives and the potential that lies within each one of them. Our innovative and creative efforts in outreach, trust-centered relationship building, intensive case management and developing strong relationships among resource holders have established our organization as a strong support system for the underserved population, which is aligned with this RFP. CEA started its first after-school program to address the educational development and latch-key safety concerns of African American students in Pittsburgh's Public Schools in 1995. During the following year, CEA created a series of employment readiness, rites of passage, and youth programs to address the workforce development, mentoring and socialization needs of low-income adults and children.

CEA's programs and services are specifically designed to meet the unique spiritual, psychological, educational, and socioeconomic needs of African American children, youth, young adults, and other family members. CEA understands that the effects of race, ethnicity, and power relationships in social services are essential to the efficacy of intervention. The types of intervention and support that we provide are: (1) Asante Nation After School Diversion and Summer Safe Passage Program; (2) Therapeutic Support Program; (3) Summer Youth Employment Program; and (4) Workforce Development & Training Program.

With CEA's base of operations and networks in predominantly resource-poor African American communities, CEA's ability to reach, serve and uplift socially disadvantaged youth and families is strengthened by its sensitivity to historical risk factors. CEA's successful intervention outcomes have been well documented by contemporary academic refereed journal publishers in the following national and internationally ranked articles:

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Byrdsong, T.R., et al. (2013) Afrocentric Intervention Paradigm: An Overview of Successful Application by a Grassroots Organization. *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*. Volume 23 (7) 931-937.

Byrdsong, T.R., et al. (2015) A Ground-Up Model for Gun Violence Reduction: A Community-Based Public Health Approach. *Journal of Evidence-Informed Social Work*. Volume 13 (1) 78-86.

Byrdsong, T.R., et al. (2017) Historical Overview of Black Suffering in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA: Depth of Contemporary Social Work Challenges. *International Journal of Social Work*. 4(2). 15–25.

Yamatani. H. and Byrdsong, T.R. (2017) Drug Abuse Trend and Profile of Current Social Crisis. *HSA Journal of Addiction and Addictive Disorders*. 6:026.

2. Describe your organizational experience maintaining databases/using software for managing finances and service delivery and for providing accurate, timely reports of financial and program data.

CEA has on retainer McGill, Power, Bell & Associates, LLC, an independent certified public accounting and business & financial advisors firm. CEA utilizes QuickBooks Premier for cost accounting. Each funding source has its own unique classifications for recording income and expenditures for each of its projects or programs and a monthly process for bank reconciliation. Payroll is outsourced through Paychex. CEA is quite familiar with countywide data management systems for various human services. We will appoint a staff to conduct all the data entry function so the task will be done consistently with clear accountability monitoring. We will furnish timeframe requirements (due dates) for each data set so that the staff and supervisor will remain cognizant of performing the on-time reporting of data into the County's data management system.

3. Describe your organization's policy on and history of hiring formerly incarcerated individuals.

CEA does not have a formal policy on hiring formerly incarcerated individuals, however we do not discriminate in hiring those who have been imprisoned, as evidenced by the many individuals that have been hired and/or worked with us since our inception. CEA hires personnel based on its needs, the individual's experience in the job applied for, ability and commitment to work with underserved individuals, if the job would be a good fit, reliability, and if they can pass the clearances as required by law and DHS. It should be noted that CEA is very committed to insure that the needs of our youth and families are addressed by caring and responsible staff. Because of the nature of our work, it is paramount that our hiring practices are sound and consistent with the funders' requirements.

4. Describe and provide examples how your organization is committed to providing high-quality services to all individuals and families so that everyone feels welcomed, well-served and supported regardless of their race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression (SOGIE), intellectual or physical ability, English language proficiency or life experiences.

CEA is open to all regardless of race, color, creed, sexual orientation, gender, and expression (SOGIE) intellectual and physical ability. Our staff participates in the required SOGIE training

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to receive certification. Our administrative and program staff are racially diverse, and we have ADA access to our facility. Given Pittsburgh's history regarding race, our facility is in the Homewood section of Pittsburgh and the majority of our service population is African American. However, we do not discriminate and welcome all to participate in our programs. We are licensed to provide individual behavioral health services and partial hospitalization services. Our agency is certified by the Bureau of Equal Opportunity

Regarding our health and wellness programming, we consider the legal issues and compliance requirements provided by the ADA, GINA, HIPAA and the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (PPACA). The ADA prohibits organizations from discriminating against individuals based on disability, including an employee's access to wellness programs. HIPAA mandates that individually identifiable health information collected from or created by participants in wellness programs is considered PHI and is protected by HIPAA rules. The PPACA requires that programs must be reasonably designed to promote health or prevent disease. Programs must be reasonably designed to be available to all similarly situated individuals, and individuals must be given notice of the opportunity to qualify for the same rewards through other means.

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B. Countywide Violence Prevention Convener (Convener) (75 points possible)

Complete this section only if you are proposing this strategy. If you are not proposing this strategy, please leave this section blank. Your response to this section must not to exceed 10 pages. N/A

1. Describe why your organization is interested in the Convener strategy, including how it fits within your mission.

Click or tap here to enter text.

2. Describe any synergies of the Convener strategy with your current work and/or with the other strategies you are proposing in response to this RFP.

Click or tap here to enter text.

3. Describe your experience with, and provide examples of, how your organization has successfully convened a broad range of stakeholders and coordinated large-scale initiatives to achieve results.

Click or tap here to enter text.

4. Describe your approach, why you chose it and how it can be expected to reduce Community Violence. If you based your approach on a promising or best-practice model, please describe the model.

Click or tap here to enter text.

5. Describe how you will manage and deliver the Convener responsibilities, as outlined in section 2 of the RFP. Include how you envision forming a collaborative (who would be essential to include, how you would convene and meet, how you would communicate).

Click or tap here to enter text.

6. What potential outcomes do you envision for this Convener strategy? How would you know if the convening is a success?

Click or tap here to enter text.

7. Describe where the Convener will fit within the overall administrative structure of your organization and why you placed it there. Summarize the staff positions needed to implement the Convener strategy and if you will need to hire and/or reassign staff.

- a. If you will hire positions, include the education and/or experience you will require and the traits you will emphasize in hiring decisions. Please attach summary job descriptions.
- b. If you have already identified individuals to staff the Convener strategy, include their names and a short description of their qualifications. Please attach resumes.

Click or tap here to enter text.

8. Identify a few key challenges you anticipate encountering as the Convener and how you might mitigate them.

Click or tap here to enter text.

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9. Please list the key stakeholders that support your Convener Proposal (e.g., partners or stakeholders from local government, community-based organizations and other groups, residents and other individuals). Provide evidence of their support. This can be in the form of attached support letters, a description of their commitment to participate in aspects of your Proposal, or other form of endorsement.

Click or tap here to enter text.

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C. Homicide and Data Reviews (75 points possible)

Complete this section only if you are proposing this strategy. If you are not proposing this strategy, please leave this section blank. Your response to this section must not to exceed 10 pages. N/A

1. Describe why your organization is interested in the Homicide and Data Review strategy, including how it fits within your mission.

Click or tap here to enter text.

2. Describe any synergies of the Homicide and Data Review strategy with your current work and/or with the other strategies you are proposing in response to this RFP.

Click or tap here to enter text.

3. Describe your experience with, and provide examples of, how your organization has successfully convened a broad range of stakeholders to review relevant data and information and develop solutions.

Click or tap here to enter text.

4. Describe your analytical experience and provide examples of how you have used homicide, shootings, social media, and other information sources in your work.

Click or tap here to enter text.

5. Describe your approach to the Homicide and Data Review strategy, why you chose it and how it can be expected to reduce Community Violence. If you based your approach on a promising or best-practice model, please describe the model.

Click or tap here to enter text.

6. Describe how you will manage and deliver the Homicide and Data Review responsibilities, as outlined in section 2 of the RFP. Include how you envision forming the review panel (who would be essential to include, how you would convene and meet, how you would communicate).

Click or tap here to enter text.

7. Describe where the Homicide and Data Review strategy will fit within the overall administrative structure of your organization and why you placed it there. Summarize the staff positions needed to implement the Homicide and Data Review strategy and if you will need to hire and/or reassign staff.

- a. If you will hire positions, include the education and/or experience you will require and the traits you will emphasize in hiring decisions. Please attach summary job descriptions.
- b. If you have already identified individuals to staff the Homicide and Data Review strategy, include their names and a short description of their qualifications. Please attach resumes.

Click or tap here to enter text.

8. Identify a few key challenges you anticipate encountering in the Homicide and Data Review work and how you might mitigate them.

Click or tap here to enter text.

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9. Please list the key stakeholders that support your Homicide and Data Review Proposal (e.g., partners or stakeholders from local government, community-based organizations and other groups, residents and other individuals). Provide evidence of their support. This can be in the form of attached support letters, a description of their commitment to participate in aspects of your Proposal, or other form of endorsement.

Click or tap here to enter text.

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D. Hospital-Based Violence Intervention Programs (HVIP) (65 points possible)

Complete this section only if you are proposing this strategy. If you are not proposing this strategy, please leave this section blank. Your response to this section must not to exceed 10 pages. N/A

1. Describe why your organization is interested in the HVIP strategy, including how it fits within your mission.

Click or tap here to enter text.

2. Describe any synergies of the HVIP strategy with your current work and/or with the other strategies you are proposing in response to this RFP.

Click or tap here to enter text.

3. Describe your approach, why you chose it and how it can be expected to reduce Community Violence. If you based your approach on a promising or best-practice model, please describe the model.

Click or tap here to enter text.

4. Describe how you will manage and deliver the HVIP. Be sure to include:

- a. A description of your partnership with your chosen trauma hospital.
- b. The roles and responsibilities your organization and the hospital will have in the HVIP.
- c. How you will work with high-priority communities to coordinate care inside the hospital and after release.

Click or tap here to enter text.

5. What potential outcomes do you envision for your HVIP? How would you know if it is a success?

Click or tap here to enter text.

6. Describe where the HVIP will fit within the overall administrative structure of your organization and why you placed it there. Summarize the staff positions needed to implement the HVIP and if you will need to hire and/or reassign staff.

- a. If you will hire positions, include the education and/or experience you will require and the traits you will emphasize in hiring decisions. Please attach summary job descriptions.
- b. If you have already identified individuals to staff the HVIP, include their names and a short description of their qualifications. Please attach resumes.

Click or tap here to enter text.

7. Identify a few key challenges you anticipate encountering in the HVIP and how you might mitigate them.

Click or tap here to enter text.

8. Please list the key stakeholders that support your HVIP Proposal (e.g., partners or stakeholders from the healthcare system, local government, community-based organizations and other groups, residents and other individuals). Provide evidence of their support. This can be in the form of

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attached support letters, a description of their commitment to participate in aspects of your Proposal, or other form of endorsement.

Click or tap here to enter text.

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E. Parent and Survivor Support (70 points possible)

Complete this section only if you are proposing this strategy. If you are not proposing this strategy, please leave this section blank. Your response to this section must not to exceed 10 pages.

1. Describe why your organization is interested in the Parent and Survivor Support strategy, including how it fits within your mission.

Core belief of Community Empowerment Association, Inc. (CEA) is that families develop best in a community with a sense of order, positive social interaction, and opportunities supported by positive adults. It is CEA's aim and commitment to work with individuals and families to build, foster and empower the African American Community through capitalization of indigenous support, community stakeholders, organized networks, and community education. CEA's cultural frameworks are clearly unique to human social service providers in the Pittsburgh region. CEA capitalizes on the powerful role that cultural influences play within African American communities.

CEA distinctive program works within four identified life-domains (individual, family, community, school), and is guided by 8 core program components which history and research has shown impact family and community changes for self-sufficiency. To work with youth, parents and families to strengthen protective factors for keeping children healthy and well, CEA is focused on serving its participants through these 8 core program components – Personal Growth & Development, Educational Support, Cultural Enrichment, Economic/Career Exploration, Health and Wellness Community Service, Recreational Activities, and Family Empowerment.

What sets CEA apart from many other community service organizations is its commitment to actively empower individuals to speak their voices in pursuit of justice and equality. A combination of education and access to key stakeholders is necessary to impact our circumstances in a meaningful way, which is why we focus on structured forums and mentoring interactions to build community confidence as a call to action.

For over 30 years, CEA has been in the forefront of bringing the issues of community violence and ways to address the root cause by utilizing a public health approach to violence. In 2011, CEA's Founder, T. Rashad Byrdsong, authored a booklet which outlined the problem, resolution approach, and the roles that systems, schools, public officials, parents and youth can play in mitigating violence in our communities. In 2015, Mr. Byrdsong, et al published an article in the *Journal of Evidence Informed Social Work* entitled "A Ground-Up Model for Gun Violence Reduction: A Community Based Public Health Approach." Both are extremely relevant today.

This Parent and Survivor Support Strategy is intrinsically interlinked with CEA's mission. In the words of CEA's founder and CEO: "The force that continues to motivate me is the tragic condition of black youth, (especially black males) and the violence that continues to saturate our communities. I have journeyed into the deepest, darkest corners where the most at-risk youth reside to offer leadership, manhood development and mentoring services as well as negotiate peace treaties among rival

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gangs. As a 24-year member of the National Urban Peace and Justice Council, I have traveled throughout the United States, bringing members of gangs and other street organizations together in efforts to offer mediation and conflict resolution services. I have been welcomed in these circles because they genuinely feel that I have an understanding of the conditions that they face. I have worked with countless youth and parents who have lost family members to violence. These experiences fuel my passionate desire to fight or change – to restore hope in the system and in the lives of people affected.”

As a community based, grassroots organization committed to the restoration, reclamation and transformation of distressed Black communities, CEA will continue to be at the forefront of developing strategies in collaboration with diverse organizations and individuals; CEA will never stop educating youth and their families, mobilizing them to reignite their resiliency; and CEA will always remain dedicated to equipping the community with the necessary tools to move towards self-determination, self-sufficiency and, sustainability.

2. Describe any synergies of the Parent and Survivor Support strategy with your current work and/or with the other strategies you are proposing in response to this RFP.

CEA's advanced and custom-tailored human service programs are designed specifically to address such needs of a Parent and Survivor Support Program. Those who attend our support groups will find understanding companions who can help cushion feelings of abandonment and counter the marginalization that comes from an unnatural or stigmatized death. Survivors need a safe place with the opportunity to express their feelings, which includes a range of emotions that may not be acceptable to all. Feelings of rage and blame must be allowed to be expressed with validation. Parent and Survivor support groups are another opportunity for community building, normalizing experiences, and fostering coping strategies base on realistic expectations. With time, survivors ultimately become role models and helpers to new members, and this builds competence and self-worth (Armour, 2007; Junhke, 1997). According to Armour, (2007), parent survivor who sustain PTSD reactions to homicide report drops in symptoms after 12 months; and close to 1/3 of survivor parents show no trauma diminishment after 2 years. The later suggest intervention is needed when PTSD continues. Parents and survivors working together can equip them and their families to become mutually supportive, nurturing, and provide comfort.

Risk factors for violence are common in some of the behaviors understood, explained, and questions by potential survivors targeted for our program. Individuals who develop strong bonds to prosocial systems are less vulnerable to risk factors and therefore less likely to engage in violent behavior as well as other problem behavior in reaction to what has prompted their need for survival support.

The effects of exposure to risk factors can be mitigated by characteristics that operate as protective factors including individual characteristic (gender, resilient, temperament, positive social orientation, intelligence), bonding relationships to systems where children function, (family, school, peer groups, community program) feel safe and secure, and healthily beliefs and clear standards for

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behavior. Protective factors in the environment (Social Determinants of Health SHOD) can reduce and buffer risk to facilitate resiliency characteristics in survivors.

- a. CEA remains rooted to the community. Its location, outlook, and approach reflect its base in the community.
- b. Our view is that the problems we face and the goals we advocate require applying a public health framework to community transformation. The public health approach provides a frame of reference for understanding and intervening issues and problems.
- c. Assess parent and survivor participants' direct and indirect effects of their most recent experiences of community violence, traumatic events in childhood, including trauma related guilt, PTSD symptomatology, substance abuse, school/employment failure, ability to trust adults, teachers, and counselors.
- d. Parent and survivor groups will reflect the resident's culture – values, beliefs, attitudes, capabilities and needs – of the community.
- e. Empowerment: Self-efficacy is a prerequisite for building healthy communities. This is particularly important for individuals whose experience has been defined by others. CEA makes it a point to use concepts and language that reflect the history and experience of the community it serves.
- f. CEA will seek partners with other community stakeholders. We seek opportunities to work with stakeholders throughout distressed communities and throughout the region to build a support infrastructure for parents and survivors of community violence in communities beyond Homewood..
- g. CEA continually evaluates outcomes of the grief and support interventions in order to understand how to optimize program outcomes and their impact on survivors' future.

3. Describe your experience with, and provide examples, of how your organization has successfully formed or led parent and survivor support groups.

In the late 80's early 90's, when violence in the black community was on the rise and before CEA was founded, Mr. Byrdsong and his wife began organizing parents in his home, holding focus groups with grieving parents to support and work through the grief they were experiencing. Participating parents spoke about what they needed, emphasizing a safe place for their children after school as well as a space to come and network together. From these conversations a group called "Parents in Action" was formed and from that – Community Empowerment Association, Inc. was born. CEA continues to work in service to at-risk, underserved youth and families, supporting them by offering services to empower them – helping them help themselves. Over the years, CEA has held emergency town hall meetings, convened workgroups, Brother to Brother and Sister to Sister meetings as well as healing circles throughout marginalized communities in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County.

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On September 11, 2010, concerned citizens from Pittsburgh came together to talk about the devastating impact that violence has had on our communities. Causes and solutions were discussed. Out of the conversation, the Urban Peace Initiative was born. It was decided in the meeting that to address violence, communities had to begin to have conversations about peace, that it was up to residents in communities to make it happen, and that it would take a groundswell of residents from communities affected to create the motivation necessary address it. Members of the Urban Peace Initiative, led by CEA began meeting and planning ways to develop strategies. In the meetings a decision was made to partner with concerned citizens and organizations from other communities and to recruit residents for this peace effort. As a result the Peace Alliance Network was formed.

The Network, led by CEA, travelled from neighborhood to neighborhood – from Homewood to Braddock, East Liberty, Beltzhoover, Northside, the Hill District, McKeesport, Rankin and Clairton spreading a message of hope and empowering residents to unite and use their collective energy to strategically work together on a plan to combat the violence in our communities.

In 2011 the Peace Alliance Network, led by CEA, created “The Healing Pen.” Coordinated by a group of women who had lost loved ones to violence, this effort served to offer a positive productive way back to healthy living for community members who were struggling to heal from losing loved ones to violence. It was the hope of the Healing Pen to guide challenged community members back to stability and triumph over the tragedies that had touched their families. Its vision was to serve as an instrument where such families and individuals had a space where they could not only begin the healing process but also exercise the grief in positive ways to help other going through the same experiences.

In 2014, CEA submitted a petition for a public hearing to address the violence in our communities. Residents from over the City and County attended the Public hearing to speak about their losses and what needed to be done to combat the violence in our communities. Citizens brought pictures of the loved one for display on the first floor of the County Building. The Honorable Ricky Burgess and Mr. Byrdsong gave words with a commitment to continue the challenge. A Dove and balloon release was conducted. City Council of the City of Pittsburgh designated June 3, 2014 “T. Rashad Byrdsong and Community Empowerment Association Day” in the City of Pittsburgh.

These are just a few of the experiences that we have had in working with parents and survivors. Throughout the years, CEA has held and continues to convene town hall meetings, healing circles, opens its space for repasses and funerals (especially during the pandemic), and many other activities. CEA has been the recipient of awards, citations, and proclamations related to its violence prevention work and the support that it provides to families in underserved communities, and has become a reputable community-based social services organization in the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County. Primarily targeting high risk, socio-economically disadvantaged African Americans, CEA’s ability to design and implement culturally specific programming set CEA apart from mainstream human and social service agencies. Further, CEA’s history of partnerships with mainstream institutions in the City and County has demonstrated its capacity to access the major

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structures and systems that plan and administer human and social services in Western Pennsylvania communities.

4. Describe your approach, why you chose it and how it can be expected to reduce Community Violence. If you based your approach on a promising or best-practice model, please describe the model.

To bring about a paradigm shift in Pittsburgh and Allegheny County of using the criminal justice system to address violence CEA produced a document entitled, A Public Health Approach to Violence Reduction for the City of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County (2011). This document was widely distributed to public officials, community leaders, faith-based leaders, university officials, public health researchers and officials, community residents and youth. CEA has also sponsored public forums to engage the community in conversations about the approach – its feasibility and benefits. Our efforts for violence prevention have been focused on the family, children, and parents. We have brought together community health providers with single parents who have been victims of intimate partner violence. Our focus groups and workshops have examined the intersection of race, gender, mental health, and intimate partner violence. (Street Outreach (chicagocred.org); CDC; Mercy, Mack, and Steenkamp, 2007).

We have examined several evidence-based approaches and use the strategies that are aligned with cultural awareness of the African American community. The approaches we have chosen to use is an integration the Public Health approach (see Question #3 response) and the three focused component supported by the Annie E Casey Foundation, (2021) culturally relevant to the work we do at CEA (Byrdsong, Mitchell, and Yamatani, 2013). **Interrupting** the transmission of gang violence in Pittsburgh through mediation to assuage retaliation. **Assess mitigating** risks by identifying and counseling individual who are most likely to commit violence by engaging in community block efforts. **Establishing** new norms in the community by sponsoring community public health events, violence awareness and education, hiring outreach workers to establish new norms that view violence as an unacceptable response for conflict. We have engaged our youth to develop a gun violence prevention campaign. Truancy prevention events. We engage our youth and families in problem solving to enhance family support systems. Provided conflict resolution workshops. Conducted support groups for parents who lost their children to violence.

Approach

Our integrative Community Public Health Model to violence reductions accomplishes the following: identify the problem(s), assess risks and protective factors, develop and test prevention strategies, continually optimize intervention methods, facilitate local community adoption. As previously mentions, CEA's strategy for violence reduction is based on a holistic intervention system, which includes three major components-- prevention, rehabilitation, and community development.

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A. Prevention-- measures that foster non-violent and peaceful coexistence, including working with abused and neglected children and their parents, truancy and school dropout prevention, expanded school curricula to aid needy students, supervision after school, curfew centers, offering at-risk youth adult mentoring activities, manhood and womanhood development programs, job training initiatives, enhanced educational opportunities, spiritual awakening activities, and development of youth leadership and think-tank institutes.

B. Rehabilitation-- violence diffusion and enabling of victims and former offenders toward sustained recovery, including community street-reach, conflict mediation, rapid response to shooting incidents for intensive case management, trauma center which can address seriously injured victims and their physical and psycho-emotional recovery, violence reduction centers, gang group diffusion, rehabilitating offenders from drug abuse and dependency, criminal justice intervention for violent offenders, services for reintegration into community life (reentry support, housing, employment, financial management, and social support networks), mental health services for victimized families as well as perpetrators, family support services, and spiritual enrichment.

C. Community Development-- enhancing process of enrichment and social environmental progress, including working with community groups, schools, employers, media, and health service providers to revitalize neighborhoods (e.g., town-hall meetings, community clean-up, management of vacant buildings, enhanced landlord responsibilities, business investment, safe play grounds, community-wide social/recreational activities, distributive health services, community volunteer management, media focus on positive youth-- decriminalization of African American neighborhoods), and elaboration and expansion of sport, music and art programs for youth recreational participation, focused engagement, and talent refinement.

To break the cycle of violence, service providers, academics, and public officials must come out of their silos, share information, and develop an interdisciplinary and scientifically sound strategic plan. It is the belief of CEA that the only viable solution is to collaboratively address violence based on a public health paradigm – intervention system focused on prevention, rehabilitation, and development. The above strategy can also engage community residents in positive ways and empowers them to take ownership and sustain much needed resident commitment for long-term public safety.

Prevention consists of interventions that help parents and survivors help factors that directly foster or consistently associate with violence:

- Work with abused and neglected children, parents, and survivors
- Engage truancy and school drop-out prevention strategies, expanded school curricula to aid needy students, after school supervised programs
- Review curfew guidelines, offering at-risk youth adult mentoring activities
- Develop manhood and womanhood rites of passage developmental programs
- Enhance current job training initiatives, enhanced educational opportunities
- Create spiritual awakening activities for health and wellness
- Development of leadership skills, civic awareness, and think-tank institutes for a training the trainer's model for sustainability

RFP for Countywide Support for Violence Prevention

- Build community collaborative systems

Rehabilitation includes violence diffusion efforts which focus on the enabling of victims, former offenders, and communities building opportunities toward recovery to:

- Provide community street-outreach, conflict mediation, rapid response to shooting incidents for intensive case management with individuals, families, and stakeholder residents
- Create a health and wellness trauma center, which addresses seriously, injured victims and their physical and psycho-emotional recovery, mental health services for parents and survivors, family support services, cultural, and spiritual enrichment
- Provide violence reduction education and gang hostility diffusion symposia
- Provide rehabilitation workshops for offenders from drug misuse and dependency, and community referrals, appropriate community health and medical referral services
- Provide restorative justice intervention workshops for survivors who have violent offender history
- Develop Services for reintegration into community life (social support, and behavioral and mental health services)
- Sponsor age-appropriate trauma informed interventions and activities for survivors

Community Development program planning processes for community enhancement to revitalize neighborhoods and maintain program towards community enrichment and violence prevention.

- Conduct Town hall meeting focused on quality of life, health, and wellness
- Sponsor community clean-up (day of caring), management of vacant buildings and enhances landlord responsibilities
- Co-sponsor community driven business investment and economic development initiatives
- Provide community-wide social, recreational, enrichment activities adequate and engaging playgrounds
- Community volunteer management
- Initiate media focus on positive youth programming to decriminalize African American neighborhoods
- Expand our sport, music, and arts programs for youth; talent refinement,
- Enhance opportunities for focused youth engagement in civic-minded activities with adults who are observed as community role models, and faith-based organizations.
- Develop a Peer Alliance networks
- Develop a youth training program in activism, advocacy, community building, civic leadership, policy formulation, and team building
- Collaborate with community groups and faith communities to facilitate interactions with high-risk individuals in ways that will reduce the risk factors for violence.
- Encourage community residents to respond pro-actively after violent incidents to reduce traumas and discourage future violence.
- Provide outreach to high-risk individuals, including those reentering the community from incarceration, and those with demonstrable existing risk factors to facilitate successful futures and discourage violence.

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- Collaborate with and facilitate positive engagement with law enforcement officials to reduce the reluctance of community members to cooperate with police in violence situations and to encourage the pursuit of law enforcement careers among underrepresented groups in the city.

Expected Outcomes: Our Parent and Survivor Support intervention programs are designed to;

- Reduce and/or eliminate known risk factors
- Build Protective factors that buffer against risk
- Address developmentally appropriate risk factors for children and adolescents
- Utilize multiple prevention strategies across multiple system-family, peer, and community
- Build social and emotional learning skills
- Enhance autonomy, self-esteem, and empowerment
- Develop problems solving skills
- Heighten participants sense of purpose, future, and meaning

5. Describe how you will manage and deliver the Parent and Survivor Support responsibilities, as outlined in section 2 of the RFP. Include how you would help others to build support in their communities.

It is the belief of CEA that knowledgeable communities have the great potential to help improve the collaborative efforts of violence reduction practitioners, intermediaries (e.g., public officials, law enforcement, school and university administrators, etc.) and applied researchers to reduce violence. Communities should also be encouraged to make sure that churches/mosques are open and involved with community residents during non-traditional church times for outreach and mentoring activities. CEA will utilize a Coordinator, Intervention & Prevention Specialist, and Community Organizers/Outreach workers to work with residents in the community to:

- Build a Base-- CEA recommends that communities begin their violence prevention work by building a broad-base coalition of support and participation, including professional community who bring science and power to the table,
- Living after murder:
 - ✓ Insure that there are counseling opportunities and support groups to deal with grief and healing.
 - ✓ Address the emotional consequences of loss – candlelight vigils – community forums and other activities, and
 - ✓ Bring people with similar losses together to begin to address the issue of violence at a broader community level,
- Organize Community Educational Forums on Violence Prevention,
- Reach out to at risk youth to offer coaching, points of wisdom and structure,
- Communities should develop political action committees to guide the decision making process of public officials,

RFP for Countywide Support for Violence Prevention

- Community residents should become responsible citizens (i.e. reviewing records of prospective candidates, voting) to make sure that public officials develop policies and are held accountable for decisions made that address community needs,
- Convene and advance outreach/street-reach teams to facilitate conflict resolution/truces within problem areas,
- Support Brother-to-Brother and Sister-to-Sister outreach activities,
- Developing block watches and street clubs

All will be introduced to the Public Health Approach to Violence document and given an overview of CEA's success in developing and maintaining service delivery. CEA Executive Team will also monitor the ongoing progress of Parent Support Group development.

6. Describe where Parent and Survivor Support will fit within the overall administrative structure of your organization and why you placed it there. Summarize the staff positions needed to implement the Parent and Survivor Support strategy and if you will need to hire and/or reassign staff.

- a. If you will hire positions, include the education and/or experience you will require and the traits you will emphasize in hiring decisions. Please attach summary job descriptions.
- b. If you have already identified individuals to staff the Parent and Survivor Support strategy, include their names and a short description of their qualifications. Please attach resumes.

The Parent and Survivor Support Initiative will be placed in CEA's Community Violence Reduction Program. It is being placed there because it fits the scope of the program and adds an added opportunity to empower survivors to build relationships and take action to reduce violence in their community. The strategy also cope with and work through the grief that often overwhelms those left behind. See attached CEA Summary Staff Positions for Countywide Parent & Survivor Group Initiative.

7. Identify a few key challenges you anticipate encountering in the Parent and Survivor Support work and how you might mitigate them.

A major challenge would be the Family's receptivity to participate given their circumstances and the possible lack of receptivity. Staff must be committed to the approach and be able to articulate that commitment and its benefits to the families served. In addition, a more concentrated effort must be utilized that insures that the survivors are active participants in service delivery and is empowered to take appropriate action to insure success.

CEA's approach is comprehensive a focus on parent and survivor engagement encompassing the following features:

Relationship Building – focus on a family context seeking mutual trust, modeling cultural sensitivity, and open communication, nurtured through continuous and consistent commitment that has as its primary goal of success to be shared by all.

RFP for Countywide Support for Violence Prevention

Continual Monitoring of Early Warning Signs and Indicators – systematically checking warning signs of withdrawal (attendance, academic performance, behavior) that are obvious to school personnel and that can be altered through family intervention.

Individualized Intervention – support that is tailored to individual needs and preferences of the participants, based on level of engagement, and the leveraging of resources available through CEAs and local community service providers.

Enduring Commitment – CEA’s commitment to parents and survivors that we are available to assist them for as long as they need our services.

8. Please list the key stakeholders that support your Parent and Survivor Support Proposal (e.g., partners or stakeholders from local government, community-based organizations and other groups, residents and other individuals). Provide evidence of their support. This can be in the form of attached support letters, a description of their commitment to participate in aspects of your Proposal, or other form of endorsement.

See Attached Support Letters

RFP for Countywide Support for Violence Prevention

F. Budget (10 points possible)

All Proposers must complete this section. Your response to this section must not to exceed 5 pages.

1. Provide a detailed, line-item budget that reflects a realistic estimate of the costs associated with all strategies you are proposing. Be sure to include:
 - a. Staff salaries and fringe benefits by position
 - b. Any matching funds, listing the funding source
 - c. Total expenses and total revenues

See Attached Budget

2. Provide a budget narrative that clearly explains and justifies all line items in the proposed line-item budget.

See Attached Budget

CEA BUDGET & NARRATIVE FOR COUNTYWIDE PARENT & SURVIVOR SUPPORT GROUP INITIATIVE		
	AMOUNT	TOTAL
Personnel		120,080.00
Coordinator (Full-Time Annual Wage \$40,000)	40,000	
Responsible for the overall coordination of the Parent & Survivor Support Group Initiative. Will work directly with the Initiative's Team to maximize successful outcomes, provide ongoing assessment of program services delivered to participants, serve as a representative of CEA to community stakeholders, have an understanding and knowledge of working with parents and survivors of community violence, assist in outreach, recruitment and case management of Initiative participants.		
Intervention/Prevention Specialist (Part-Time 20/hrs/wk - \$17,680)	17,680	
Responsible for working with Parents and Survivors, conducting assessment of needs and connecting them to identified resources. Will work directly with the Initiative's Team to maximize program successful outcomes, assist in the conducting of mapping process to identify resources in the community, coordination of the development of the Parent & Survivor Groups, trainings and workshop development and implementation, assist in outreach, recruitment and case management of Initiative participants		
3 Community Organizers/Outreach Workers (Part-Time 20 hrs/wk - \$15,600)	46,800	
Responsible for developing and maintaining contacts with community stakeholders, organizations and educational institutions for the purpose of outreach, recruitment and positive public relationships with Parents and Survivors of community violence, will work directly with the Initiative's Team to maximize program successful outcomes, have an understanding and knowledge of working with parents and survivors of community violence, conduct on-going follow-up service with participants.		
Administrative Support (\$15/hr x20 hrs/week - \$15,600)	15,600	
Responsible for all administrative duties to insure success of the Initiative.		
Fringe Benefits (33% of FT Salaries, 28% of PT Salaries)		36,403.00
Fica, W. Comp.,PASUI, Health	36,403	
Additional Expenses		43,517.00
Refreshments for Monthly Meetings (\$100/mth x 8 neighborhoods x 12 mths)	9,600.00	
Facilitators for Monthly workshops (\$100/wksp x 8 neighborhoods x 12 mths)	9,600.00	
Refreshments for Monthly workshops (\$75/wksp x 8 neighborhoods x 12 mths)	7,200.00	
Parent Support Group Events & Activities throughout the year (\$1500 x 8 neighborhoods)	12,000.00	
Supplies (marketing, workshop & meeting materials, etc. \$639.63 x 8 neighborhoods)	5,117.00	
TOTAL BUDGET		200,000.00

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Community Empowerment Association, Inc. (CEA)
2021-2023

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Member of Executive Team

Angela E. DeVan, MSW
Program Manager
Member of Executive Team

March 1, 2022

I am writing this letter in support of Community Empowerment Association's (CEA) proposal to convene and provide resources to groups of parents and survivors of community violence.

My two children first attended CEA's afterschool program over 20 years ago after I searched for an affordable organization that I could trust to care for my middle school and elementary school aged children, assist with homework, have fun with their peers, provide a small meal and most importantly, provide a safe space. I found all of that and more at CEA. They eased my fear and concerns which allowed me to work and provide for my children knowing that afterschool they would be alright. I met many other families and we too became a small family just like our children did. The staff at CEA became more like aunties, uncles and grandparents to the children and sisters & brothers to us parents. After my third child began school, it was a no brainer as to where she would go for afterschool care. She worked her summer jobs at CEA and now in her senior year, she continues her afterschool time there and participates in their "World Changers" program on the weekend. She loves it there!

My personal relationship runs very, very deep with CEA. Twenty years ago, I tragically lost my eight-year-old daughter and fiancé to gun violence soon after my children left from having one of the best afternoon/evenings with all the kids and staff. The love, support & nurturing my son and I received from CEA (even now) as they fought thru their tears & pain of losing one of their babies (my daughter) has been God sent! Brother Rashad, Sister Margie and the CEA family recently had their unfortunate encounter with gun violence with the loss of their grandson Jafar whom which my daughter was friends with since elementary school. They were there for us so we have to be there for them. Despite my pain and theirs, we all keep pushing forward.

Our communities have been plagued with so much unfortunate violence including the neighborhood in which CEA resides. Without skipping a beat, they continue to provide programs, meetings and services for families to help bring a change and better our communities and people. Throughout the year (every year) CEA continues to selflessly provide various resources to the Pittsburgh communities doing all they can to assist many families in their time of need or to at least ease some of the burden during tough times. My daughter and I volunteer any time we can when they need help during their turkey give a way, coat drives and food pantries.

I know of no other organization here in Pittsburgh committed to addressing the issue of Community Violence. I totally support Community Empowerment, Inc. receiving and leading DHS's Parent and Survivor Support component of its Countywide Support for Violence Prevention.

Sincerely,

Terri Coles

March 1, 2022

Hello,

This is Rose E. Lane. I am writing this to explain my thoughts and feelings about the support serviced.

My son Wakeel was murdered, and I called Brother Rashad and Sister Amargie to inform them of this, they provided me with love and

Peace. They were my strength when I had none! Brother Rashad was at my house when I went to sleep that horrible night/day and he was there when I got up.

I can't really write what it has meant to me and my family to have them in our life. Then to be put with others who have been in this painful situation, is verrrryyy important, because this 😞 is not a feeling that ever goes away 😞

I still need to be able to get in contact with this on a regular basis, because I am still not able to get over this pain/loss daily.

This Support service needs to have all the financial SUPPORT that is available, (ESPECIALLY IN OUR COMMUNITY)

If any more information/ questions needed please contact me via Sister Amargie at CEA

SINCERELY YOURS,

Rosemary E Lane

CEA SUMMARY STAFF POSITIONS FOR COUNTYWIDE PARENT & SURVIVOR GROUP INITIATIVE

Coordinator: Responsible for the overall coordination of the Parent & Survivor Support Initiative. The Coordinator will:

- Work directly with the Initiative's Team to maximize program successful outcomes,
- Provide ongoing assessment of program services delivered to participants,
- Be able to identify gaps, assess corrective action and make recommendations for modifications to ensure goals and objectives of the program are met
- Have an understanding and knowledge of working with parents and survivors of community violence
- Train staff in CEA approaches and violence reduction prevention/intervention model to be utilized for the Initiative
- Serve as a representative of CEA to community stakeholders
- Assist in outreach, recruitment and case management of Initiative participants

Requirements:

- Bachelor's Degree in Social Work, or related field preferred with at least three to five years experience working with urban youth, families and communities – or – any combination of training and experience
- 2 years supervisory experience
- Valid Driver's license and automobile
- Act 33, and 34, FBI and mandated reporting clearances
- Ability to work an adjustable work schedule to engage youth and families participation in evening and weekend events
- Proficiency in computer software applications that are needed to perform the required tasks

Intervention/Prevention Specialist: Responsible for working with Parents ad Survivors, conducting assessment of needs and connecting them to identified resources. The Intervention/Prevention Specialist will:

- Assist in the conducting of mapping process to identify resources in the community
- Assist in the coordination of the development of the Parent & Survivor Groups
- Assist in trainings and workshop development and implementation
- Work directly with the Initiative's Team to maximize program successful outcomes
- Have an understanding and knowledge of working with parents and survivors of community violence
- Assist in outreach, recruitment and case management of Initiative participants

Requirements:

- 3-5 years experience working with urban youth, families and communities – or – any combination of training and experience

- Valid Driver's license and automobile
- Act 33 and 34, FBI and mandated reporting clearances
- Ability to work an adjustable work s schedule to engage survivors participation in evening and weekend events
- Proficiency in computer software applications that are needed to perform the required tasks

Community Organizers/Outreach Workers: Responsible for developing and maintaining contacts with community stakeholders, organizations and educational institutions for the purpose of outreach, recruitment and positive public relationships with Parent and Survivors of community violence. The Community Organizer/Outreach Worker will:

- Assist in the conducting of mapping process to identify resources and contact in the community
- Conducts outreach and recruitment of participants
- Have an understanding and knowledge of working with parents and survivors of community violence
- Assist in the coordination of the development of the Parent & Survivor Groups
- Work directly with the Initiative's Team to maximize program successful outcomes
- Conduct on-going follow-up service of participants

Requirements:

- 2-3 years experience working within impacted families
- Ability to effectively communicate, connect with and motivate participants
- Ability to work an adjustable work schedule to engage survivors participation in evening and weekend events
- Proficiency in computer software applications that are needed to perform required tasks

Administrative Support: Responsible for all administrative duties to insure the success of the Initiative.