

PROPOSER INFORMATION

Proposer Name: LaRosa Youth Development Foundation dba LaRosa Youth Club

Authorized Representative Name & Title: James T. Barry Jr., CEO and Executive Director

Address: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]

Email: jimbarry@larosayouthclub.org

Website: www.larosayouthclub.org

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

Date Incorporated: July 20, 2020

Partners included in this Proposal: N/A

How did you hear about this RFP? (Please be specific.) From DHS Staff, Erin Dalton

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

REQUIRED CONTACTS

| | Name | Phone | Email |
|----------------------------|---------------------|--------------|------------------------------|
| CEO: | James T. Barry Jr. | [REDACTED] | jimbarry@larosayouthclub.org |
| Contract Processing: | James T. Barry Jr. | [REDACTED] | jimbarry@larosayouthclub.org |
| Chief Information Officer: | Dennis Reist | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
| Chief Financial Officer: | John Michel | [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
| MPER Contact: | James T. Barry, Jr. | [REDACTED] | jimbarry@larosayouthclub.org |

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

BOARD INFORMATION

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

Board Chairperson Name & Title: Thomas P. Maglicco / Board Chairman

Board Chairperson Address: [REDACTED]

Board Chairperson Telephone: [REDACTED]

Board Chairperson Email: [REDACTED]

Other Board Members: Daniel Dougherty, Renee Falls, Laureese Harper, Elizabeth Lape, Nicole LaRosa-Karpuska, Donald Michel, John Michel, the Rev. William Meekins, and LuEthel Nesbit.

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.*

1.) Mayor Mike Cherepko City Of McKeesport
mike.cherepko@mckeesport-pa.gov
412-675-5020

2.) Superintendent Dr. Mark Holtzman McKeesport Area School District
Mholtzman@mckasd.net
[REDACTED]

3.) Dana Launis - Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank
dlaunis@pittsburghfoodbank.org
[REDACTED]

PROPOSAL INFORMATION

Date Submitted: March 2, 2022

Amount Requested: \$410,040

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 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>.

- Partner commitment letters, if applicable N/A
- MWDBE and VOSB documents X
- Allegheny County Vendor Creation Form X
- Audited financial reports or other financial documentation for the last three years (As a new 501(c)3, the LaRosa Youth Development Foundation has provided bank statements and six-month financials in lieu of audited financial reports) X
- W-9 X
- Completed budget template X

REQUIREMENTS

Please respond to the following. The maximum score a Proposal can receive is 125 points. Your response to the following section should not exceed 7 pages. (Pages 1-3 are not included in the page count).

Organizational Experience (15 points possible)

1. Describe your organizational experience providing OST Programming or programming that works with youth and families.

The LaRosa Youth Club staff and the LaRosa Youth Development Foundation board has more than 200 years of combined institutional experience and knowledge operating OST programming and management at their current McKeesport site. This organization focuses on acquiring the financial resources necessary to deliver first class, relevant enrichment opportunities for club members under strong financial oversight.

The LaRosa Youth Club is located in the former LaRosa Boys & Girls Club of McKeesport. OST services have been operating at this 901 Ravine Street site since 1957. Services began in the community when a club was incorporated in 1945 by namesake Samuel R. LaRosa. Continually from 1957 until November 2020, the club operated as a local extension of the Boys & Girls Club of Western PA (BGCWPA). It took on new life and leadership in July 2021 with the formal establishment of the LaRosa Youth Club and LaRosa Youth Development Foundation. This was after the BGCWPA leadership's decision to permanently close the site in November 2020.

The LaRosa Youth Development Foundation is proud to bridge that gap and provide much needed OST services to the McKeesport community. This foundation was created by members of the LaRosa Family and former staff and board members of the local Boys & Girls Club. It had been founded in July 2020 to address the specific needs and experiences of McKeesport club members by creating and preserving financial resources that stayed in the local community. The foundation took formal responsibility for the club, when it was reopened as a standalone operation the following summer.

2. Describe your organizational experience working in high-need communities, especially the community(ies) you are proposing to serve.

The LaRosa Youth Club's primary focus will be the McKeesport community and the satellite municipalities that comprise the McKeesport Area School District (MASD). The LaRosa Youth Club has had a continuous presence in this community for 78 years. The community has chosen this organization, and its board and staff embrace the challenge. The club has fostered strong relationships within all levels of government and service within the City of McKeesport and the McKeesport Area School District. A solid relationship also exists with parents and caregivers who have come to trust and rely on the club's board and staff in this safe OST space – a confidence that has been decades in the making.

LaRosa's roster has a plethora of practical experience working with the McKeesport community, intimately understanding the specific needs of the young people they serve, their families, and the challenges to their survival and success. By modeling the foundation's building blocks of integrity, trust, respect, and love in their everyday actions, they have earned the community's implicit trust.

The club has addressed the community's obstacle of a lack in quality childcare by creating a safe place for kids to learn, play, socialize, and have fun by simply being kids without all the pressure of the outside world. This is performed by caring adult staff who advocate on behalf of the community, particularly those who are vulnerable and/or marginalized.

By securing the LaRosa Youth Club site for continued use as an OST facility, the foundation further gained the trust and support of the community, who have grown to appreciate this effort and resilience. LYDF, along with community stakeholders, immediately took steps to acquire the site and its programming contents, thus making a commitment to restore and preserve this community hub. After eight months of legal wrangling, LYDF acquired the site on July 6, 2021, and opened our doors for OST programming on September 13, 2021. This action kept the foundation's promise to not let this treasured community asset go by the wayside.

Program Design (40 points possible)

3. Provide an overall description of your proposed OST Programming:

- *Describe how you will provide youth with a physically and emotionally safe space to spend time and how you will ensure that they and their parents/caregivers feel safe. Provide a brief description of current or proposed safety policies and procedures. Describe the physical location you intend to use.*

The LaRosa Youth Club, 901 Ravine Street, McKeesport, campus includes four interconnected structures sitting on two acres of property, including a green space specifically designed for OST activities. It is utilized safely by youth, as staff takes all reasonable precautions to maintain a physically safe environment. As a policy, safety our No. 1 priority.

The facility includes a gymnasium, outside sports/play arena, ballfield, computer lab, gaming lab, fitness room, teen center, dance studio, homework room, art room, and music studio. All of these facilities are designed and configured in alignment with safety standards. Future capital improvements include replacement of six rooftop HVAC units that will be capable of refreshing the indoor air every hour by the spring of 2022.

The LaRosa Youth Club has created an environment that is welcoming to young people. Staff provides mentorship and leadership to club members by getting to know what is important to them and by celebrating their uniqueness, likes, and interests – all while working with them to gain a sense of belonging socially. The club addresses bullying directly, and staff prioritize the elimination of this type of behavior. The club’s culture is one of support and caring, which staff model with empathy daily. Staff recognize the young people's accomplishments and seek to support their aspirations, in the club, school, and community – with their emotional safety considered in all interactions.

- *Describe how you will provide opportunities for youth to engage in enriching activities and how the activities align with the Programmatic Content expectations outlined in Section to of the RFP. Provide an example of a week’s schedule of activities.*

The LaRosa Youth Club’s programming model is simple – deliver first-class enrichment experiences to members, who may not otherwise have access. This is done, in most cases, at no participant cost. Financial resources are focused on providing programs such as homework assistance/tutoring, STEM, arts, ballet, dance, music, team sports, and sport-specific training opportunities for kids who otherwise couldn't afford such experiences. The goal is to close the opportunity gap by making available enrichment activities that are relevant and, most importantly, fun!

The foundation’s passion, which aligns with its mission, is that a child's ZIP code should not predetermine their lot in life. Their opportunities and their chances to learn should not be limited. The LaRosa Youth Club delivers to that promise throughout the McKeesport area.

The LaRosa Youth Development Foundation's mission is to "be the benchmark by which all other youth services organizations are measured based on our unwavering commitment to serve the youth of our community with passion and love, providing support and hope for generations of young people to achieve their utmost potential in a safe and caring environment."

- *Describe how you will provide participants with opportunities to make positive connections with peers, adults and their community. Provide a brief description of your organization's code of conduct for staff, staff training expectations, and policies and procedures.*

One of the staff's strengths is the ability to connect with young people through mentoring; therefore, forming a bond of trust with one or more staff is not uncommon. These relationships foster members' sense of belonging and emotional security. It makes the LaRosa Youth Club a place they want to be. The club provides several opportunities for interaction with positive role models, including participation in community special events, hosting groups at our facility, and helping others in need. They are teachable moments to "pay it forward." There has been a heightened importance for socialization opportunities for children with their peers since the pandemic, and the LaRosa Youth Club provides that.

The club holds staff to an exemplary code of conduct and provides training on relevant professional development topics and safety. All staff have the necessary clearances and training requirements in order to perform their OST duties. Upon hire, the club provides staff with an employee handbook that details LYC code of conduct, employee policies, and procedures. The employee handbook is available for review.

- *Describe the community(ies) in which you intend to locate your OST Programming. Why did you select those community(ies)? How will you tailor your Programming to respond to the unique needs of the community(ies) you are serving?*

The LaRosa Youth Club will operate OST programming in McKeesport at the same site its predecessor organizations, operated by many of the same individuals, since 1957. This group is very responsive in tailoring OST programming to the needs of local families by taking a holistic approach toward childcare. Concerns that are most important to member families include the following:

- 1.) Cost effective/accessible childcare: The current monthly fee structure for afterschool programming is \$20 per child (1st child), \$15 (2nd child), and \$10 for all other children in the family. The club has never turned a child away for the inability to pay. Summer camp fees are \$125 per week, with most members scholarships or discounts. For example, in 2019, the average child paid \$35 per week, with the difference subsidized through fundraising. The foundation may be in the position to reconsider these fees, if programs become funded by DHS;
- 2) Transportation to OST: LYC, in partnership with McKeesport Area School District, provides busing from all MASD locations directly to the club daily;

3.) Homework help/tutoring: LYC provides daily homework assistance for all club members – a vital aspect of our programming that is valued by parents/caregivers;

4.) Food insecurity: Hot meals and snacks are provided daily. LYC, in partnership with the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank and the Heritage vendor, provide hot dinners and nutritional snacks to children. The club also participates in a co-op where it receives a weekly shipment of fresh fruit. Additionally, a local church partners with the club on a weekly basis to provide peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, as well as a variety of other snacks.

Youth and Parent Experience (10 points)

4. Why do you think youth will want to participate in your OST Programming? Provide specific methods you will use to ensure that they remain engaged and interested in your Programming.

A great need for OST programming exists in McKeesport, and the LaRosa Youth Club, in its many forms, has been a staple for child development for 78 years. Club leaders listen to parents and members to align programming with their interests. The staff tailors programs to meet members' needs, while insuring the programs are engaging, relevant, and fun.

5. Describe your approach to communicating with parents/caregivers. Provide specific methods you will use to ensure that parents/caregivers feel comfortable with your OST Programming and confident that their child is safe and well cared for.

All communication to parents and guardians is clear, consistent, and transparent. Prospective members are given a chance to tour the facility before joining. They are introduced to staff and expectations are discussed. This includes what they expect from LYC and what is expected of them and their children. Annually, the club hosts an open house. Once enrolled, parents and caregivers receive a parent handbook for which they must sign off to acknowledge club policies. A copy is available for review, if necessary.

Operations (20 points)

6. Describe how you will market your Programming and open referral pathways. Provide a description of how you will build and sustain relationships with schools.

The LaRosa Youth Club maintains a productive working relationship with the McKeesport Area School District at all levels – administration, teachers, and counselors, all who routinely make referrals to this OST program. Recruitment has never been an issue, as the club's leadership communicates and markets all program offerings through flyers at the schools and on social media. The club typically sends five communications per year – at the beginning of the school year, for fall/winter sports programs, for OST programs, spring sports programs, and for summer camp. The best form of recruitment has always been happy kids and satisfied parents, who spread the virtues of the LaRosa Youth Club offerings to their friends and peers.

7. Describe how you will staff your Programming and the strategies you will use to recruit, hire and retain racially diverse staff, staff with relevant lived experience and staff that reflect the population served.

The club is very strategic and intentional in its staffing, making certain that the staff is diverse, empathetic, compassionate, and a representation of the young people it serves. The board prefers to hire staff that live in the McKeesport community or who are connected to McKeesport through the community's schools or other activities. Of its current eight-member staff, six are lifelong residents of McKeesport. Children, parents, grandparents, and teachers all know these individuals, who they are, and what they do.

8. Provide the hours and days you expect your OST program to operate during the school year and summer.

Afterschool

- Monday through Thursday 2:30PM to 6:30PM
- Fridays 2:30PM to 6:00PM

The daily operational OST schedule mirrors that of the McKeesport Area School District relative to days off, holidays, and spring, fall and winter breaks. With the advent of virtual days, due to weather or other circumstances, the club often remain open with safety as the main criteria in that decision making process.

Summer Camp

- Monday through Friday 7:30AM to 5:00PM
- 10 Weeks from June 14 through August 19,2022. Closed on July 4, 2022.

9. Describe your plan for storing and providing healthy snacks and meals during the school year and summer.

The club has a small kitchen area with an oven for heating food, three refrigerators, and a stand-up cooler for storing and refrigerating food and drinks. The club utilizes "hot boxes" and portable coolers, as necessary. Meals and snacks are served in a clean, safe area that has been approved by the Allegheny County Health Department and is inspected frequently. All staff are trained to safely provide and serve food to members.

Implementation Challenges (20 points possible)

10. If your Program experiences low attendance, how will you engage more youth?

If the OST program would experience low attendance (fortunately to this point the club has never experienced low enrollment), leaders would take every measure within in their control to promote programs and listen to the community on how to engage more youth – adapting and being more receptive to change to meet the needs of members/families. In club leaders' experience, it is much easier to provide quality, affordable programming that is designed with input from – and by communicating and listening to – those the club serves.

11. If a youth in your Program experiences behavioral or mental health issues, what will you do?

The club sets forth, in a parent handbook, behavior expectations of club members, what they can expect from staff, and the consequences of negative behavior. Staff are trained in redirecting techniques in hopes of intervening before an unwanted behavior occurs. Staff are consistent in how they communicate daily with members and parents/caregivers as issues present themselves. Some staff are trained in Mental Health First Aid and are able to recognize critical situations and make referrals to trained professionals for resolution. A professional development objective has been established for all staff to receive certifications in Mental Health First Aid prior to summer camp in 2022.

12. If the results of the bi-annual parent survey indicate that parents are not satisfied with the experience of their children in your Program, what will you do?

When this facility operated under the Boys & Girls Club of America organization, the members and families were surveyed annually. That information was used as a guide and benchmark to recognize where the club was doing well, but just as importantly identifying any perceived weaknesses that needed to be addressed. The club's leadership continually works toward the best possible experience for young people and their families. It has always been the club's practice to adapt and make improvements utilizing industry best practices and tailoring programming and professional development to meet those expectations. This exercise has been very educational and constructive and a key component towards continuous improvement. The LaRosa Youth Development Foundation intends to continue the practice of gathering feedback from parents/caregivers via surveys sent in late spring and early fall.

13. If a parent of a child in your Program expresses a transportation issue, what will you do?

If the parent of a child expresses a transportation issue, the club's leadership and staff will explore all available options. Historically, the staff has arranged carpools, in certain circumstances, provided transportation directly. Currently, the club does not own a van, but options are being evaluated to acquire a van. The current bus driver shortage, which has created issues in McKeesport, underscores the importance of transportation alternatives. The availability of transportation should never be an obstacle for young people participating at the LaRosa Youth Club or any off-site experiences.

Financial Management and Budget (20 points)

14. Using the budget template available on our website, provide a detailed one-year, line-item budget that reflects a realistic estimate of the costs associated with implementing and sustaining the Programming. Please include any other funding sources that would contribute to OST

Programming, including fees to families. The budget template file attachment will not count toward page limits.

Please note:

- *Indicate the number of children you expect to serve, with DHS funding, during the school year at a \$27 rate and during the summer at a \$40 rate. Please also share the total number of children you expect to attend afterschool and during the summer (include other seats that will be paid for through other funding streams).*
- *If you intend to administer programming at multiple sites, please provide the number of youth you plan to serve by site both during the summer and during the school year.*
- *Include any other funding sources that would contribute to OST Programming, including fees to families.*

The LaRosa Youth Club anticipates serving at least 60 children per day through DHS funding (See Attached) for both afterschool and summer day camp and another 20 to 25 children through additional funding sources, including private foundations, corporate and individual donations, and fundraising activities. Costs per child are found in the “cost effective childcare” section of the above-described Program Design.

15. In the space below, provide a budget narrative that clearly explains and justifies all line items in your proposed line-item budget.

The LaRosa Youth Club’s OST proposed line item budget costs include funds allocated primarily to employee-related expenses, and attracting the most qualified employees to carry out our mission. Other significant investments would include facility operations, where technology is key to delivering programs. The club’s leadership intends to invest heavily in providing unique learning experiences for children who may not otherwise have those opportunities.

16. Describe the funding model of your proposed OST Program (i.e., do you have a mixed model of private pay, subsidy and free spots, only free spots?).

The funding model for this proposed OST program is a mixed model including subsidized private pay, and free spots. The goal is to provide OST programming to 85 to 100 children per day.

Please populate only the green cells. If you are proposing to have locations at multiple sites, please complete a tab for each site. If you are proposing to provide over 3 sites, please copy and paste onto new tabs.

| | total # of children requesting funding for** | rate | days | total |
|-------------|----------------------------------------------|------|------|---------|
| Afterschool | 60 | \$27 | 182 | 294,840 |
| Summer | 60 | \$40 | 48 | 115,200 |
| | | | | 410,040 |

**DHS funding if for free programming, so children funded through private pay and subsidy should not be included in this request

**Funding can be requested for a subset of total number of children served

| Afterschool | Expense |
|----------------------------------------|----------------|
| <i>Personnel</i> | 191,190 |
| Salary/Wages | 155,817 |
| Payroll Taxes | 23,373 |
| Health Care | 12,000 |
| | |
| <i>Operations (supplies, rent)</i> | 24,550 |
| Building Expense (Cleaning, Utilities) | 14,000 |
| Phone/Internet | 10,550 |
| | |
| <i>Other</i> | 67,100 |
| Field Trips | 7,500 |
| Food | 54,600 |
| Special Events | 5,000 |
| Indirects | 12,000 |
| | |
| | *Total 294,840 |

Total funding request based on seats 294840

*Total should total funding request based on seats

| Summer | Expense |
|----------------------------------------|----------------|
| <i>Personnel</i> | 106,700 |
| Salary/Wages | 79,750 |
| Payroll Taxes | 15,950 |
| Health Care | 3,000 |
| Educational Class/Teachers | 8,000 |
| | |
| <i>Operations (supplies, rent)</i> | 6,000 |
| Building Expense (Cleaning, Utilities) | 3,500 |
| Phone/Internet | 2,500 |
| | |
| <i>Other</i> | 81,500 |
| Field Trips | 7,500 |
| Food | 72,000 |
| Special Events | 2,000 |
| Indirects | 2,500 |
| | |
| | *Total 115,200 |

Total funding request based on seats 115200

*Total should total funding request based on seats

45TH DISTRICT
JIM BREWSTER

SENATE BOX 203045
THE STATE CAPITOL
HARRISBURG, PA 17120-3045
717-787-5580
FAX: 717-772-3588

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FAX: 412-380-2249

201 LYSLE BOULEVARD, SUITE 100
MCKEESPORT, PA 15132
412-664-5200
FAX: 412-664-5202

NEW KENSINGTON CITY HALL
301 11TH STREET, SUITE L
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WEB: www.SenatorBrewster.com
FACEBOOK: @SenatorBrewster
TWITTER: @SenatorBrewster
INSTAGRAM: @SenatorBrewster



Senate of Pennsylvania

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February 25, 2022

Allegheny County Department of Human Services
One Smithfield Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
Attention: Out-of-School Time Programs

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in support of the LaRosa Youth Development Foundation's (LYDF) application for Out-of-School Time Programming funding from the Allegheny County Department of Human Services.

As the Department is knows, out-of-school time programming offers a safe, enriching place for children when their school day ends and for full days during the summer months. The City of McKeesport is lucky to have LYDF providing these services daily for more than 120 children at the LaRosa Youth Club. As a former educator, I can say that the LaRosa Youth Club is doing outstanding work, with programs including homework assistance, educational tutoring, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), dance, the arts, and athletics.

The LYDF board and staff of the LaRosa Youth Club are investing in the community, and I am very proud of what they are accomplishing. An award under this program will allow the Club to continue providing excellent services, and support from the Department of Human Services will help to further their mission and achieve their goals.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jim Brewster".

Jim Brewster
State Senator

AUSTIN DAVIS, MEMBER
35TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT

216 IRVIS OFFICE BUILDING
P.O. BOX 202035
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120-2035
(717) 783-1018
FAX: (717) 780-4779

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FAX: (412) 664-0039

3905 MAIN STREET
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(412) 476-3046
FAX: (412) 476-3048
March 1, 2022



House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

COMMITTEES

APPROPRIATIONS
INSURANCE
CONSUMER AFFAIRS
TRANSPORTATION
POLICY

DELEGATIONS

ALLEGHENY COUNTY HOUSE DEMOCRATIC
DELEGATION, CHAIRMAN

CAUCUSES

GAREER & TECHNICAL EDUCATION
PA LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM
MANUFACTURING
AFTER SCHOOL
BLUEGREEN
CLIMATE
HUNGER
STEEL
YMCA
SAFE

Ms. Erin Dalton
Director
Allegheny County Department of Human Services
One Smithfield Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

RE: RFP Teen Programming LaRosa Youth Development Foundation

Dear Ms. Dalton:

I am writing to express my ardent support of the LaRosa Youth Development Foundation's (LYDF) application for Teen Programming through Allegheny County DHS.

The LaRosa Youth Club in McKeesport provides out-of-school time programming in a safe, enriching environment for not only elementary students but teenagers aged 13 to 19. From sports and physical activities to homework assistance and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) programming there are a variety of resources that teens utilize the club for outside of traditional school hours.

With funding from DHS, LaRosa Youth club would like to increase programming for teens to be able to provide them with mentorship, life skills, and character-building opportunities that help set them on a positive trajectory into early adulthood.

It is not always easy to attract school-aged teens to participate in after school programming, but I must say that I was impressed to hear that the LaRosa Youth Club has been successful in doing so. It is important to be able to provide teens with access to resources and mentors beyond normal school hours because of the many challenges they are faced with.

I fully support the efforts of the LaRosa Youth Development Foundation to increase youth programming and ask for your favorable consideration of this funding request. If you have any questions regarding this grant applicant, please do not hesitate to contact me at 412-664-0035.

Sincerely,

Austin Davis
State Representative
35th Legislative District

Allegheny County Department of Human Services
One Smithfield Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15222



McKEESPORT AREA
School District

RE: Out-of-School Time Programs

To Whom It May Concern:

McKeesport Area School District is pleased to support the LaRosa Youth Development Foundation's (LYDF) Out-of-School Time Programming. This local club provides safe, positive after school and summer camp experiences for youth with programming that includes mentorship and academic support, as well as innovative STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics), sports and recreation programming.

The LaRosa Youth Development Foundation is a tremendous asset in our community and our students often spend their non-school hours benefitting from the club's services. Our teachers and staff are most appreciative of the after school academic and life skills training that complement their work in the classroom.

Our students can benefit from more programming, such as, career readiness, financial literacy, social entrepreneurship and solid business skills. These programs will have a lasting effect on the young people we serve and create productive citizens for our community.

McKeesport Area School District strongly supports the LaRosa Youth Development Foundation's Out-of-School Time Programming.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark P. Holtzman'.

Mark P. Holtzman, Ed.D
Superintendent



Mayor Michael E. Cherepko

500 Fifth Avenue
McKeesport, PA 15132
412-675-5020, ext. 605

Thursday, February 24, 2022

Allegheny County Department of Human Services
One Smithfield Street
Pittsburgh, PA 15222
Attn: Out-of-School Time Programs

To Whom It May Concern,

As Mayor of the City of McKeesport, I am writing to share my support for the LaRosa Youth Development Foundation's (LYDF) application for Out-of-School Time Programming.

As the Department of Human Services team is well aware, out-of-school time programming offers a safe, enriching place for children to go when their school day ends and for full days during the summer months. In McKeesport, we are blessed to have LYDF providing these much needed services on a daily basis for more than 120 children at the LaRosa Youth Club. As a former educator, who spent a portion of my career conducting summer camps and other out-of-school time activities, I can say without a doubt that the work taking place at the LaRosa Youth Club is second to none with programs including homework assistance, educational tutoring, STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math), dance, the arts, and athletics.

LYDF was created in 2020 to further the 76-year legacy of Samuel R. LaRosa, his wife Della, and their family's commitment to unselfishly service the youth of McKeesport. The foundation aims to provide mentorship, programming, and character-building opportunities, as Mr. LaRosa did, beginning in 1945. The goal is to continue to provide first-class enrichment opportunities and experience to the children of McKeesport. Mr. LaRosa's genuine passion for helping others set generations of McKeesporters on a successful path to adulthood, using the foundational building blocks of integrity, trust, respect, and love.

With that in mind, the LYDF board and the staff of the LaRosa Youth Club are caring, experienced individuals who are investing all they can into the McKeesport community. My administration touts a motto of "Working Together for a Better McKeesport." This notion is more than a slogan – it's an invitation for community members to step up and do their part. These individuals are doing just that, and more importantly, they are teaching club members to do the same. I couldn't be prouder of what this organization's leaders, staff, and young members are accomplishing.

The Department of Human Services' support will allow them to further their mission and achieve their goals in the McKeesport community.

Sincerely,

Michael E. Cherepko, Mayor