


Grants to Community Organizations

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Submitted by Kristen Bohanon (kristen@sistercarmen.org)

Grant Application

The Grant to Communities Program Application purpose is a uniform process by which community organizations may apply to the Town for financial support of projects, programs, and events. This application assumes an annual cycle to allow for appropriate budgeting and planning.

Organization Name	Sister Carmen Community Center
Street Address	655 Aspen Ridge Drive
City	Lafayette
Zip Code	80026
Organization Type	non-profit organization
Upload 501c3 Documentation	 IRS Determination Letter 2022.pdf
Name of Contact Person	Kristen Bohanon
Contact Email	kristen@sistercarmen.org
Contact Phone	7209545724

Organization Description

Sister Carmen Community Center (SCCC) is a non-religious agency whose mission is to provide assistance to residents of Lafayette, Louisville, Superior, and Erie who are in need, without discrimination. Our origins stem from Sister Carmen Ptacnik, a Catholic nun who came to help the people of Lafayette, Colorado in 1970's. The community embraced and continued her humanitarian efforts, eventually becoming the organization we are today, offering critical resources to thousands of individuals and families a year. In 2012, we officially became a Family Resource Center (FRC), providing a safe accessible place for individuals and families to connect to a multitude of comprehensive and coordinated services. We take a holistic approach to addressing the needs of people experiencing poverty by equipping them with the tools they need, allowing for the best opportunity for success as they take steps towards stability and self-reliance.

We verify our need through the population we serve. Every year, 5,000 - 6,000 individuals (about 2,000 families) seek our assistance--although in our last fiscal year we served 8,295 unique individuals among 3,000 families due to the increased need. We actively seek participant input and feedback through our Participant Advisory Committee, participant surveys, and individually to constantly improve our programs and services. Additionally, Boulder County Trends report shows each year that thousands of families in our community--especially those with children--are struggling to make ends meet. Low-income families in our community are struggling to pay for basic needs including housing, utilities, transportation, childcare, food, and more. Colorado Center on Law and Policy recently released a report that a family of

four living in Boulder County must make at least \$107,462 a year to make ends meet without assistance, and that 24% of Boulder County residents are unable to make ends meet.

Does your organization have a board of directors?

Yes

Describe how board members are compensated.

They are not compensated. All board members are volunteers.

Does your organization utilize help from volunteers?

Yes

Describe how volunteers would be used for the event or service you're requesting funding for with this application.

Volunteers are welcome to contribute their time in our food bank, thrift store, office, garden, and for special projects such as food drives and events. We welcome one-time group activities as well as individual volunteers who contribute on a regularly scheduled basis. We do not utilize volunteers specifically for Direct Financial Assistance, as we only offer those services through our professional Advocacy services.

Please identify other organizations providing similar services to the target population you serve (if any).

The local organizations UpLink and the Erie Community Food Bank also provide services to this population, however Sister Carmen Community Center is able to serve a much larger population and offer a deeper level of assistance for some services such as Direct Financial Assistance for rent, utilities, and transportation. As a Family Resource Center (FRC) we are also able to provide access and connections to a wide array of resources. We work closely with other local nonprofit organizations to make sure we do not duplicate services, and do not leave any population underserved. For example, we have an MOU with other area FRCs including EFAA in Boulder, Broomfield FISH, and the OUR Center in Longmont to make sure each city/town has access to an FRC.

Is this funding request for an "Event" or "Service"

Service

Name of Service

Direct Financial Assistance for Erie Residents

Begin Service Date

01/01/2025

End Service Date

12/31/2025

Service Location

Erie

Estimated number of residents impacted by your service?

200-300

Amount of funding requested

\$15,000

Please describe how the requested funds will be used - be specific.

We are seeking funds from the Town of Erie to support our Direct Financial Assistance (DFA) for residents of Erie throughout the 2025 calendar year. DFA funds are used to cover low-income families' need to pay rent, mortgage, utilities, transportation, or other essential services to make sure they don't become homeless or go without basic needs. DFA funds are distributed through our Advocacy program.

In just the first three quarters of 2024 we served 186 Erie residents within 66 unique households with direct financial assistance. We anticipate serving at least 200 if not close to 250 total. Over the last fiscal year, we've assisted over 500 Erie residents across all of our programs, including the food bank. It is our hope that the Town of Erie can help us to keep up with the demand with increased funding.

Describe the services your organization will provide and how do you identify this need? Please provide specific examples.

Our professionally trained Advocates provide families with one-on-one, individualized, and culturally responsive support to meet immediate needs, as well as short- and long-term goals towards self-reliance. Through all our Advocacy services, we use a family-centered, family-led approach that focuses on their strengths. We support participants in advocating for themselves and their families to attain stability by providing information, resource/referral connection, and personal guidance that is unique to each family situation. We prevent homelessness and improve stable housing by providing direct financial assistance for rent/mortgage, utility, and other necessary financial assistance, as well as encourage and provide connection to resources such as financial planning, parenting, enrolling in healthcare/public benefits, employment, legal guidance, and more. Through several Advocacy programs, we also provide ongoing family support that helps strengthen families, increase family economic self-reliance, and improve family health long-term. This includes building rapport and trust with families, goal setting (family-driven), coordinating services, considering strengths and needs of the families based on the Colorado Family Support Assessment 2.0 (CFSA2), and regular follow-ups.

We've identified this as a need, because we already serve this population. From January 1st through October 18th of 2024 we provided \$28,500 in rent to 29 households, \$7,648 in water assistance to 15 households, \$20,653 in Xcel assistance (through Energy Outreach CO program) to 28 households, \$5,198 in miscellaneous assistance (gas cards, car repairs, etc.) to 21 households, and distributed \$1,733 in free shopping vouchers to our thrift store for clothing and other essentials. A total of 66 households and 186 individuals received financial assistance.

How long will the requested funding support the services described above?

The 2025 calendar year.

Who will benefit from these services – both directly and indirectly?

Low-income Erie residents and their families will directly benefit from our services. Indirectly, this benefits the Town of Erie by ensuring their residents who are most in need do not end up homeless or in desperate situations. By lifting up those who need our help the most, our entire community can prosper and thrive.

What are your desired outcomes and how will you measure success?

Our desired outcome is to see more Erie families able to access our Direct Financial Assistance as well as other Family Resource Center services available to them, and to prevent them from experiencing homelessness or utility shutoffs. If the need remains as high as what we've seen in the last year, we expect to serve approximately 100 Erie households (200-300 individuals) in the 2025 calendar year. SCCC uses Boulder County Community Connect to track our participant data. This database is new as of 2023 and will help us to better report on our Colorado Family Support Assessment (CFSA2) data. Using the same database as other agencies in the region creates a streamlined experience for our participants and eases information sharing between agencies.

Is this a new or existing program or service?

Existing

What other sources of funding are you pursuing to provide this service?

Much of our direct financial assistance (DFA) budget comes out of our general operating budget. However, we also receive some DFA funds from Boulder County Housing & Human Services, Boulder County Area Agency on Aging, Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP). Unfortunately, those funds are only to be used for Boulder County, so they cannot be used for residents living in the Weld County portion of Erie. For those residents we must primarily use general operating funds as well as the Town of Erie grant.


How will the services you offer be

As an organization we are very much struggling with the increased demand for

impacted if the requested funding is not received?

direct financial assistance across all of our service areas. We have already had to limit the number of people we can serve and often the amount and number of occasions we can help an individual family. This funding goes directly to families in need, so the less funding we receive, the fewer Erie families we're able to provide support. It will have a 1:1 direct impact on Erie families.

Upload Any Relevant Service Documents

 SCCC Annual Report 22-23.pdf

Signature

Kriston Bolden

Timestamp

11/18/2024 6:03 PM (MST)