



**CIVIC SPRING PROJECT
GRANT APPLICATION**

* required answer

MAIN CONTACT FOR PROPOSAL	
<i>You should be a representative of the lead partner of the proposal (i.e. the organization within the proposal that holds either 501(c)(3) status or fiscal sponsorship.)</i>	
First Name*	Jonathan
Last Name*	Phillips
Email*	elizabethnj@groundworkusa.org
ELIGIBILITY SCREENING	
<i>Please confirm your eligibility for consideration by selecting all statements that apply to your organization/partnership or proposal.</i>	
Can you receive a grant? * <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does at least one applicant have 501(c)(3) status or the engagement of a fiscal sponsor with the ability to receive, manage and report on the use of grant funds? 	Yes
Do you meaningfully and constructively engage youth? * <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does your proposal include partnership(s) with youth-led or youth-driven organizations (s)? Groups that do not 	Yes

<p>have civic education experience per se, but that do have a demonstrated passion for a mission consistent with the goals of the project and a desire to constructively engage youth in their mission, are also encouraged as partners.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Does at least one member of your partnership have experience partnering with young people? ▪ Was there meaningful youth participation in the development of the proposal? 	
<p>Do you have the capacity to deliver in the current context over the summer timeframe?</p> <p>*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is one of your partners an existing organization that already operates well in the civic learning space, engages with young people and has 	<p>Yes</p>

demonstrated a passion for the project goals?

- Does at least one member of your partnership have experience working with the population(s) whom you intend to serve? (e.g. students, seniors, domestic abuse victims, etc.)
- Does each of the partners have senior officer with decision-making power involved in the project?
- Do you have the virtual, technical, and technological capacity to operate in the current COVID-19 environment? (This includes ensuring broadband/Wi-Fi access to participants, either through the grant or with existing infrastructure, where required)



<p>Will you meet a local need? *</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do you have local partner(s) with experience connecting/working with the populations whom they want to serve? The local element of this program is essential. Applicants can be local organizations OR national organizations partnering with local organizations. 	<p>Yes</p>
<p>ORGANIZATION DETAILS</p> <p><i>Please note: this page is exclusively for the details of the lead partner making the proposal. There will be the opportunity to provide details for the other organizations within your proposal as you proceed through the application process.</i></p>	
<p>Organization Name *</p>	<p>Groundwork Elizabeth</p>
<p>Is this a 501(c)(3) entity, or fiscally sponsored? *</p>	<p>501(c)(3) status</p>
<p>City *</p>	<p>Elizabeth</p>
<p>State*</p>	<p>NJ</p>
<p>Zip</p>	<p>07206</p>



Mission statement	<p>Groundwork Elizabeth (GWE) works towards making Elizabeth a healthier, more sustainable, and more equitable community for all. Deeply invested in our Youth, GWE creates opportunities for youth engagement activities leading to public participation by individuals, families, neighborhoods, non profits, groups, schools, and the entire community. With assistance from foundations, the public sector, non profits and members of the community, our youth have been engaged in both program initiatives and influencing policy. Young voices have made a difference in urban agriculture, conservation and restoration projects, sustainable careers, and in gaining a legacy foothold on City 10 year planning initiatives, private sector policy, education, and health related programming. We stand by our commitment to serve the City of Elizabeth as everyone deserves the chance for an environmentally just place to live. By leveraging existing relationships with new and long time partners, we continue to deliver and expand a wide variety of community based programs. We love our community and want everyone to thrive.</p>
Web address	www.groundworkelizabeth.org
States organization is active in:	NJ
Estimated number of young people served annually	250
Estimated annual budget (\$)	500,000
Number of permanent staff	6
Number of volunteers (annual basis)	500
Select practices of the organization <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Classroom Instruction ▪ Discussing Current Events ▪ Service Learning 	Discussing Current Events, Service Learning, School Climate Reform

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extra Curriculars ▪ Student School Governance ▪ Democratic Simulations ▪ News Media Literacy ▪ Action Civics ▪ SEL ▪ School Climate Reform ▪ Research Validation 	
<p>PROPOSED PROJECT DETAILS</p> <p><i>Now for the information about your proposal's program - starting with the questions below. Please fill in the requested information about the location(s) and community(ies) that you intend the proposed program to serve.</i></p>	
<p>State(s) of intended delivery *</p>	<p>NJ</p>
<p>Community(ies) of intended delivery *</p> <p>Rural Urban Suburban Mix</p>	<p>Urban</p>
<p>PROPOSED PROJECT DETAILS</p> <p><i>Longer format questions, describing your proposal in detail.</i></p>	
<p>1. Please provide your project narrative.*</p> <p>Define project deliverable(s) (i.e. civic actions, performance, learning content delivery, etc.) and project-specific outcome measurements as they</p>	<p>Article 12 of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that children and young people have a right to have their views listened to, and taken into account on decisions that affect them. Yet very few countries have fully incorporated the youth voice in policy making and the United States is one of only two countries that has not ratified the convention although the UN adopted it in 1989. (Youth Intervention Programs Association)</p> <p>This needs to change. We believe in the power of the young voices within our community, and in their ability to help coordinate civic actions. Through experiences and opportunities provided by Groundwork Elizabeth,</p>



connect to the goals of the Civic Spring Project

our youth have already had the opportunity to develop their own community action plans and programming. Our youth are in place to lead members of our community to create a civic action plan to deal with COVID-19 and other future disease outbreaks. That is our goal for Summer 2020.

We have the experience to get a lot done in a short period of time. Groundwork Elizabeth, a 501c3 non profit, has been working locally with urban, diverse, and underserved youth since 2006, drawn from communities of color, ages 14-24 for over a decade in a program called the “Green Team”. <http://groundworkelizabeth.org/youth-programming/green-team/>. Through our work with these and other youth in an ongoing grant program from New Jersey Health Initiatives called, “Next Generation Community Leaders”, Groundwork Elizabeth has trained and engaged our Next Generation in civic projects during the past two Summers and have delivered action within an eight week period each year. (Grant funding for the NJHI Next Gen program emanates from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and is supported by Rutgers University) <https://www.njhi.org/projects/preparing-elizabeths-next-generation-community-leaders/>. For each of the two summers, with support from our staff and other non- profits and community organizations our youth chose to focus on (a) senior connections and senior health, and (b) food security for low income community. They made an immediate impact on the community through their work.

In the third year of the NJHI Next Gen Grant, Groundwork has built upon our youths’ experiences and skills and has pursued civic community actions, with the goal of working in the community to influence policy decisions. The NJHI grant has prepared us for our next steps for a Civic_Spring program.

Elizabeth, N.J. is in the process of developing a 10 year Master Plan for the City, including development, transportation, housing, and community health. Our goal for the Woodrow Wilson Civic_Spring grant opportunity is to position our Groundwork Youth team to take a leadership position to work with members of those who affect community health. Members will include Trinitas Regional Medical Center, the City’s only hospital, the City of Elizabeth and Union County Health Departments, the public housing community, other non profits, and the community at large. We aim to provide opportunities for youth voices to coordinate suggestions that can mitigate the effects of this pandemic and propose solutions for policies that will prepare the community for more such experiences. We then will formally submit their suggestions to



the authors of 10 year Master Plan being undertaken now by the City of Elizabeth as a civic project with long term value.

Here is how we will get it done in eight weeks. Each Monday there will be a debrief period, and each Friday there will be a coordination period, where youth will enter metrics into a “Virtual Headquarters system”, which is already set up in the Groundwork Google Drive. Community of practice programming and documentation will be part of the deliverables for the project. At the end of the project period our youth will deliver a Civic_Spring project which will address COVID-19 and will ultimately affect health policy via a youth driven agenda.

Timeline:

June 29-July 3rd: After notice of the award, our Youth Director, with the assistance of two youth coaches, will hold a series of meetings to firm up the selection of members of the Youth team. They will be drawn from the existing Green Team, drawn from a diverse group of youth who are just learning that their voices are essential to building sustainable community solutions. Project Director and Youth Leaders will participate in the first of a series of community of practice exercises, and will prepare youth for their participation in the program and sustainable actions after the program period.

July 6-10: Director and Youth Coaches hold meetings with youth, preparing them for the Civic_Spring project. These meetings will be held in person or remotely. Guests for the partners selected for the program will be invited to sit in the meetings as a way of building relationships.

July 13-17: Youth will meet with Katherine Sarmad and Victor Vinegra of Harbor Consultants to talk about ways to address the COVID-19 pandemic and to integrate health policy suggestions into the 10 year plan. Youth will begin the process of understanding the type of research and results that will be needed for a successful proposal to the plan. Later in the week, our youth tour community sites of our partner organizations in anticipation of work to come.

July 20-24: Meetings between our youth and Doug Harris Director of Communications at Trinitas Regional Medical Center. After a discussion with Mr. Harris, he will assist the youth in being able to get to the right people in the medical community to talk to the program participants. A second meeting will be held with the Lifelong Elizabeth program from Jewish Family Services, led by Jill Dispensa, Margaret Church, and Carlos



	<p>Herrera, to talk about Senior Health and programming already in works to help fight the COVID-19 pandemic. Visitations either remotely or in person from other Youth programs, listed in Youth representation section.</p> <p>July 27-31: Meetings with City of Elizabeth Director of Health and Human Services, Krishna Garlic and her Department, to fully understand the programming already in place to deal with CoVid19. The Youth will be invited into City Hall to meet or will meet remotely. A second meeting will be held with Catherine Hart, Deputy Director of the Elizabeth Housing Authority, to assess what programming has been put into place at the City's affordable housing sites.</p> <p>August 3-7: Meetings with Debbie Ann Anderson, Union County Director of Health and Human Services. Ms. Anderson will build upon Ms. Garlic's information. A second meeting will be held with Colleen Clayton or Corey Wu Jung of the Gateway Family YMCA and Shaping Elizabeth, to see what work the coalition has done to help the community to date.</p> <p>August 10-15: Youth revisit community sites, talking to community members at each site. Youth will interface with elected officials, City Council members, and the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders for discussions that can lead to realistic outcomes for the summer program.</p> <p>August 17-21: Youth work to develop an action plan that can be reviewed by partners. Through community of practice participation, youth will share their personal stories about their participation in the grant, share stories, videos, and lessons learned with the Woodrow Wilson Foundation and the greater communities at large.</p> <p>August 24-28: Youth Director and Coaches and community will work on final action plan for ways to mitigate and prevent the effects of COVID-19 and other communicable diseases. This will be presented to Civic Spring as it is integrated into the 10 year plan. All media will be shared.</p>
<p>2. Please provide a brief description of each partner organization, including: *</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Mission and vision b. Organizational goals 	<p><u>Groundwork Elizabeth</u></p> <p>Groundwork Elizabeth(GWE) aims to make Elizabeth a healthier, more sustainable, and more equitable community for all. Deeply invested in our youth, GWE creates opportunities for youth engagement activities leading to public participation by individuals, families, neighborhoods, nonprofits, groups, schools, and the</p>



<p>c. Annual budget (2019/20)</p> <p>d. Leadership structure and number of staff</p> <p>e. Community/ies served</p> <p>f. Experience working with and/or being led by youth, where applicable</p>	<p>entire community. With assistance from foundations, the public sector, non- profits and members of the community, our youth have been engaged in both program initiatives and in influencing policy. We stand by our commitment to serve the City of Elizabeth as everyone deserves the chance for an environmentally just place to live. By leveraging existing relationships with new and long time partners, we will continue to deliver and expand a wide variety of community based programs. We love our community and want everyone to thrive.</p> <p>Groundwork has a FTE staff of five, with an Executive Director, Director of Youth, Director of Urban Agriculture, and Director of Operations, with agricultural and youth coordinators. Working with the City, County, State of NJ, nonprofits, elected officials, the private sector and the community at large, Groundwork’s Annual Budget is averaged at \$500,000 for the past 3 years.</p> <p><u>Shaping Elizabeth/Gateway Family YMCA</u></p> <p>Shaping Elizabeth (CHI) is a team composed of like-minded community leaders committed to improving the health and well-being of the residents of the City of Elizabeth by creating sustainable change to policies, environment, and strategies that support improved health, nutrition and physical activity for all. The coalition is run through the Gateway Family YMCA, led by a Program Director with assistance from 4 Y staff. Groundwork Elizabeth is one of the founding partners and steering committee members. The Coalition relies on grants and donations through its partners. There was a large New Jersey Health Initiatives investment in the Shaping Elizabeth organization that continues today. The Shaping Elizabeth and Gateway Family YMCA’s budgets are intertwined. Shaping Elizabeth’s estimated annual budget is \$100,000. The Gateway Family Elizabeth Branch impacts the community by “nurturing the potential of every child, teaching the importance of spirit, mind, and body to achieve a healthier lifestyle and supporting its neighbors to learn life skills that will help them grow and thrive.”</p> <p><u>Lifelong Elizabeth/Jewish Family Services</u></p> <p>The Lifelong Elizabeth program is run through Jewish Family Service in Elizabeth. The program is designed to provide information, programming, and services so that adults 55+ can age in place in the community that they call home. Groundwork Elizabeth has worked very closely with the Lifelong Elizabeth program to develop relationships between youth and Seniors and is currently working within the organization to</p>
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continue this program. The program has a Director, a Coordinator, and a hands-on staff person who hold meetings, create informational documents, and coordinate activities that promote civic responsibility. The Lifelong budget is primarily funded through the Grotta Fund for Senior Health program, and is supplemented by Jewish Family Service support. JFS serves the nonsectarian community in programs for health, mental health, food pantry, and other services.

Housing Authority, City of Elizabeth

The Housing Authority of the City of Elizabeth’s mission is to provide safe, decent and sanitary housing conditions for very low-income families and to manage resources efficiently. Youth services coordinated by the Boys and Girls Club of Union County are held adjacent to Mravlag Manor, a major public housing location situated in the Bayway section of the City. Groundwork works hand in hand with the Deputy Executive Director of the Authority and her assistant in programs that give youth new-found opportunities. Many of the New Jersey Health Initiative youth in the Groundwork program have ties to the organization. Groundwork, in its quest for better public health and access to locally grown foods, has a 50 bed community garden at Mravlag Manor and gardens at other Housing Authority sites on 2nd Street and in the J. Christian Bollwage Residence. As a public agency the Housing Authority has a large budget and has been willing to work with Groundwork Elizabeth on programs that benefit both their youth and adult members.

City of Elizabeth and Union County

Groundwork Elizabeth has regular ties to the City of Elizabeth and Union County Health Departments. Through making personal connections with the community to growing foods on City and County sites, Groundwork Elizabeth and these two public agencies regularly share programming to improve lives. Our youth work with the City of Elizabeth, Mayor, City Council, and with the Health Department on gaining access to community centers and to those who use them. Groundwork has key ties to the Union County Board of Chosen Freeholders, who developed a “Kids Dig In” program to grow foods locally at every Union County Public School. The City of Elizabeth and Union County Department of Community Health will be important partners in pursuit of this Civic_Spring initiative. Their budgets are public record; the

	<p>relationships that Groundwork has with them are interwoven into the possibilities to come out of Civic_Spring with real deliverables.</p> <p><u>Harbor Consultants</u></p> <p>Harbor Consultants is an Engineering Firm contracted by the City of Elizabeth to develop the 10 year plan. Victor Vinegra, a principal of Harbor is a Groundwork Advisory Board member. With our ties to the private sector firm coupled with their role in creating policy through the 10 year plan, Groundwork can position its youth to get real results in a short period of time.</p>
<p>3. Define youth representation and impact of the proposed project, including:*</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The depth, breadth, and diversity of youth participants; b. The depth, breadth, and diversity of youth impacted beyond those participating directly; c. Outreach to and/or the inclusion of youth from communities historically excluded from civic opportunities; d. Area(s) of civic learning specifically targeted, including but not limited to: dispositions, skills, 	<p>Elizabeth, N.J. has a large youth population--out of 129,007, nearly 26% are below the age of 18. Minority enrollment is 87% of the student body (majority Hispanic), which is more than the state average of 51%. The High School Graduation rate is 73% ,which is drastically less than the State average of 87.5%.</p> <p>-</p> <p>Groundwork Elizabeth’s Green Team Program was founded in 2006 and engages local youth and young adults from ages 14-24, most from low income and diverse backgrounds, in hands-on community inspired work to improve the environment, nurture civic engagement, and improve quality of life in some of our country’s most challenged neighborhoods.</p> <p>Here is a blog from one of Groundwork's youth to demonstrate what type of youth are part of our program. This 16 year old Elizabeth High School student arrived from the Ivory Coast of Africa when she was 14:</p> <p>Sarah Tizie Blog May, 2020</p> <p>I was young and scared, growing up and living in the Ivory Coast, Africa. I did not see much hope for a good life. Then I got lucky. A worldwide group called the International Rescue Committee found me and my family. IRC “provides opportunities for refugees, asylees, victims of human trafficking, survivors of torture, and other immigrants to thrive in America.” (Rescue.org)</p>



knowledge,
capacities/social
capital

Sponsored by the IRC, my family and I arrived in the U.S. from the Ivory Coast in 2017. Soon afterwards I was introduced to Groundwork and its search for youth to be on a Next Generation Community Leaders program. What a difference it was to be taken from a place of fear and uncertainty to where I ended up!

I was only 14 years old when I entered into the program in 2018. And besides a program, it was a job and my first ever! I learned that it's important to be on time, and helped develop social and language skills, make connections with other people, my age and older.

I was really happy when my coaches and leaders in the NJHI here in Elizabeth asked me to be part of a new program the very next year. We would take what we learned by showing our community how to access food and other services and continue to try to work with other community groups to make sure that we could help affect people's lives for the long term. We looked at issues like a safe environment, having less flooding, and more! This past January our entire group joined other youth and we looked at ways we could do even more, by working with the City on their 10 year plan for everything they do. And they listened!

I am especially happy that this program and job is changing how I see myself. I connect better with other youth, and I am so lucky that I could be part of this group. I really don't know how I would have fit in to my new home without this opportunity.

There are other youth programs that will included as sounding boards for the initiative. The City of Elizabeth Youth Programming, under the jurisdiction of the Department of Health and Human Services hosts the Building Future Leaders Program for high schoolers and the S.O.A.R. Program engages children under 14. The Boys and Girls Club of Union County's mission is to enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens. The Gateway Family YMCA Youth Leadership programs include Climbing Above Conflict, Youth and Government, Leaders Club and Junior Leaders Club. The Housing Authority of the City of Elizabeth offers a variety of community services including Family Programs, Scholarship and Professional Development, Senior Activities and Supports, Summer Initiatives and After-school programs. The New Jersey Youth Corps of Elizabeth is open to Union County residents age 16 through 25, who have dropped out of a traditional high school setting and are in need of an alternative method to earn a high school education. The program combines an academic

	<p>GED preparation curriculum with workplace readiness training which is centered on service learning. PROCEED provides and connects people to educational, health, and human services.</p> <p>Using the Green Team program and the work done through the New Jersey Health Initiatives Next Generation Community Leaders program, Groundwork Elizabeth will engage these community youth programs in the processes around the COVID-19 Civic_Spring program.</p>
<p>4. Proposed project budget, including:* (File format accepted: xls/xlsx/pdf/zip, Maximum file size 1 MB)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Staffing expenses broken out by individual b. Cost assumptions c. Youth compensation structure, if any (e.g., percentage of grant funds to be paid to youth on staff or through microgrants to youth-led partnerships); d. d. Additional resources to be allocated to the project, where applicable. 	<p>Attached</p>
<p>5. Describe community impact of the proposed project, including: *</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Acuteness of need being addressed in Project 	<p>COVID-19 is wreaking havoc throughout our country, our state, and in our local communities. The impact is even more pronounced in underserved urban communities of color. We need policies to mitigate its impact and to prepare for similar outbreaks. Our youth can help.</p> <p>Through Groundwork Elizabeth’s Green Team and the New Jersey Health Initiatives “Next Generation Community Leaders” grant program, scores of a ethnically and racially diverse youth were presented with</p>

- b. Proposed project's impact on this need (output, outcomes, efficacy, impact)
- c. Integration of local planning and response as part of Project

opportunities to affect public policy for decades to come. These youth are those whose voices and opinions were not customarily listened to, yet who are disproportionately affected by the greatest challenges that stand in the way of their living their best lives--social justice, economic opportunity, and healthcare. Since 2006 Groundwork Elizabeth youth programs project leaders and coaches have steadily engaged our youth in developing research and speaking skills increasing their self esteem. In 2020 our youth program took a leap forward when they were authorized by Eduardo Rodriguez, the City of Elizabeth's Director of Planning and Community Development to lend their voices to policies that our youth felt should be included in development for the next 10 years. We have been given the green light to continue to participate in this 10 year planning activity, and the COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated that we need to take a proactive look at communicable diseases starting with COVID-19.

Through the Civic_Spring initiative, our youth will work with community members and organizations in the community to be able to use their passion and skills in helping to assess real community needs. They will be working with partners and at the end of the grant period and will be able to programs that can address sustainable and youth led suggestions to mitigating and preventing communicable diseases like COVID-19.

Establishing Youth Voices in Public Policy deliver the following outputs.

1.Assemble core team (of 10 youth) taken from Groundwork Elizabeth youth programs to participate in Civic_Spring project.

2.Youth will set up an eight week program either in person using social distancing guidelines, OR remotely with affected community members including seniors, residents in public housing, and partners including Trinitas Regional Medical Center, Lifelong Elizabeth, the City of Elizabeth, Union County, and with Harbor Consultants. We will include those affected by threats posed by illnesses and those whose influence can form policies that can address these issues. Surveys will be created and collected which are based on needs outlined by community meetings.

3.Youth will survey community members who live in the most vulnerable areas, i.e. public housing, via phone, computer, or if possible, via live visit to deliver surveys.



	<p>4.Youth will assemble information gleaned from meetings into Google Charts, and develop a narrative that can be made into an interactive google page or powerpoint.</p> <p>5.Suggestions for the mitigation and prevention of COVID-19 and other potential communicable illnesses will be presented to the City for integration into the 10 year plan.</p> <p>6. The Green Team and the youth from Next Gen report into a virtual headquarters and keep track of metrics for tracking and sharing purposes. The reporting can also be shared with other NJ communities for reference and will also be shared with the Groundwork USA network, other US Urban Communities with similar challenges by New Jersey communities.</p> <p><u>The following outcomes will be delivered:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Youth gain a legacy seat on health providers, hospitals, City and County Health Departments. - Youth will gain greater influence in shaping public policy. -Youth will enjoy more respect for their voices with health departments in Hospitals and in the City and County, from peers, schools, and community at large. <p>* Youth from Civic Spring will gain long term benefits by learning community engagement skills, forming personal relationships with program participants, and gain appreciation of public service.</p>
<p>6. Any other relevant information You may be asked to provide additional materials to confirm what you have said in this application.</p>	<p>Groundwork Elizabeth has the capacity to coordinate, manage, and deliver on large scale grants.</p> <p>In 2006 Groundwork proved its capabilities for leading large scale projects by its role in the design and construction of an Elizabeth River Trail system. Through 2006-2012, working with the Federal, State, County, and City and private partners, Groundwork coordinated over \$3,500,000 to coordinate community feedback, hire consultants and contractors. The Elizabeth River Trail was opened in 2012.</p>



In 2016, Groundwork was awarded a \$250,000 by New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection for a County wide program called MORE P.E.A.S., under the direction of Riche Outlaw, NJDEP Environmental Justice program.

In 2017, Groundwork was awarded \$200,000 through the New Jersey Health Initiatives program for the Next Generation Community Leaders program, which is still underway. We had to move quickly on youth programming for two years during this program, and delivered youth directed results during the two eight week summer program periods.

In 2019, Groundwork was awarded a grant through our partner organization Groundwork USA and the Kresge Foundation, for a “Climate Safe” initiative. This grant is underway and will be funded over a 2 year period for \$150,000.

<https://gwmke.maps.arcgis.com/apps/Cascade/index.html?appid=94113f89b61b4b638db54b5aa2b76706>

We have worked with Youth since 2006 and have hundreds of stories to tell. Here is one showing our youth have the capacity to deliver a program and to understand the value of personal connections:

Everyone needs access to healthy food

My name is Marcella Tosetti and as part of the Next Generation Community Leaders program of 2019 through NJHI and Groundwork we helped residents of our local community learn about and sign up for the SNAP program. SNAP stands for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and helps those in need buy food. We volunteered at multiple food pantries in our city as well as community centers to inform people that there is a program which can assist them.

We visited local community centers and public residences. My personal favorite experience was at the Peterstown Community Center. There was a special woman there who attracted my attention after the few days of visiting the center. I originally had gone to her table to get to know her and the ladies. We spoke about our High School experiences and I even got to see her High School Yearbook! She treated me with such kindness and love. She hugged me multiple times and never forgot to mention how beautiful my hair was.



She held my hand the entire time I sat with her and we touched on other topics like our favorite breakfast sandwiches, prom dates, and dating. Let's just say it was a magical time.

We prepared almost a whole year for the program. The months of July and August, our actual program time, was filled with learning, understanding, and lots of gratitude. We interviewed over 200 people and took as many screenings as possible. So many people thanked us and realized how good of a program this truly was. Each one of us were able to put ourselves in someone else's shoes. There were times where our emotions became too powerful as we realized that we couldn't help everyone. I feel good that our youth were able to help those in Elizabeth in such a short amount of time. We came back to some locations more than a few times, and the best feeling was having people come back to us and thank us for all that we all that we did just for providing a little bit of information, with open ears, and hearts.

Woodrow Wilson Foundation.Civic_Spring 2020

<u>Period</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Civic Spring</u>	<u>Leveraged</u>
<u>Expenses</u>			
<i>Personnel</i>			
Civic_Spring Project Director July-September 2020 12 weeks@\$1,500/week	18,000	16,000	2,000
Civic_Spring Project Assistants (2) 12 weeks@1,000/week	24,000	20,000	4,000
Youth Participants (10) @ \$15/hour, 25 hours/weekX12 weeks=300 hours \$4,500 each	45,000	35,000	10,000
Subtotal without fringe	87,000	71,000	16,000
Fringe benefits 17%	14,790	12,070	2,720
PERSONNEL subtotal	101,790	83,070	18,720
<i>Direct Costs</i>			
Office Operations	2,500	2,000	500
Food for trainings	1,000	500	500
Summer Action Plan costs, transportation to sites to meet with community and officials	1,250	750	500
Room Rental for larger group meetings	550		550
Direct Costs Sub total	5,300	3,250	2,050
<i>Purchased Services</i>			
Coalition Support	3,000	1,500	1,500
Guest speakers	2,500	750	1,750
Purchased services Sub total	5,500	2,250	3,250
SUBTOTAL program	112,590	88,570	24,020
Indirect Costs 12%	13,511	10,628	2,883
<u>GRAND TOTALS</u>	<u>126,101</u>	<u>99,198</u>	<u>26,903</u>

Civic Spring Project Final Grant Report – Groundwork Elizabeth

Name: Jonathan Phillips

Organization: Groundwork Elizabeth

Date: October 14, 2020

I. OUTCOMES FEEDBACK: Please list the outcomes proposed in your Civic Spring Project application and fill out the following table.

Outcome	Outcome Details:	How did you do on this outcome?	Lessons learned related to this outcome:
<p>1. Youth work to gain a legacy seat on health providers, hospitals, City and County Health Departments.</p>	<p>Our goal was to set up ‘face to face’ meetings with stakeholders who affect policy and through these actions secure a place for our Elizabeth Youth work to gain a legacy seat on health providers, hospitals, City and County Health Departments, Boards or Committees. We want our youth to be seen as informed participants who could help affect public policy around COVID-19, and other large scale health related programming.</p>	<p>We met with City and County Departments of Health and Human Services. City and County both listened, City asked for a survey from the Youth to see about COVID vaccine, County offered internships for continuing work. Freeholder from the County was open to continuing to attract youth voices for longer term via other County departments via Zoom and other gatherings. City Councilwoman noted, “we need to find a way from this program surrounding our youth to be a permanent part of the City”. Opened up dialogue with the hospital and requested volunteer opportunities. Met with Senior Management at Hospital staff and spoke about medical internships.</p>	<p>We were thrilled with the way that our stakeholder guests, who were invited during regular Zoom meetings, carefully listened and validated youth points of view. Because of the relationships strengthened during the virtual meetings, our cohort of youth and youth leaders made progress in promoting youth self esteem, gaining respect regardless of age, and in building the foundations of real civic policy change.</p>
<p>2. Youth will gain greater influence in shaping public policy.</p>	<p>Our goals for this outcome were to provide opportunities to our youth to insert themselves into</p>	<p>Met with the Mayor and with the author of the City of Elizabeth’s Ten Year Master Plan, Victor Vinegra.</p>	<p>We are working on a follow up report for the 10 year plan to share with the City, regarding</p>

	<p>discussions with policy makers, to gain their trust and inclusion into conversations that sincerely listen to youth as peers in public discussions, giving them a greater influence in shaping public policy.</p>	<p>Mayor agreed to continue to engage youth voices by establishing a Youth Council. Youth have created a document for Victor which will be inserted into the Plan. For continuing work, GW has entered into an agreement with the National Park Service's RTCA to continue to pursue environmental improvements for the community incorporating youth ideas in this pursuit.</p>	<p>education, food and shelter, and the environment which includes Green Building and assuring safe and clean open spaces for the community. We are also working on suggestions to dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic, outcomes after speaking to the Hospital and City and County Health Departments. We have the commitment from stakeholders to listen carefully to our youth so they can make a civic difference. There is now a place for a legacy seat for community input by placing youth on a new Mayor's Youth Council, and promising opportunity for youth voices at the Board of Ed as active decision makers from youth's point of view.</p>
<p>3. Youth will enjoy more respect for their voices with health departments in Hospitals and in the City and County.</p>	<p>This outcome is perhaps the most difficult, as our intention was to present our youth as serious partners, not just children for use in community discussions regarding health policy.</p>	<p>One of our early projects was to work with our youth to create meaningful youth profiles, which required soul searching by our team. We then shared these profiles on Social media with great results. With a large number of 'likes and impressions', our youth realized they were respected in the community and needed to live up to their promises. To bolster their skills, our youth team leaders worked daily on training the cohort on methods of research, looking at original unbiased sourcing for data to back</p>	<p>Youth profiles which are shared introduce a personal flavor to working in public policy. Unexpected outcomes were that all of our policy making guests exceeded their allotted time in discussions with our youth, receiving offers of internships and possible employment, integration of this program into future City youth Summer programs. Film from GW regarding work during the Civic Spring project was shared with the Foundation and will continue to be shared on GW</p>

		<p>up what they would want to discuss with stakeholders. With all guests, youth were very respected. Some stakeholder guests scheduled for 15 minutes, however exceeded reserved times. Our Freeholder, Mayor, BOE, Councilwoman, and Hospital contacts all went longer than scheduled, lasting for at least 1 hour, some 1.5 hours. Youth were uplifted with this respect. The County Director even brought in the COVID-19 County Health officer for greater detail in youth engagement. The City Health Department was very interested in how youth could help the City more. There is a plan by Groundwork through our Youth Directors to continue to expand program to other youth who show interest.</p>	<p>sites. A lot of youth coaching went on behind the scenes in private discussions via text, phone calls and in private chats during Zoom meetings. We will be expanding the program to known Groundwork Youth (Green Team) and via survey to community at large will offer opportunities to other youth peers in the immediate future.</p>
<p>4.Youth from Civic Spring will gain long term benefits by learning community engagement skills, forming personal relationships with program participants, and gain appreciation of public service.</p>	<p>We wanted this WWF opportunity to be the foundation for a longer term youth program which built upon the original intent to engage youth in the civic process. We wanted our stakeholders to continue to welcome our group long after the WWF grant finished. By working with youth on gaining their trust within our group first, we continued to help</p>	<p>Youth leaders and our Youth Whisperer worked one on one with youth cohort to improve their communication skills. Youth felt empowered because of the gravitas of guests in Zoom. Youth gave a presentation in front of the City Council, Zoom meetings with CIRCLE and enthusiastically participated in Community of Practice, We are hopeful for potential for youth voices to be incorporated at decision levels at Board of Education. During our last Zoom</p>	<p>Board of Education for public schools had made decisions on COVID 19 classes with teachers, administrators, parents, BUT NOT youth. Eyes were opened during discussions with BOE member and saw value to include the youth in future decision making. Social media posts were shared on local social media and the WWF blog helped the Foundation community understand what goals were being met. Video stories by youth and a movie made by a GW</p>

	<p>them to hone their skills in research and presenting. We wanted to accomplish this through discussions with our stakeholders, by playing online 'civic' related games and understanding the structure of the public sector. As 2020 is an election year, many discussions in the Zoom meetings surrounded policies that will be affected by the election, i.e. use of masks, policies around disease prevention.</p>	<p>meeting, many want to continue with Civic engagement, volunteering, etc. Skills developed during program will continue to be used by team.</p>	<p>filmmaker helped share the program with the community.</p>
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II. **MAJOR LESSONS LEARNED RELATED TO THE FOLLOWING:** Please share your reflections on each of the following categories listed in the left-hand column below. There are examples for a few to help you get started - please erase them as you fill in the table yourself.

	Lessons Learned/Takeaways
Outcomes	<p>We had specific goals coming into the WWF grant, which were to incorporate youth voices into public policy surrounding COVID-19 and in gaining a foothold on the City's Master 10 year plan. We made inroads by meeting one on one with policymakers who, because of our Youth Leader and "Youth Whisperer" preparation felt they actually could make a difference. We were pleased outcomes were on specific youth development, a newfound sense of worth and value for each youth. With the confidence and reassurance from the adults in the program, the youth felt empowered and we feel that the program has changed ways of thinking and being, developing not only programs and policies, but the next leaders of this continuing youth led work. An 'aha' moment occurred in our discussions with the BOE, who realized that youth had not even been considered in how education would progress in a COVID-19 scenario, which could last years.</p>
Process	<p>We needed a few weeks of intensive internal work to prepare the cohort towards meeting our objectives. Learning civics and who the policymakers in our City were was the first benchmark that needed to be addressed. Self esteem building by forming personal profiles which would be shared with the community were very</p>

	<p>important, and allowed youth to address City Council, and make a video outlining their personal goals for the program. Our Zoom meetings developed team bonds which proved to be vital in attaining outcomes. Objective research skills, team bonding, speaking skills, financial literacy, etc. were part of the process. The youth were then very prepared to engage in meaningful discussions with high level community policymakers And be respected in the process. The WWF community of Practice meetings gave our youth the opportunity to talk to other youth from other programs, increasing a team spirit from local work in Elizabeth to a larger generational context.</p> <p><i>We started using the rose, bud, thorn exercise from the Community of Practice in our own team meetings because it helped us better frame a conversation about what we were proud of and what we needed to work on where everyone had the chance to share...</i></p>
<p>The Environment/Context of your project</p>	<p>The Groundwork program had begun policy work in 2019 through an NJHI grant called Next Generation Community Leaders. This earlier work largely was a planning process, but showed us a way forward. Our program promoting youth as voices in civic discussions needed fine tuning to be able to give our youth a real chance to be heard. The WWF opportunity allowed to hone our skills in developing a youth team, providing skills, We discovered that the adult decision-makers in our community before meeting our youth did not expect the level of commitment and understanding that they found during meetings, which was uplifting for the youth and a great outcome for the policymakers. The COVID-19 pandemic was an unlikely platform which allowed both youth and adults to open up lines of communication. This ‘thorn’ in many ways, became a ‘rose’ for youth voices and a new generation of civic leaders.</p>
<p>Your Local Community</p>	<p>The community has a thirst for Youth engagement. Mayor Chris Bollwage at first began with a standard adult/youth approach during his scheduled time during a Zoom meeting, but quickly realized that these you were serious and had done their homework. Freeholder Granados immediately opened up to the group, even making a call to Union County’s Director of Parks and Recreation regarding a situation one of the youth spoke about at a local park. City and County Health Departments offered internships and asked for assistance in engaging the entire community. The author of the City of Elizabeth’s 10 year Master Plan did not know what to expect, but after a few minutes listened actively and intently to suggestions and eventually offered one of our youth an internship.</p> <p>A fable lends a good analogy for the gap in our community for youth to be heard,</p> <p>“There were two shoe salesmen who went to a very rural community in the 1800’s. One of them returned in a</p>

	<p>week, stating ‘I can’t sell anything here, everyone goes around barefoot’. The company did not hear from the 2nd salesman for a week. He finally wired a note, saying ‘send more order forms, ‘everyone here needs shoes’.</p> <p>Elizabeth wants and needs youth voices inserted into civic discussions; policy can be authored by informed youth.</p>
COVID-19	<p>If this were a typical year, the youth from our cohort would have engaged face to face with the stakeholders that we invited to meet with. The pandemic in NJ was fierce, especially in the months of March-May where at times 400 people a day were dying in the State and many in our Elizabeth community. The gravity of the COVID-19 situation was evident, the school year was made virtual. For the Civic Spring program, youth were already accustomed to meeting virtually; for Groundwork Elizabeth’s team, most of the time spent during the Civic Spring program was held in daily 6-7 hour Zoom meetings. During the meetings, we had ice breakers which got the youth to open up to each other. On certain days every two weeks we held a socially distant meeting at a local park, inviting some stakeholders with full compliance with social distancing. The youth researched the 1918 Pandemic and noted the preventive measures that were in place, and compared them to the COVID-19 pandemic, as a baseline for further research, discussion, and suggestions. In the end they lent their voices to the local hospital, City and County Health Departments and to the Board of Ed and Shaping Elizabeth coalition partners.</p>

III. **IMPACT OF YOUR PROJECT ON THE FOUR BUCKETS OF CIVIC LEARNING:** We took a stab at filling this table out for you, hoping that having something to edit is easier than coming up with content first. However, there is NO pride of authorship so please review the draft language below and make edits directly to the table. We will use your revised version in our future publications.

	How does it increase civic knowledge?	How does it increase civic skills?	How does it increase civic dispositions?	Does it also increase civic capacities?
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Definition:	<i>An understanding of government structure, government processes, relevant social studies knowledge and concepts, and American history and political thought in a global context.</i>	<i>Competencies in the use of one's voice, including basic writing, speaking, and listening skills and skills of research, investigation, and critical thinking; competencies in the use of practices of democratic coordination, political institutions, and media literacy.</i>	<i>Attitudes important in a democracy, such as a sense of civic duty, sense of efficacy, concern for the welfare of others, and commitment to trustworthiness and bridge-building.</i>	<i>Access to networks, opportunities to participate, and other forms of social capital that promote civic agency.</i>
Elizabeth, NJ	Participants in Groundwork Elizabeth's program engaged in civics lessons prepared by their Youth Leaders ; they met with the Mayor as well as council members at the City and County to learn about their roles in government; they studied policy-making and local governance. They also looked at State and National civic structures, gaining greater understanding of these which is key during a Presidential election year.	After researching and speaking with stakeholders, elected officials and policymakers, Groundwork Elizabeth fellows created a set of policy recommendations about issues that relate to them and their community to be considered for the City of Elizabeth 10-year master plan.They presented findings and policy recommendations to the Elizabeth City Council and engaged in conversation about issues of concern to youth in Elizabeth. They developed writing, speaking, listening and research skills when preparing for interviews with stakeholders in the community, from the Mayor to administration at the regional hospital.	Groundwork Elizabeth participants increased their sense of civic disposition through positive interactions with elected officials and stakeholders in their community; they have shown a commitment to bridge building through their willingness to engage in challenging conversations with each other with to gain understanding and respect.	Relationship development with local government officials, County government, Public Housing, local YMCA and other non-profits in the community; Community of Practice meetings helped cohort relate to youth in other communities, learning from their perspective and forming cross national relationships.