



THE CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY OF NEW JERSEY

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PRESS RELEASE

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The Children's Home Society of New Jersey Receives Grant Award to Deliver 21st Century Community Learning Center Programming in Trenton

Trenton, NJ (September 11, 2019) – The Children's Home Society of New Jersey (CHSoF NJ) has been awarded \$498,979 per year for five years to deliver 21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC) programming for the City of Trenton. The 21st CCLC grant follows an evidence-based model and is funded by the US Department of Education. With this competitive grant award, CHSoF NJ will serve 240 middle school students and their families each year at Joyce Kilmer Middle School and Grace A. Dunn Middle School through after school programming and summer camp.

The afterschool program will meet three hours per day, five days a week. Students will participate in homework help, positive mentoring, recreational activities, and a variety of project-based clubs that leverage collaborator assets, make intentional school day linkages, and culminate in student-created projects, performances, or events. The 4-week summer session will operate 5 hours per day (9am-2pm), 5 days per week at Kilmer School and will be offered to all participants served during the school year, including nonpublic school students.

CHSoF NJ's program partner is Trenton Public Schools. Collaborators are McCarter Theatre, Bloomberg, Friends of Washington Crossing, Dress for Success, Latin American Legal Defense and Education Fund, Henry J. Austin Community Health Center, Dominion Mentoring, YWCA of Princeton, Capital Area YMCA, Civil Air Patrol, the PEAR Institute of McLean Hospital of Harvard University, and CHSoF NJ Family Success Centers and Mental Health Clinic. CHSoF NJ will also work with non-public schools in Trenton serving middle school students: Garvey School/Egun Omode Shule, Christina Seix Academy, and SproutU School of the Performing Arts. CHSoF NJ and these schools will share STEM lesson plans and project kits for middle school students.

A Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) theme guides the program's engaging inquiry-based learning opportunities, providing chances for students to learn how scientists, engineers, and mathematicians work, and to experience firsthand the tasks they perform. Benefits of the STEM theme include supporting critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, and entrepreneurship. A rich array of clubs are designed to build on students' expressed interests and extend their exposure to new fields and concepts. Students make decisions about program activities and structure and take responsibility for their choices.

Other program elements include: academic support and enrichment activities including field trips; improved student attendance through character development; program staff and Peer Leader mentorship; exposure to arts and cultural activities that embed social emotional and academic learning; and education related to nutrition and healthy choices.

Students who participate in 21st CCLC programming often demonstrate improved English/Language Arts and Math performance on state standardized tests; increased sense of safety and belonging; improved attitudes toward STEM; and decreased absenteeism. Additionally, the program often leads to increased parent and family involvement in their children's education.

About 21st Community Learning Center Programing The 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC), a federally funded program, provides approximately \$7.2 million to the New Jersey Department of Education (NDOE) to support out-of-school time programs in New Jersey, which include before-school, afterschool or summer enrichment. Research has identified out-of-school time (OST) programs, such as afterschool, before-school and summer enrichment programs, as critical supports within high-functioning education systems. Quality OST programs have demonstrated an increase in academic gains and student engagement among participating youth, while also supporting working families. Additionally, these programs build stronger connections between schools and communities.¹

About The Children's Home Society of New Jersey

The Children's Home Society of New Jersey is a nonprofit child and family serving agency whose mission is to save children's lives and build healthy families. Founded in 1894, the agency protects abused or neglected infants and at-risk children by ensuring stable, permanent, and loving homes for each and every child it serves. All services are confidential and most are free. For more information, visit our website at www.chsofnj.org

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¹ March 2009, *The Quality Imperative: A State Guide to Achieving the Promise of Extended Learning Opportunities*, National Governors Association, Center for Best Practices and Council of Chief State School Officers.