

WALKING FELLOWSHIP OF CHESTER

The following has been written as the result of Chester Innovations Community Services (a 501 (c) (3) non-profit corporation in Chester, PA), making a grant application to America Walks, submitted on November 10, 2017. It is for their 2017 Community Change Micro Grant. This is the proposed project that we will implement as a result of this awareness and hopefully with the support of this organization.

I have been a participant in various community walks in Chester, all for worthy causes. I have also experienced the camaraderie, unity, goodwill and the sense of hope that was generated. We believe these walks also promote good health and build stronger relationships between the participants. Furthermore, I've observed that upon their conclusion, they act as a catalyst to attract others to join in. There was a great anticipation for the next walking event. We believe more of these walking opportunities need to be created and planned to capture, retain, grow and sustain all of the positive benefits mentioned above, and then some.

We believe that the men of Chester and vicinity can lead this particular charge to revitalize and transform the lives of people in our communities. We believe that there are men who will rally to this cause through the simple act of walking and conversing along the way. Here we will set forth a plan which we believe will accomplish this objective.

We would begin this project by meeting with Vinnie Washington, Ronald Hughes, Steven Benson, Jon Reid, Maceo Waring and John Johnson. There will be others added after this initial discussion on the project. We would also give the project an official name at that time. This project has its basis in the scripture discourse found in **Luke chapter 24**. The primary effect we are looking for is from **verse 32: And they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?** This account signified the beginning of a great transformation in the lives of those people, just because they decided to take a walk and converse along the way.

WHO

We intend for this project to be initiated and headed up by men. However, anyone can form a group or walk along with us. It's hoped that participants will partner-up for the walking. Vinnie Washington, Ronald Hughes, Steven Benson, Jon Reid,

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Maceo Waring and John Johnson are the initial coordinators for this effort. Others can be added as the project develops. These persons would serve as the group coordinator for the persons they invite to walk with them. These individuals will constitute various networks, which would serve as an accessible resource to everyone for any future collaborative project efforts.

WHAT

We hope to introduce a planned effort led by men, to promote walking and walkability in the city of Chester, Pennsylvania. The project will consist of various groupings of people, participating at various times and places, to share the benefits that come with walking and conversing together. We hope to receive as many benefits that are possible from engaging in this, what we believe to be a life changing project. We believe our people and our community will be more educated, strengthened and revitalized with a new hope in meeting the needs in our communities.

WHEN

We can begin this project right away with whoever is available now. We would build on the momentum with formal roll-out of the project with a special highlight on Father's Day (Sunday June 17, 2018). This will be an ongoing effort Each particular group will establish their own schedules for their walks.

WHERE

We will utilize our own walking trails in Chester, located at our riverfront and in Chester Park. We can also use other locations such as Chester High School's Athletic Field, Chester's Memorial Park, the John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum and Brandywine Park in Wilmington Delaware. We will also establish some indoor locations such as local malls and gyms, that are conducive to walking. The locations would be determined by the respective group leaders.

WHY

We hope our efforts will produce an outcome similar to what is described in the above mentioned biblical context. **Luke chapter 24 verse 32: And they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?** We hope our efforts generate the camaraderie, unity, goodwill and a hope that produces a positive transformation in the lives of those that participate. These walks also promote good health and build character, strengthen relationships, and demonstrate the benefits of a true fellowship.

HOW

1. We will combine our network resources from our initial meeting to start our walks. We'll capture this walk on video and share it via social media to promote the awareness and draw others into joining our effort. The collection of pictures and videos will be ongoing.
2. The emerging leaders for the various groups of walkers will determine what they want to target as the specific purpose for their walks.

For example: A leader may choose to use the walks as a platform to mentor individuals within their circle of influence. Another leader may choose to target the incidence of diabetes and incorporate walking as a means to support one another and share information and experiences on its treatment and prevention. Another leader may highlight walkability through the creation and maintenance of environmentally friendly zones for walking.

3. We will design and create a t-shirt which is earned by individual participation. It will serve as an incentive to participate and a symbol of achievement of the group's cause. The design or image must be provocative and compelling enough to possibly draw new recruits. *(We hope that the cost of the t-shirt will be covered by the receipt of the 2017 Community Change Micro Grant awarded by America Walks.)*

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4. We will conduct interviews from participants and other interested parties. This will capture the sentiments for the project to facilitate assessments. We can use the results of a glad's, mad's, and sad's survey as assessment data for analysis. This will be a tool we can use to gauge the effectiveness of and provide direction for the project. We could also design our own Walk Audit Checklist.

5. We will use the results of our data to further enhance and duplicate the project for other communities, as well as spawn new projects of benefit for our people and community.

6. Other items to be determined after initial meetings as necessary. Other specifics, particulars and fine details not included here, will be supplied at a later time.

Submitted by
John Johnson
Chester Innovations Community Services
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