December 12, 2018

[Foundation Executive Director/Officer Name]

[Foundation Address]

***Re: Letter of Interest: MBK Delaware – Youth Connect Centers***

Dear [Executive Director],

[OPENING](https://grantspace.org/resources/sample-documents/?tab=letters-of-inquiry" \o "The OPENING paragraph is 1-3 sentences that serve as the summary for the letter of inquiry.  Your goal is to hook the reader. Include: Organization Name, Project Title, Purpose of the letter, Amount needed, Connection to foundation's guidelines, prior exp)

My Brother’s Keeper Delaware (MBKD) seeks support to build the capacity of our Youth Connect Collective - a network of partners across Delaware building a movement in schools to improve the lives of boys and young men of color – to better address barriers mitigated by poverty and violence in communities. Upon review of [Public Welfare Foundation](http://bmafunders.org/funding-map/)’s mission and commitment to youth justice and equity in public education, MBKD submits this letter of interest to consider a full proposal in the amount of $200,000 to support the growth of the Youth Connect Programs. [We invite you to our quarterly ***Youth Speak***](https://grantspace.org/training/courses/how-to-cultivate-meaningful-relationships-with-funders/) event on January 3, 2019 to hear directly from young people who have envisioned and organized around fair and supportive practices in their schools.

[NEED](http://bma.issuelab.org/?coverage=&author=&funder=&publisher=&wikitopic_categories=&keywords=&pubdate_start_year=1&pubdate_end_year=1&sort=&categories=)

Perhaps the most difficult and persistent challenges in our country are those rooted in racism and oppression, and the disparities that follow. These disparities are particularly salient for boys and young men of color, creating a vicious cycle of male inter-generational disadvantage, impacting their overall life outcomes. Delaware is no exception, and racial disparities in educational outcomes, income distribution, and incarceration remain a severe issue.

* [Stagnant educational attainment](https://www.issuelab.org/?_ga=2.172339491.1254133317.1544797493-931472488.1544797493) - Delaware has a school dropout rate of 7.1% statewide, however that number jumps to 10% and 37% for Black and Latino males respectively in 2017[[1]](#footnote-1).
* [Over-criminalization of youth](https://www.issuelab.org/?_ga=2.172339491.1254133317.1544797493-931472488.1544797493) - Black students in grades K-12 in public schools are 3.8 times as likely to receive one or more out-of-school suspensions as white students. Most of the preschool students in public schools who are suspended are boys, meaning the criminalization of Black boys starts when they are toddlers. Furthermore, American Indian or Alaska Native, Latino, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, and multiracial boys are also disproportionately suspended from school. They represent 15 percent of K-12 students, but 19 percent of students receiving one or more out-of-school suspensions[[2]](#footnote-2).

[ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION](https://foundationcenter.org/improve-your-skills/organizational-sustainability)

In 2015, MBKD answered President Obama’s call to action to gather community leaders and members to collaborate and adopt innovative approaches, strengthen support, and build ladders of opportunity for boys and young men of color. Over the last 4 years MBKD has gathered over 40 organizations and government agencies to develop a Local Action Plan to increase the number of BYMOC graduating from high school and completing post-secondary degrees, decrease youth violence and incarceration, and increase access to positive support and role models through mentoring. Since 2015, our ***Youth Connect Collective*** has partnered with over 100 health professionals and supporters with schools to mentor and provide counseling to over 300 young men of color. In 2018 we gathered 450 youth, ages 16- 24 alongside organizations and corporations for ***Pathways Day*** – a day-long convening providing youth with access to community resources and social services, connect to mentors, discuss solutions to youth violence, and participate in career and leadership development trainings.

[PROJECT DESCRIPTION](https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/whitehouse.gov/files/documents/MBK%20Program.pdf)

The MBK Delaware Youth Connect Program represents one innovation that arose from our convening of leaders and youth as we uncovered ways to ensure boys and young men live the healthiest life possible and contribute to their communities. YCP focuses on violence prevention, health education, and mentoring within schools to reduce youth exposure to trauma and increase high school and college attainment. Schools are partnered with local health organization and a non-profit specializing in street violence prevention to provide outreach while also connecting families and students to community health centers located within their neighborhoods and schools. To date, YCP has built 4 community connect centers linking our largest health and hospital corporation (XXXYYY Health System) with 3 schools across Delaware. These centers have improved educational attainment for youth and particularly boys of color by removing barriers caused by trauma leading to school drop out.

[FUNDING REQUEST](https://www.obama.org/mbka/about-mbka/)

MBKD proposes to accelerate the impact of these communities through expansion of the Youth Connect Program to include school-based counselors, social workers and additional social emotional support programming at each of our location. Specifically, a grant in the range of $200,000 would support the development of one additional YCP center site within a school district and increase the staffing model across all existing centers. Our communities are courageously tackling the hard questions, examining current policies, and thinking about innovative collaborations between education, health, and social services to address these complex challenges. They are also ready to take their plans to the next level, which will require the best in professional and organizational development, increase in staff and access to promising ideas and innovative strategies to sustain this momentum.

[CONCLUSION](https://grantspace.org/resources/sample-documents/)

Thank you for considering this request. We are at a tremendous time of growth and capacity building within our MBK Delaware local action plan. An additional injection of grants to increase trauma supports in schools will continue to eliminate barriers and drive the success we see across our state. If you have any questions or should you need any further information, please feel free to contact **[STAFF CONTACT**].

Sincerely,

[YOUR NAME]

Executive Director

1. National Center for Education Statistics (2018). Trends in High School Dropout and Completion Rates in the United States: 2018. Washington, DC: US Department of Education. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. US Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (2018). Civil Rights Data Collection for the 2015-2016 school year. Retrieved from: <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/crdc-2015-16.html>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)