

Feeding Families for Success

House of Hope

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Application Form

SECTION 1: ORGANIZATION PROFILE & INFORMATION

Primary Organization Name*

House of Hope

Name of Program / Project*

Feeding Families for Success

Program / Project Description

Please select one:

Expansion of Existing Program or Project

Organization History*

- Provide a brief overview of the organization and its unique role in meeting the needs of the population served.
- List the organization's current key projects and activities.

Founded in 1984, House of Hope's mission is to empower Martin County residents to overcome hunger and hardship, and is the county's largest and only basic needs provider with service centers in low income communities of Stuart, Hobe Sound, Jensen Beach and Indiantown. Every program offers basic needs and life skills to the almost 18,000 food insecure county residents. Services include: access to nutritious food, clothing, and home goods; financial assistance to avoid a crisis and help clients retain housing; information and referrals; comprehensive case management; and self-improvement workshops that are free and open to the public at Golden Gate Center for Enrichment, designed to enhance low income communities through increased awareness of healthy living and access to job-skills training, literacy programs, and much more. Programs created to support the agency's health and nutrition initiative include Growing Hope Production Farm, Elizabeth Lahti Nutrition Center, and 4 Nutrition Gardens in low income communities. Food insecurity is the primary reason people come to House of Hope, and we are committed to supplying high quality, nutritious food to maximize clients' opportunities for success in a dignified way. Almost 1.5 million pounds of food were distributed last year to clients and community soup kitchens, church pantries, shelters, and youth programs. Every agency program and service is provided at no cost to participants or clients.

What percentage of the Board contributed financially in the most recent fiscal year?*

100

If the Board does not have 100% participation, please explain why.

Please select the skill sets or attributes represented on the organization's Board.*

Business Development
Compliance
Computers & IT

Finance & Accounting
Fundraising
Governance & Bylaws
Grantwriting
Human Resources
Insurance
Investment
Legal
Marketing & PR
Medical
Policies & Procedures
Social Work
Web Design & Social Media

SECTION 2: INFORMATION ON PROPOSED PROGRAM / PROJECT

Overview of Request

Overview should be one to two sentences.

This proposal includes an expansion of the Elisabeth Lahti Nutrition Center (est 2017) and Growing Hope Farm (est 2019), to improve the efficiency, safety and capacity of the agency to grow, prepare, and distribute high quality, fresh foods and meals to nearly 7000 clients and 24 food partners, all at no cost to those served. The need for the services provided by House of Hope, especially pantry and food bank services, have increased dramatically during the pandemic. These improvements in infrastructure are critically important to allow the organization to continue to assist the growing number of clients and partners.

The Nutrition Center produces 1600 packages weekly of healthy meals and salads for clients and partners. The expansion will create a more productive work space, increasing efficiency and allowing for the automation of certain tasks, such as dishwashing and food processing. Clients who can not easily navigate their kitchens and those who are homeless or on fixed incomes will benefit most.

The Farm delivers 1400 packages of produce weekly, providing low-income clients regular access to healthy, fresh foods that can improve their diet but are cost-prohibitive in supermarkets. The expansion adds a trellis growing system to the main greenhouse that will double the current harvesting capacity to 2800 packages weekly. The existence of the Farm is one of the key reasons that House of Hope has been able to meet the needs for fresh foods in the low income community.

Detail Regarding the Proposed Program / Project*

Please refer to the proposed program / project description above. Please provide any relevant additional information or detail related to the proposed program / project that was not stated in the Letter of Intent.

Every visit to an agency pantry provides clients or partners with food that is supplied from the Nutrition Center and the Farm. Clients with households have monthly access to pantry services (twice monthly for larger households) and clients experiencing homelessness have daily access. Food supplies include dairy items, meats, baked goods, non-perishables, and several packages of farm-fresh produce such as potatoes,

onions, squash, tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers, lettuces, spinach, kale, herbs, and even more varieties of fruits, vegetables, greens and herbs harvested at Growing Hope Farm year-round. Every member of a client's household receives a nutritionally balanced fresh-frozen meal from the Nutrition Center with each pantry visit. Frozen meals contain a protein of beef, chicken, or pork with starch of pasta, rice, potato, or beans, and a vegetable. Every client experiencing homelessness receives a "day bag" that includes a protein-packed salad and/or sandwich from the Nutrition Center with fresh fruit and other pantry items. These food items support a balanced and healthy diet for clients who are not financially able to provide that for themselves or their household. Microwaveable or oven-warming "tv dinner-style" meals are life-saving for senior-aged or disabled clients who have difficulty preparing foods in their own kitchens. The same packaged meals and produce are provided to House of Hope's nonprofit community partners who serve their clients through soup kitchens, youth programs, community pantries, and shelters. The Farm and Nutrition Center are dependable sources for healthy, nutritious foods that benefit the over 7000 agency clients as well as the additional 3500 clients estimated to be served through partners.

Almost 1.5 million pounds of food were distributed by House of Hope last fiscal year (FY19-20 - October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020), which is a 46% increase over the prior year. Agency demands for service increased 30% since March 2020 with the registration of 700 new families and 1500 new individual clients as a result of the pandemic, which caused a spike in local unemployment rates from 3.2% to over 11%. Even more residents gained pantry access when adjusted federal emergency response protocols raised the qualifying income levels to receive services. More community nonprofit programs became aware of the availability and value of the quality of food supplied by House of Hope. In FY19-20, 781,537 pounds of food were distributed to partners, which is more than double the amount of the prior year. This sharing of resources and strengthening of partnerships amplifies the reach and impact that House of Hope can make on the most vulnerable members of the community, and also requires additional funding and food sourcing to maintain. As with every agency service and program, food distribution is always at no cost to the client or partner served.

The Elizabeth Lahti Nutrition Center grew exponentially in FY19-20, by acquiring a full time Food Production Specialist in June 2020 and commercial-grade equipment for bulk cooking and packaging in September 2020. A commercial kettle bulk cooks rice and pasta, makes sauces, cooks meats and more. Cooked pasta may be combined with seasonally fresh produce to make pasta salads daily. The rice can be cooked, cooled, frozen and packed out for later use. Prepared foods are combined with a protein and vegetable, sealed into tv-dinner style trays, and frozen for distribution through agency pantries to clients and partners. Donations of perishable and non-perishable foods from local markets and restaurants are combined and packaged fresh for clients, such as fried chicken donated from Popeye's combined with a pasta or bean salad.

Growing Hope Farm currently provides weekly harvests from over 6,200 plants of 50 types of produce, and if awarded this grant, will increase its space of hydroponic greenhouse growing, adding almost 5000 plants with the installation of trellis growing systems in a new greenhouse. At the time of this proposal, the new greenhouse framing is constructed, and upon receipt of necessary funding, the trellis systems will be purchased and installed. Farm produce is packaged and professionally labeled, which sometimes includes recipe or cooking suggestions that allow clients to know how to prepare foods that may not be familiar to them. The expansion of the Farm also includes the completion of a dedicated packing house with cold storage and the planting of a fruit tree orchard, both of which received funding last fiscal year, and were put on hold due to COVID.

House of Hope is introducing a new program in 2021 called the Produce Prescription Plan, which will add to the demand for Farm produce. This Plan is a partnership between House of Hope, Cleveland Clinic Martin Health, and the Florida Department of Health, and directly targets the prevalence of diabetes, and its pre-indicator of obesity, in low income communities. Through this program, Cleveland Clinic will identify low income diabetic patients, and refer them to both the Health Department for education on how to manage living with diabetes, and to House of Hope for a regular supply of nutritious produce that supports the best diet for minimizing and reducing the impact of diabetes. Patients that are referred to House of Hope by the Hospital will be enrolled as clients, and will be clearly identified as part of the Produce Prescription Plan, to

guarantee that they receive the foods as prescribed by their medical and nutrition experts. With the guidance of the Health Department, Growing Hope Farm will know what crops to grow each season, so House of Hope can provide these clients with therapeutic amounts of healthy produce to optimize their health benefits at no cost to them.

How does the program / project support and align with the organization's mission or strategic plan?*

House of Hope's mission is to empower residents to overcome hunger and hardship, and provide services that maintain or improve the health of those served in a dignified way. Over 70% of clients initially come to House of Hope requesting help providing food for their household to reduce a recurring financial strain. The agency is determined to answer that need with high quality, nutritious food that allows clients to manage healthy diets, which is a larger challenge for low income families because of the high price of nutritious food in standard markets. Healthy eating helps reduce obstacles to success that are commonly created by diet-related chronic diseases like diabetes and obesity, which are prevalent in low income communities. Healthy children are better learners and health adults are more successful in the job-force, increasing chances for financial independence. The programs that will be funded by this grant directly support the supply of nutritional food to the agency's four pantries and community partners. The Farm will use grant funding to complete an expansion that will almost double its size and capacity, adding different fruits and vegetables to what it currently grows, and providing ample amounts of a wide variety of fresh produce to support the increase in demand through agency pantries. The Nutrition Center will use grant dollars to add equipment and space that will increase its productivity and allow for more meals to be delivered to pantries each week.

What other organization(s) is(are) working to address or have(has) worked to address a similar need?*

How is the proposed program / project unique or different?

House of Hope is the only program in Martin County that uses an empowerment model to provide clients with comprehensive case management, while prioritizing their health through a holistic approach to solving hunger and hardship. There are approximately 24 soup kitchens, emergency pantries, and/or shelters across the county that are supplied food by House of Hope. These sites are often serving one hot meal per week, or offer limited access to a pantry.

What key factors or ingredients are in place now to make the program / project a success?*

The programs affected by the proposed expansions are already operating as part of the House of Hope mission. The expansions of each program will not require any change in the existing staffing, and will follow already defined protocols for operations, safety, and licensing. House of Hope has operated for years as an organization that puts the health and dignity of clients first, and has the experience to successfully improve efficiencies and infrastructure to meet increasing demands. Through the original construction of the Farm, the trellis equipment was researched, and vendors were identified and validated. The organization has a dependable general contractor for the Nutrition Center project who has visited the facility, confirmed the feasibility of the expansion and provided an accurate cost estimate.

The existing Farm and Nutrition Center full-time program supervisors are talented, experienced staff members who are invested in the success and productivity of their programs, and are managed by the Food Distribution Manager who is a senior staff member with over 8 years at House of Hope. These programs are powered by recurring and episodic volunteers who are scheduled in half day shifts to work with program supervisors. Volunteer dependability is strongest with recurring volunteers and is developed through mutual respect for the overall mission, as well as the inclusion of volunteers in a certain level of planning of program details, such as what to add to meals in the Nutrition Center and what variety of crops to plant with each

turnover at the Farm. Volunteers often have a level of professional or personal experience that brings significant benefits to the program they are supporting. For example, one of the recurring volunteers in the Nutrition Center used to be a head chef at a local restaurant.

What challenges may the proposed program / project face?*

The past fiscal year brought a record 30% increase in the demand for services at House of Hope, and a 60-80% decrease in volunteer availability. The organization successfully adjusted to respond to these changes without interrupting client services, and at the same time began plans for maintaining this higher level of service for the foreseeable future. The proposed expansions are part of that plan, specifically to meet the goal to provide every client and partner receiving food from agency pantries with ample amounts of fresh produce and nutritionally balanced meals to maintain healthy diets. These programs may be challenged to reach even higher demands in the future if there is an extended economic effect of the pandemic or any other unexpected impact to the economy. At the close of FY19-20, House of Hope was reaching 7000 of the almost 18,000 county residents who live at or below the federal poverty level, and the growing awareness among these vulnerable residents will continue to increase the demand on House of Hope offerings. A public economic or health emergency that again reduces available volunteer support would also create an immediate challenge to these programs, since every service at House of Hope is driven by over one thousand episodic and recurring volunteers.

How will the organization work to overcome those challenges?*

The agency's operations are designed to have the ability to respond and fulfill a sudden increase of need by having the appropriate infrastructure to safely store perishable and non-perishable food supplies and the staff flexibility to adjust priorities to accommodate changing demands. Managers have the experience to respond to emergency situations that place an immediate increased demand on services, having worked with the agency through past hurricane emergencies and economic downturns, not to mention the unprecedented experience in 2020. The agency maintains strong relationships with existing volunteers and is always recruiting new support in every part of the mission. Volunteers are matched to their time, skill and physical abilities and interests and feel invested in the work they do. This increases the dependability and recurrence of volunteers, who not only help routinely and advocate for the organization in the community, but make themselves available to help during unexpected times.

Key Staff & Job Descriptions Related to Program / Project*

Please provide the title and minimum qualifications for the key positions that will be responsible for the successful implementation of the program / project.

If these key staff are already part of your organization, please state as such.

Example:

Social Worker - MSW required with a minimum 5 years of work experience in a social or human service organization.

All key staff positions responsible for the success of the Farm and Nutrition Center expansions that would be funded by this grant are currently filled with qualified, experienced individuals. The Farm and Nutrition Center expansions will be managed by the existing Food Distribution Manager, who has been with House of Hope for over 8 years, managing these programs since they started, with vast agricultural and project management experience. The Farm and Nutrition Center each have a dedicated staff member who supervises the daily production as well as the volunteers that provide the work hours to successfully reach each programs' targeted output and growth goals. These program supervisors are qualified with experience in farming and food processing, accordingly. The House of Hope CEO, Rob Ranieri, is involved in the overall planning and strategic vision of these programs, and follows the expansion progress closely. The Farm and

Nutrition Center have become cornerstones of the agency's health initiative to provide low income communities with high quality food that can promote their individual success.

SECTION 3: OUTCOMES

Measurement*

In the LOI, there were proposed outcomes stated. Please answer the following specific to the proposed outcomes.

- How will the impact of the proposed program / project be measured?
- What tool(s) will be used to measure the success?
- Include frequency of measurement, who will be responsible for measuring, and how information will be used and shared.
- If the outcomes are experiential, please indicate how the organization will capture and share that information.

The impact of the proposed program expansions will be included in measurement processes already in place, such as counting and recording the daily production quantities of the Farm and Nutrition Center. Totals are tracked weekly, monthly and annually for comparisons to prior months and years, and to allow for future projections. Food distribution is measured as pounds delivered through agency pantries and from the main distribution center. Distribution is separated into food categories, allowing specific weights of produce and Nutrition Center foods to be recorded and tracked. Data is recorded in Excel spreadsheets and in the Apricot Social Services database. Data is collected and reported monthly by the senior management team and reviewed with the CEO and board members. Annual totals are shared in the agency's Annual Report. Evidence of the increased production levels from these program expansions will be seen as part of the comparison between FY20-21 production levels and FY19-20 levels.

Detailed production from the Elisabeth Lahti Nutrition Center is measured in units and grouped into three categories of service – Homeless Sandwich Program, Production Packaging, and Food Repurposing. The Homeless Sandwich Program includes sandwiches, salads and other single service items produced to provide to homeless clients on a daily basis. The Production Packaging program counts prepared and frozen products from the Nutrition Center that are delivered to the pantries for distribution, including packaged produce from the Farm. The Food Repurposing program combines food donated from restaurants or retail partners into packaged meals for pantries. In the 19-20 fiscal year, the Homeless Sandwich Program ramped up to 4,984 units total, and is now delivering an average of 600 units per week; the Production Packaging program delivered 19,106 units of packaged foods; and the Food Repurposing program delivered 19,428 packages. These three product varieties are expected to increase after this expansion, based on the increased efficiency of the food preparation, and the increased produce that the Farm will deliver weekly.

The benefits of the Farm and Nutrition Center foods being distributed to clients and partners is recorded via a quick survey of clients and the collection of anecdotal evidence. Ninety-six percent of clients surveyed report healthy improvements in their diets because of the fresh produce offered to them at House of Hope pantries. Clients report being overwhelmed with the quantity, quality and freshness of foods they are receiving in House of Hope pantries. One client in November 2020 stated that with all of the fresh produce from House of Hope, she "feels better physically and has been losing weight." House of Hope seeks to empower clients out of food insecurity, and financial crises they may have never expected to face, by prioritizing their health and serving them respectfully.

SECTION 4: ORGANIZATION'S QUESTIONS & SITE VISIT INFO

Questions specific to the organization's proposed program / project.

1. How will you sustain and support the ongoing staff costs, including benefits?
2. In addition to the automated dishwashing, what other, if any, productive work space(s) is/are being proposed at the Nutrition Center?
3. What is the title of the project manager?

Please answer these questions specific to the proposed program / project in detail.*

1. The portion of staff salaries and administrative costs that are part of this proposal will be sustained beyond this grant through the organization's diverse funding and revenue sources, which includes ongoing requests to new and repeat grantors who support the organization, as well as thrift store revenue and unsolicited donations. These are existing staff positions in the 2020-2021 operating budget for the organization. The portion of salary supported by this grant was kept minimal, and is 11% of the total salaries paid.

No additional staffing will be required to maintain the program expansions. Alternatively, the existing staff will operate at a higher level of efficiency, getting more produced in a set amount of time.

2. The Nutrition Center expansion will accommodate a dedicated sanitizing area, including a new industrial dishwasher. This equipment will vastly increase the food preparation time available to the team because they will not have to spend so much time hand washing trays, bowls, utensils and other equipment used in different stages of food preparation. Other equipment investments planned through this proposal include adding bakers racks with trays, commercial grade stainless steel work tables, and an industrial grade immersion blender. The racks with trays and work tables will increase the surface area for food during preparation. Cooking, cooling and freezing stages of food and meal preparations will be more efficient by laying out food on the trays that get stacked on the racks and then can go in and out of the oven or freezer without being transferred off the trays. For example, diced potatoes can be spread out on 10-20 trays that fit into one rack which is then rolled into the oven for baking, out of the oven for cooling, and into the freezer for flash freezing before packing into family sized bags and delivered to pantries. The immersion blender will allow for large quantities of sauces, vegetables, or potatoes to be pureed in much less time than the current process.

3. The project manager for both expansion projects is the existing Food Distribution Manager, who is a senior manager that oversees the Farm, Pantry, and Nutrition Center operations.

SECTION 5: REQUIRED FINANCIAL INFORMATION

How will the \$100,000 be used?*

Even though a program / project budget will be uploaded, please state specifically as to how this \$100,000 grant will be used and over what time period.

For example, "We will use this grant to support salaries for therapists who will manage this program's pilot and implementation for the next 12 months."

\$31,000 from this grant will be used to support a portion of the 2020-2021 general operating expenses for the Farm and Nutrition Center budgets. The support will cover a portion of the salaries of each full-time employee that is dedicated to these programs, which are the Food Distribution Manager, Food Production Specialist, and Production Farm Supervisor. A portion of the programs' administrative expenses will also be covered.

\$35,179 from this grant will be used to purchase trellis equipment that will be permanently installed at the Farm in fall 2021 for the planting and harvesting of thousands of vine-growing produce plants that will supply pantries of fresh fruits and vegetables for years to come.

\$33,821 from this grant will be used to renovate the Nutrition Center and purchase equipment to install in fall 2021 that will improve efficiencies and productivity of the program for years to come.

Proposed Program / Project Operating Budget*

HOH Proposed Program - Project Operating Budget IMPACT 20-21.pdf

Sustainability

If needed, please provide a further or more detailed explanation regarding sustainability than what was mentioned in the LOI.

Since the submission of our LOI to IMPACT100, The Andrew and Robin Hunt Philanthropic Fund has committed to funding \$25,000 for the general operations of the Farm and Nutrition Center.

New, existing, and diverse funding sources are continually developed to maintain House of Hope's high level of cost-free service. When pandemic response conditions cease, a more regular revenue stream will come from the organizations four thrift stores being fully open again after months, if not over a year, of limited hours of operations. Before the pandemic, thrift store revenue supported approximately 45% of the agency's operating budget.

House of Hope continues to be a great steward of the donor dollar, with 92 cents of every dollar going directly to programs and services. House of Hope has received the highest level, four star rating by Charity

Navigator for the past seven years; the 2020 Guidestar Platinum level Seal of Transparency; and remains the highest ranked charity in Martin County.

Key Sources of Funding for the Organization*

Identify the key courses of funding for the organization. Include the percentage for each (i.e., government grants, individual donors, special events, etc.).

Individ: 33%

Local Corps: 4%

Amerisweeps, Coldwell Banker, FPL, Fresh Market, HBKS, Hear Care Center, ICL Calibration Labs, Int Battery of Treas Coast, Knights of Columbus, Macy's, Mariner Sands Charity Wk, Mingace Custom Snd, Nina Haven Sch., RV Johnson Ins., Southeastern Printing, TC Music Teachers Assoc, Warfield Investments, Women's Club at the Retreat

Gov't Agencies: 1%

Children's Srvc Council of MC

Fdns/Other: 32%

Allegany Franciscan Ministries, Hobe Snd Comm Chest, Betty & Leo Balzereit Fdn, Bank of America Fdn, Bank United, Blueeyes Fdn, Busch Family Fdn, Christ Memorial Chapel, Comm Fdn. for Palm Bch & Martin Ctys, D'Agostino Fdn, Exxon/Mobil Fdn, Frances Langford Fdn, Horizon Fdn, Roy A Hunt Fdn, Impact 100, PNC Fdn, Ruth Lilly Philanthropic Fdn, Loblolly Comm Fdn, Nextera Energy Fdn, Publix Charities, Susan & John Sullivan Fdn, The Comm Fdn of Martin-St. Lucie Cty, Triumph Grp Charitable Fdn, William & Helen Thomas Trust, United Way MC

Thrift Stores: 26%

Spec Events: 4%

If capital request, provide proof of ownership deed or lease contract (5-year minimum)

Long-Term Debt

Explanation of long-term debt amount and / or operating deficit in last two years, if applicable.

N/A

SECTION 6: CONSENT

Consent*

By clicking yes, I attest that the contents of this grant application are true and accurate. If our organization receives an Impact100 Martin grant, I give Impact100 Martin and The Community Foundation Martin - St. Lucie permission to publish our organization's name, photograph(s), and applicable correspondence in professional, news release, or other media. All grant award recipients must use the Impact100 Martin name / logo on all program materials and / or media releases as well as on any community outreach efforts.

Yes

House of Hope, Inc.
Proposed Program / Project Operating Budget 2020-2021

	Impact	Other Funder 1	Other Funder 2	Other Funder 3
Total Budget:				
Impact100 Martin	\$100,000.00			

Program / Project Expenses:

Staff Salaries & Benefits				
Program Staff	\$16,000.00			
Admin Expenses (up to 15%)	\$15,000.00			
Miscellaneous / Other				
Green House Expansion	\$ 35,179.00			
Trellis System				
ELNC Expansion				
Equipment	\$ 17,433.00			
Renovation	\$ 16,388.00			