



MILWAUKEE COUNTY AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT ALLOCATION

Community Support Program Proposal

Beach Ambassador Program

COMMUNITY SUPPORT CATEGORY

Please select the community support category that applies to this proposal:

- ☐ **Household Assistance.** Proposals may include expenditures related to food programs; rent, mortgage, and utility aid; cash transfers; internet access programs; eviction prevention; unemployment benefits or cash assistance to unemployed workers; housing support: affordable housing; and housing support: services for unhoused people.
- ☐ **Mental & Behavioral Health.** Proposals may include expenditures related to mental health services; substance abuse services; and other public health services.
- ☒ **Other Social Determinants of Health.** Proposals may include expenditures related to job training assistance; small business economic assistance; aid to nonprofit organizations; aid to other impacted industries; healthy childhood environments: home visiting and services to foster youth or families involved in child welfare system; social determinants of health: community health workers or benefit navigators and community violence interventions; clean water; drinking water; and broadband.

PROJECT DESIGN

Provide an overview of how the community support project being proposed addresses an urgent community need brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic. Demonstrate how the project provides a feasible solution to the demonstrated need and is being coordinated with partners. Explain how the proposal falls within Milwaukee County's scope of services. (500-word max response)

The Beach Ambassador program was developed in 2021 by Milwaukee partners (Milwaukee Water Commons, Wisconsin Sea Grant, Milwaukee Community Sailing Center, Milwaukee Riverkeeper, and Coastline Services) as a response to water safety concerns at Lake Michigan beaches such as increased beach use during the COVID-19 pandemic, inadequate signage, a lifeguard shortage, and racial inequities related to swimming, water safety and increased drownings. In particular, 4 people died at McKinley Beach in 2020, and there were no lifeguards placed at beaches that year due to pandemic and recruitment issues.

This project provides beachgoers at Bradford Beach with water safety information through a face-to-face relational approach. Last year, the program engaged over 400 beach goers in water-safety conversations and provided useful websites and knowledge about topics such as rip currents and water quality, and also expanded to include a water safety social media campaign, a sidewalk chalking campaign, and water safety workshops for small youth groups. The program was featured several times through local media outlets (e.g., Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, Urban Milwaukee, local TV stations).

2021 saw a significant reduction in drownings in Lake Michigan. While 2022 holds a better promise of lifeguards, staffing is still uncertain. Beach condition signage goes unnoticed or misunderstood, and there are dangerous gaps in community understanding of how to be safe in open waters. To prevent more needless drownings, we have developed and implemented these harm-reduction strategies to ensure that people are receiving and responding to information that will keep them safe in and near the Great Lakes and regional waters. When water or beach conditions are unsafe for swimming (e.g., due to bacteria outbreaks, rip currents, sewage overflows, or cold-water temperatures), we must ensure people have access to the information, knowledge, and signage they need to keep them safe in the water. As the COVID pandemic continues, we continue to expect larger numbers of people taking advantage of the beach areas in Milwaukee in 2022, necessitating the continuation of this program.

To do this, we share information and resources with beachgoers and decision-makers to make Milwaukee beaches safer for swimming (e.g., fewer drownings, less risk of getting sick due to poor water quality, better access to available water safety resources). Longer-term, we hope that our initiatives will lead to greater awareness of water safety strategies that will ensure Milwaukee beachgoers can have safe, meaningful experiences on the water. In particular, we hope this work will directly serve communities of color (e.g., African Americans, Latinx communities) that are most impacted by drownings in Milwaukee. In effect, we are seeking funds to support the Beach Ambassador program for future years and plan to expand and improve the program to reach more people.

TRACKABLE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Provide an overview of the project's goals, objectives, outcomes, and/or outputs that will be achieved by December 31, 2024. Please ensure that proposed project outcomes align with the Milwaukee County vision to achieve racial equity and eliminate health disparities. (250-word max response)

The overarching and long term goal of the Beach Ambassador Program is to have safe Milwaukee beaches. To this end, we are seeking support for immediate, short-term solutions that will lead to long-term beach safety.

As stated above, this project provides beach goers at Bradford Beach with water safety information through a face to face relational approach. Last year, the pilot of this program engaged over 400 beach goers in water-safety conversations and provided useful websites and knowledge about topics such as rip currents and water quality. By 2024 we hope to have completed updated signage, flag systems, information systems, and further support the Milwaukee County lifeguard recruitment efforts.

In 2022, Ambassadors will:

- **Monitor beach conditions and communicate with the public how to find information about beach closures, dangerous swimming conditions and safe planning for a beach day. They will also be equipped to speak on the McKinley Beach closure, AOC efforts, and the public trust doctrine.**
- **Gathering information from, and observations of, beach goers to assess their understanding of beach safety concerns, swimming competency, and the effectiveness of existing signage to promote safe and equitable access at Milwaukee's beaches.**

- Facilitation of water safety workshops for small groups at the lakefront.

To be specific, this program supports the Milwaukee County vision by creating and nurturing an inclusive culture and dismantling barriers to diverse and inclusive communities by providing safe and safety informed access to green spaces and recreation.

-outreach and education

INVEST IN EQUITY & INTENTIONAL INCLUSION

Provide an overview of how the proposed project supports historically underserved, marginalized and/or adversely affected groups. Projects will be scored by their alignment with Milwaukee County's strategic objectives to (1) achieve racial and health equity, (2) dismantle barriers and (3) invest "upstream" to address root causes of health. Demonstrate how this proposal supports any or all of these objectives. If applicable, include how this proposal was informed by community input and builds capacity of community organizations. (500-word max response).

Our approach to the ultimate goal of safe Milwaukee beaches is multifaceted, but starts with a coalition of organizations strategically thinking about how we can make our beaches safer and more equitable for Milwaukeeans. Coalition partners (Wisconsin Sea Grant, Milwaukee Water Commons, Milwaukee Riverkeeper, Milwaukee Community Sailing Center, and Coastline Services) encompass a diverse array of perspectives and backgrounds. In addition, each of our organizations works towards and directly addresses issues related to social and environmental justice. For example, we have partnered on previous initiatives related to further understanding barriers to swimming and access to swimming opportunities in Milwaukee, we have co-created a map that shows 'swimming deserts' in Milwaukee, partnered to bring to life Milwaukee's first open water swim on the Milwaukee River, and have partnered on an "education/recreation" initiative focused on strategizing ways to be more inclusive and have diverse representation in local water activities. Specifically, in 2020 we came together to address concerns regarding the drowning of 4 people on Milwaukee's beaches, all of whom were African American. The Beach Ambassador program was developed from a "call to action" coalition meeting that was held in July 2020 to develop strategies to prevent further drownings and to tackle inequities related to swimming, beach access, and water safety in Milwaukee through short and long-term solutions.

The coalition partners have also been in regular communication with Milwaukee County Parks officials to make sure that our efforts are supporting the County mission. It is not meant to supplant, but rather supplement the County's lifeguard program by providing useful resources to the public to help them be better prepared to safely enjoy our incredible public beaches. Initially Ambassadors are placed at Bradford Beach, but we hope to expand this program in the future to other beaches not currently served by lifeguards, but which regularly close due to weather and water quality conditions, as well as beach morphology.

This project has already made an impact in achieving racial and health equity, by providing beachgoers information to allow them to interact with Lake Michigan safely. It has also made an impact in dismantling barriers, by providing historically underserved populations the tools they need to enjoy the public beach space and Lake Michigan safely. Further, by providing educational resources and tools to beachgoers, this project has provided information that can be taken home to communities and shared, which means that "upstream" causes of drownings (lack of safety information, for

instance) are being addressed through peer-to-peer in-person information and safety campaigns. Further, the program partners have made the hiring of personnel that reflect Milwaukee's racial make-up a priority: in 2021 the Beach Ambassadors were mainly men and women of color.

EVIDENCE-BASED STRATEGY

Please select the statement that aligns with the community support project. This project was developed with:

- ☐ **Strong Evidence:** can support casual conclusions for the specific program with the highest level of confidence. This consists of one or more well-designed and well-implemented experimental studies conducted on the proposed program with positive findings on one or more intended outcomes.
- ☐ **Moderate Evidence:** reasonably developed evidence base that can support casual conclusions. The evidence-base consists of one or more quasi-experimental studies with positive findings on one or more intended outcomes OR two or more nonexperimental studies with positive findings on one or more intended outcomes. Examples of research that meet the standards include well-designed and well-implemented quasiexperimental studies that compare outcomes between the group receiving the intervention and a matched comparison group (i.e., a similar population that does not receive the intervention).
- ☒ **Preliminary Evidence:** can support conclusions about the program's contribution to observed outcomes. The evidence-base consists of at least one nonexperimental study. A study that demonstrates improvement in program beneficiaries over time on one or more intended outcomes OR an implementation (process evaluation) study used to learn and improve program operations would constitute preliminary evidence. Examples of research that meet the standards include: (1) outcome studies that track program beneficiaries through a service pipeline and measure beneficiaries' responses at the end of the program; and (2) pre- and post-test research that determines whether beneficiaries have improved on an intended outcome.

Provide an explanation to support the statement that most aligns with the project. Include the experimental studies conducted on the proposed project. *Evidence-based strategies can be found through the following: [Results First Clearinghouse Database](#) | [The Pew Charitable Trusts](#) (pewtrusts.org) and [Homepage](#) | [CLEAR \(dol.gov\)](https://clear.dol.gov). (250-word max)

The Pilot Program was developed based on a need shared by all of the project partners: to keep Milwaukee communities safe while they enjoyed Lake Michigan, which is the best natural resource we have. Our priority is harm-reduction through peer-to-peer communication and education. Beach Ambassadors are not authority figures, but they are educators, and fellow Milwaukee citizens to the majority of beach attendees. In 2021, we collected quantitative and qualitative data to understand more about the populations served and the interactions between the Ambassadors and beachgoers, and that data demonstrated that we accomplished our mission to reach a variety of populations on multiple topics related to water safety and safe enjoyment of Lake Michigan.

In 2021 we collected enough qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate the program and its effectiveness at Bradford Beach, which we used to determine our 2022 goals for the program. We have made adjustments to the program based on the data, including changing the hours that Beach Ambassadors will be on Bradford Beach, in order to better serve larger populations. We expect that

our data collection in 2022 will raise our n to provide enough evidence to be classified as Moderate Evidence from 2023 to 2026.

ARPA REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Provide a detailed overview of the applicant's experience managing federal funds. Detail any experience ensuring accurate data collection and adherence to federal reporting requirements. If this is an internal application, detail any experience managing contracts and ensuring reporting deadlines are met. If this is an external applicant, detail any experience receiving funding from Milwaukee County and ensuring reporting deadlines are met.

The Milwaukee Water Commons will serve as the fiscal agent for the Beach Ambassador program. Milwaukee Water Commons is the recipient of state grants and a federal grant, with experience in managing and reporting based on grant requirements. They are wholly compliant with all aspects of grant and fund management.

ARPA FUNDS REQUESTED

Provide the total request amount to be spent between 2022 – 2026. Explain how funds will be incurred and encumbered by December 31, 2024. Include if the project has matching funds or resources. (250-work max)

All funds received from this grant will be solely used for the Beach Ambassador program.

The total request for 2022-2026 is \$128,250

This amount would be broken into yearly amounts:

FY 2022: \$28,250 ¹

FY 2023: \$25,000

FY 2024: \$25,000

FY 2025: \$25,000

FY 2026: \$25,000

In 2021, funding was received from the McDougal Foundation and Wisconsin Sea Grant to fund this program, with funds from participating partners including the Milwaukee Sailing Center, Milwaukee Riverkeeper, and Milwaukee Water Commons to support the full pilot project.

The 2022-2026 Fiscal Year projections are based on \$15/hour wage for 4-6 beach ambassadors, who would be serving from early June through Labor Day weekend, with an emphasis on weekends when beach use is highest. The budget also includes funding supplies, signage, and staff support.

Any costs not covered by this grant will be funded through the non-profit organizations that comprise the Beach Ambassador program.

¹ FY2022 Budget requires an additional \$2,000 in Personnel Expenses and \$1,250 in Supplies & Equipment. These costs will not be needed in the FY2023 – FY2026 budget.

The fiscal agent for this program is Milwaukee Water Commons.

BUDGET

Complete the short-form budget and provide a formula for your calculation by defining the expense item, number of units, and cost per unit for the requested project period. Please add rows as necessary. In the table below, outline any matching funds or resources.

Expense Item	Description	Total Cost
Personnel Expenses (including fringe benefits)²		
1. Beach Ambassador	\$15 an hour (minimum) for four Ambassadors (minimum) at 20 hours per week (minimum)	\$18,000 per year
2. Staff Support	\$15 an hour (minimum) for staff support for the program at 20 hours per week (minimum)	\$4500 per year
3.		
Professional Services		
1. Water Safety Training	A professional water safety trainer is crucial to this program to ensure adequate messaging and Ambassador training.	\$4500 per year
2.		
3.		
Supplies & Equipment³		
1. Brand Shirts	Beach Ambassador Logo shirts will introduce the Ambassadors to the public	\$400 per year
2. Printing and Materials	Materials used to hand out to the public as well as to use as a reference for Ambassadors	\$400 per year
3. Training materials	Two-day training costs for Ambassadors	\$450 per year
Capacity Building Resources for Implementation		
1.		
2.		
3.		
Total Calculations		
Total Expenses		\$28,250

² FY2022 – 2026 Budget will be reduced by \$2,000 per year

³ Supplies & Equipment budget is FY2022 cost only

Other Revenue Source (s)	Committed or Available Revenue Amount	Potential Revenue Amount
Total Other Revenue Amount	\$0	\$0