

Town of Colchester
ARPA Recovery Funding Request Application

Directions: Please fill in all fields. Once completed, either print and drop off this application to the First Selectman's office located at 127 Norwich Ave, Colchester, CT 06415, or save a copy and email to ARPA@ColchesterCT.gov. If you have questions please email ARPA@ColchesterCT.gov. Please include any additional documentation you feel would help in the application process. Submit only one project per application (submit multiple applications if you have multiple projects).

Important: Applicant must demonstrate that the funding use directly addresses a negative economic impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Applicant Background Information

Applicant Name:	Valerie Geato	Date Prepared:	12/10/2021
Applicant email:	vgeato@colchesterct.gov	Applicant Phone:	860 537-7255
Department / Business / Establishment Name:	Colchester Youth & Social Services		

Project Details

Project Title:	Community Counseling	Anticipated Start Date:	2022 - ASAP
Total Funding Request Amount:	\$ 63,000.	Anticipated Length of Time to Complete Project:	18 months
On a scale of 1 (Not Urgent) - 10 (Very Urgent), how urgent is this request? Please explain.	10. Therapy is in high demand, and our community needs can not be met by current providers alone.		

Project Description (How will the funds be used?)

Funds will be utilized to provide free counseling to youth and their families for 60 weeks. We hope to be contract with an agency or enough licensed clinicians with varied expertise so that seniors can also receive services. Clinicians will be contracted for \$70/hour to provide 15 hours per week (split between 2 or 3 different clinicians, depending on availability) over 60 weeks.

Justification (Please describe how your request addresses a negative impact to COVID-19.)

Please see Surgeon General report attached.

Briefly explain the positive impact your project will have on the community.

*Attached

Describe the impact to your department / business / establishment if ARPA funds are NOT approved.

Our most vulnerable groups will continue to struggle and the mental health of our citizens will continue to deteriorate. The long term impacts will be significant, not only on young people but the entire family unit and our Senior citizens as well.

Budget Overview (How will the ARPA funding be spent?)
(If more room is needed, please attach additional spreadsheet)

Budgeted item / Service	Budgeted Amount	Notes
Counseling Services	\$ 63,000	\$70/hr x 15 hours per week x 60 weeks
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
TOTAL:	\$ 63,000.	

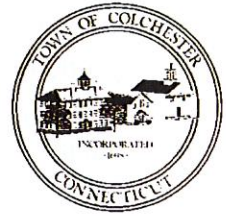


Colchester Youth & Social Services

127 Norwich Avenue, Suite 205, Colchester, Connecticut 06415

P: 860-537-7255 F: 860-537-1731 E: youthservices@colchesterct.gov

www.colchesterct.gov



Memo

To: Board of Selectmen and ARPA Committee Members

From: Valerie Geato, Y&SS Director

Date: February 22, 2022

Re: ARPA

As a community, if we are serious about mitigating the impact of the Covid 19 pandemic we will heed the recent [Advisory issued by the US Surgeon General](#) titled, *Protecting Youth Mental Health* - a national health crisis exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Advisory offers recommendations for supporting the mental health of children, adolescents, and young adults and includes essential recommendations for the institutions that surround young people and shape their day-to-day lives—schools, community organizations, health care systems, technology companies, government, and others.

To combat the negative impacts of Covid-19 on children's mental health, the Surgeon General recommends several different strategies, many of which can be done through Youth & Social Services and our partner agencies. Supporting the mental health of children and youth will require a whole-of-society effort to address longstanding challenges, strengthen the resilience of young people, support their families and communities, and mitigate the pandemic's mental health impacts. The strategies are as follows:

- Communities should implement evidence-based programs that promote healthy development, support children, youth, and their families, and increase their resilience. Examples include youth enrichment programs (e.g., mentoring, after-school programs), skill-based parenting and family relationship approaches.
- Support the mental health of children and youth in educational, community, and childcare settings. This includes creating positive, safe, and affirming environments, expanding programming that promotes healthy development (such as social and emotional learning), and providing a continuum of supports to meet the social, emotional, behavioral, and mental health needs of children and youth.
- Recognize that mental health conditions are real, common, and treatable, and people experiencing mental health challenges deserve support, compassion, and care, not stigma and shame. Mental health is no less important than physical health and that must be reflected in our how we communicate about and prioritize mental health.

- Empower youth and their families to recognize, manage, and learn from difficult emotions. For youth, this includes building strong relationships with peers and supportive adults, practicing techniques to manage emotions, taking care of body and mind, being attentive to use of social media and technology, and seeking help when needed.
- Ensure that every child has access to high-quality, affordable, and culturally competent mental health care tailored to children’s developmental stages and health needs. It’s particularly important to intervene early, so that emerging symptoms don’t turn into crises.
- Address the economic and social barriers that contribute to poor mental health for young people, families, and caregivers. Priorities should include reducing child poverty and ensuring access to quality childcare, early childhood services, and education; healthy food; affordable health care; stable housing; and safe neighborhoods.
- Increase timely data collection and research to identify and respond to youth mental health needs more rapidly. Governments and other stakeholders should engage directly with young people to understand trends and design effective solutions.

Youth & Social Services, with our community partners in C-3 and Colchester Recreation, already provide positive youth development opportunities and family programs that address some these areas of concern. We can lead the charge on this community call-to-action, but we need appropriate resources to do so. We currently provide our programs in a building that has been largely neglected for decades and does not meet the needs of our youth or families. To better support and engage young people in programs and services we need a safe, healthy, and inviting building to hold space for our kids at a time when they need connection and caring adults more than ever.

We’ve done the best we can with the resources we have to make the Youth Center more appealing, the fact of the matter is – it’s in awful shape. There are mushrooms growing inside from on-going water damage. The smell of mold and mildew hit you in the face upon entering. All the paint and decorating in the world can’t cover up the structural deterioration that has occurred since we moved in back in the early 90’s. The soffit on the front is completely rotten and falling off the building, the roof needed to be replaced ages ago, there is no insulation, it’s built on a dirt floor, and the windows don’t open. It is hard to have good feelings about the place. Being in the youth center doesn’t evoke feelings of calm and content. Funding a Youth Center project will allow us to design a space for young people with intention and purpose. A Youth Center that is safe and sound with good air quality and modern aesthetics shows our young people that they are valued, and their health and well-being are important.

A building designed to meet the needs of our youth and families (rather than trying to figure out how to make inadequate space work) is exactly what we need to provide dedicated space to offer programs and services to our youth and families. We can create a space that can be utilized by the Collaborative for Colchester’s Children (C-3) for children under 5 and their parents, as well as adequate space to provide parent education and support groups. Additionally, the Recreation Department can offer programs in the evening or even possibly as an indoor option for summer camp.

It would be most beneficial for anyone who has a role in determining how the ARPA funds are spent to take a few minutes and read the Surgeon General's Advisory. The following excerpt from the Advisory summarizes the current state of adolescence quite well.

The challenges today's generation of young people face are unprecedented and uniquely hard to navigate and the effect these challenges have had on their mental health is devastating. Recent national surveys of young people have shown alarming increases in the prevalence of certain mental health challenges— in 2019, one in three high school students and half of female students reported persistent feelings of sadness or hopelessness, an overall increase of 40% from 2009. We know that mental health is shaped by many factors, from our genes and brain chemistry to our relationships with family and friends, neighborhood conditions, and larger social forces and policies. We also know that, too often, young people are bombarded with messages through the media and popular culture that erode their sense of self-worth, telling them they are not good looking enough, popular enough, smart enough, or rich enough. That comes as progress on legitimate, and distressing, issues like climate change, income inequality, racial injustice, the opioid epidemic, and gun violence feels too slow. And while technology platforms have improved our lives in important ways, increasing our ability to build new communities, deliver resources, and access information, we know that, for many people, they can also have adverse effects. When not deployed responsibly and safely, these tools can pit us against each other, reinforce negative behaviors like bullying and exclusion, and undermine the safe and supportive environments young people need and deserve.

During the pandemic, children, adolescents, and young adults have faced unprecedented challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic has dramatically changed their world, including how they attend school, interact with friends, and receive health care. They missed first days of school, months or even years of in-person schooling, graduation ceremonies, sports competitions, playdates, and time with relatives. They and their family may have lost access to mental health care, social services, income, food, or housing. They may have had COVID-19 themselves, suffered from long COVID symptoms, or lost a loved one to the disease. Since the pandemic began, rates of psychological distress among young people, including symptoms of anxiety, depression, and other mental health disorders, have increased.

Here in Connecticut, doctors are seeing the trends, too. "The high rates of depression, one in four youth now experiencing symptoms of depression, one in five youth experiencing symptoms of anxiety, and perhaps most notably, as the advisory indicated, which we're seeing here in Connecticut, is the number of kids ending up in the emergency room due to suicide attempts," said Dr. Melissa Santos with Connecticut Children's Medical Center.

In addition to a new Youth Center, we are also requesting funds to provide free mental health counseling for youth. Parents reach out weekly looking for supportive services for their kids and we don't have many resources to offer. Covid has taken a toll on our youth and our service providers, and the demand outweighs the supply. Most of the providers who we generally refer to in our area are full, and there are very few therapists who are accepting new clients. Depending on what insurance you have, there may be no appointments available. Waitlists for many are 2- 4 months out.

Regarding Covid-19 and Youth Mental Health, Murthy wrote in the report, "It would be a tragedy if we beat back one public health crisis only to allow another to grow in its place." The ARPA funds provide a very rare opportunity to invest in our community in the areas that have been so profoundly impacted by Covid. I hope we can all get behind supporting our young people in the out-of-school time by providing this much needed support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Valerie Geato". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Valerie Geato
Director

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Applicant Background Information

Applicant Name:	Valerie Geato	Date Prepared:	2/24/2022
Applicant email:	vgeato@colchesterct.gov	Applicant Phone:	860 537-7255
Department / Business / Establishment Name:	Colchester Youth & Social Services		

Project Details

Project Title:	Youth Services Case Manager	Anticipated Start Date:	April 2022
Total Funding Request Amount:	\$ 42,681	Anticipated Length of Time to Complete Project:	32 months
On a scale of 1 (Not Urgent) - 10 (Very Urgent), how urgent is this request? Please explain.	8. The more time our youth spend out of school, the less likely it is they will graduate.		

Project Description (How will the funds be used?)

Attached

Justification (Please describe how your request addresses a negative impact to COVID-19.)

Attached

Briefly explain the positive impact your project will have on the community.

*Attached

Describe the impact to your department / business / establishment if ARPA funds are NOT approved.

Our community will not be equipped to help our most vulnerable students recover from the impacts of Covid. Currently, Youth Services is doing all they can but lack the necessary hours to provide the level of follow up and case management that kids and families needs to manage the challenges they are facing. Kids who do not benefit from additional interventions will be more likely to drop out of school.

Budget Overview (How will the ARPA funding be spent?)
(If more room is needed, please attach additional spreadsheet)

Budgeted item / Service	Budgeted Amount	Notes
School Year 2012-2022	\$ 3,920	7 weeks x 20 hours per week x \$28/hour
Summer 2022 & 2023	\$ 3,248	8 weeks x 5hr/wk x \$28/hour x 2 years
School Year 22-23	\$ 23,520	42 weeks x 20 hr/wk x \$28
School Year 2023-24	\$ 8,960	16 weeks x 20hrs x \$28
Fringe	\$ 3,033	7.65%
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
TOTAL:	\$ 42,681	

Colchester Youth Services will use the funds to hire one part-time case manager/outreach worker to support the youth and families referred to us for truancy and other FWSN behaviors through the Youth Diversion Alliance.

In 2018, the CT Legislature began to remove behaviors from the CT statute pertaining to "Families With Service Needs" and finally in 2020, all FWSN behaviors were removed from Statute and instead of going to Juvenile Court, those kids get referred to the Youth Service Bureau. There was no funding attached to this legislation change.

"Family With Service Needs" (FWSN) behaviors involve a child under 18 who:

- *has been truant from school or while in school has been continuously and overtly defiant of school rules and regulations*
- *has without just cause run away from his parental home*
- *is beyond the control of his/her parents, grandparents, or guardians*
- *has engaged in indecent or immoral conduct*
- *is thirteen years old, or older, and has engaged in sexual intercourse with another person who is thirteen years old, or older, and is not more than two years younger or two years older than the first person.*

This workload falls on the Youth Services Director who is also the Diversion Program Case Manager. In addition to the FWSN changes, the new marijuana law that legalizes marijuana for adults, essentially decriminalized it for kids. Now, the first offense *may* be referred to Youth Services and the second offense *shall* be referred to Youth Services. This is another unfunded mandate that will add to the case management load once a system for tracking is put in place.

The new case manager will work 20 hours per week throughout the school year and 5 hours per week during the summer beginning April 25th, 2022 and commencing on Dec. 23, 2024.

The Covid 19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the health and well-being of our youth. In addition to the myriad of mental health challenges our kids are facing, many of those who were already disengaged and chronically absent, found a place to hide in virtual learning. When families were given the choice to be Voluntary At Home Learners (VAHLs), rather than hybrid last year, many of the kids who were already struggling with attendance chose to be VAHLs and then failed to engage in virtual learning. According to the [CT Dept of Education database](#), Colchester's chronic absent rate is around 9%.

Chronically Absent - CT State Dept Of Education										
<i>For the 2019-20 school year, chronic absenteeism calculations are based only on in-person school days until mid-March 2020.</i>										
	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19		2019-20		2020-21	
District	Student Count	%	Student Count	%	Student Count	%	Student Count	%	Student Count	%
Colchester	135	5.6	174	7.4	134	6.0	175	8.0	203	9.7

When chronically absent kids get referred to us, the school has often made many accommodations and exhausted every resource they possess to engage the student and have them regularly attend school. Chronic Absenteeism is usually complex and proves to be challenging to solve. It is rarely so simple as buying a kid an alarm clock and giving the family money for the laundromat. Mental Health issues are often at the heart of the problem, and sometimes that includes the larger family system as well. What we have found is that even if the number of cases hasn't increased dramatically, the complexity of the cases requires more intensive case management and services. In addition to therapeutic interventions, some students participate in youth employment, reconnect with old hobbies, need rides to school, need home visits help ease the anxiety of returning and need someone to advocate on their behalf. Sometimes getting a young person to reconnect to the community can open the door to connecting at school.

While success in school is dependent upon many factors, being present each and every day is critical, particularly for low-income students and other high need students who face a variety of educational barriers. Time away from the classroom hurts a student's chance to succeed. Students who miss too much school may face lifelong economic consequences. Truancy has repercussions far beyond the individual and can affect the overall success of schools, other students, and communities at large.

The negative impact of Covid 19 on our most vulnerable students may be lifelong if it results in dropping out of school. Our kids deserve all supports the community can provide to help them recover from the social and emotional toll of the pandemic.

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Important: Applicant must demonstrate that the funding use directly addresses a negative economic impact of the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Applicant Background Information

Applicant Name:	Andreas Bisbikos	Date Prepared:	6/2/22
Applicant email:	selectman@colchesterct.gov	Applicant Phone:	
Department / Business / Establishment Name:	First Selectman		

Project Details

Project Title:	Old Youth Center Roof	Anticipated Start Date:	ASAP
Total Funding Request Amount:	\$ 44,020.00 (overall cost \$74,020)	Anticipated Length of Time to Complete Project:	
On a scale of 1 (Not Urgent) - 10 (Very Urgent), how urgent is this request? Please explain.	10 - The Youth Center has been neglected for an extremely long time. It might one day become a safety issue and it is also a historical building.		

Project Description (How will the funds be used?)

The funds will be used to repair the current Youth Center Roof/Old Town Hall facility. The plan is to move the all Youth Center activities into the current Senior Center building (which will be revitalized itself) and make that the new Youth Center. The current Youth Center Building will in turn be made into a location for our local VFW/Veterans Groups as well as turn into a historical museum. The building itself is a historical building and has long been neglected by our community. Once the roof is repaired and it officially becomes a home for our Veterans & a historical museum, I will be seeking state and federal funding to make it a location to be proud of.

***\$30,000 already allocated to the project

Justification (Please describe how your request addresses a negative impact to COVID-19.)

Municipal Project - Falls Under Revenue Loss

Briefly explain the positive impact your project will have on the community.

1. Fixing a roof that could become a safety liability
2. Restoring a historical building
3. Establish a new home for our local VFW/Veterans Groups
4. Create a historical museum for all those who have served
5. Part of the tradition revitalization plan of the First Selectman
6. Part of the First Selectman's ARPA plan to revitalize Colchester's center

Describe the impact to your department / business / establishment if ARPA funds are NOT approved.

1. Town Center neglected
2. Historical building falls apart
3. Shows a lack of vision & care for our community

Budget Overview (How will the ARPA funding be spent?)
(If more room is needed, please attach additional spreadsheet)

Budgeted item / Service	Budgeted Amount	Notes
Roof Repair	\$ 32,320	
Shingle Side Wall	\$ 13,700	
Plywood Replacement	\$ 350	
Soffit Replacement	\$ 28,000	
Corbel Replacement	\$ 3,500	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	
	\$	\$44,020 is the overall ARPA request
TOTAL:	\$ 74,020	***\$30,000 already allocated to the project

RFP #2022-005
BID FORM

BIDDERS: COMPLETE ALL INFORMATION REQUESTED BELOW. BIDDER MUST SIGN BID FORM.

COMPANY NAME & ADDRESS: Scholar Painting, LLC
2 Klarides Villages Dr. #145
Seymour CT 06483

TELEPHONE #: 877 - 447-2465

EMAIL: admin@scholarpainting.com; scholarpainting@gmail.com

REPRESENTED BY: Vaughn Butler, Owner
(Name & Title)

INSTRUCTIONS: *The undersigned, attesting to be a duly authorized representative of the Bidder, having familiarized himself/herself with the existing conditions of the school and Specifications contained herein affecting the cost of the work, hereby proposes to furnish the Town of Colchester / Colchester Public Schools with all supervision, technical personnel, labor, materials, equipment, tools, appurtenances, permits, fees and services required to perform and satisfactorily complete the work specified, in accordance with said Specifications, for the sums as indicated below.*

BASE BID

<u>Item #</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Price for Item</u>
1	Lump Sum price for Roof Repair 36 ft. x 32 ft.	<u>\$32,320.00</u>
2	Lump Sum price for Shingle Side Wall – 4 sides	<u>\$13,700.00</u>
3	Per Sheet cost for 4x8 Plywood Installed Replacement if required	<u>\$350.00</u>
4	Lump Sum price for Soffit replacement	<u>\$28,000.00</u>
5	Corbel Replacement if required – Each	<u>\$3,500.00</u>

Total of estimate Amount Written in words (Items 1, 2 & 4)

\$74,020.00

Scholar Painting, LLC

Bidders Name (print)

Vaughn J. Butler
Authorized Signature

Bidders Address: 2 Klarides Villages Dr. #145, Seymour CT 06483

(877)447-2465

(877) 737-5543

Bidders Phone

Bidders FAX