

THE CC250 STRATEGIC PLANNING TASK FORCE APPROVED FULL STRATEGIC PLAN & ANNUAL ACTION PLANS ON 5/25/23.  
THE CC250 COMMISSION APPROVED PLAN ON 6/1/23.

-UPDATED 10/23 W/UPDATED BYLAWS INFO.  
-UPDATED 2/24 W/REVISED FUNCTIONAL ORG CHART & CY24 ANNUAL COMMITTEE GOALS

THIS STRATEGIC PLAN REVIEWED & REAFFIRMED  
BY FULL COMMISSION 4/4/24

ANNUAL ACTION PLANS IN SEPARATE .DOC FOR REVIEW & MONTHLY REVISION

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Committee  
workplans plans  
updated monthly.  
Contained in  
separate document.

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## STRATEGIC PLAN



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This CC250 Strategic Plan has been compiled based on:

- CC250 Committee & Workgroup reports from 2022, 2023 & 2024
- a full-Commission planning session facilitated by Krys Sipple on April 6, 2023
- Heritage Strategies' **ChesCo Heritage Tourism Plan** as of January 2024
- Additional resources cited throughout the plan.

The full CC250 Commission reviewed, refined, and approved the plan at its meeting of June 1, 2023, and again on April 4, 2024.

The Overarching Plan (mission, vision, values, overarching goals & aims) is envisioned to remain constant throughout the initiative, as a guiding framework.

Committee Annual Workplans are a separate, complementary document, updated monthly as ideas and opportunities continue to emerge. Committee Chairs should use their workplans as a reporting framework at Commission meetings, to demonstrate activity in relation to the overall plan.

Updates should be communicated with Karen Simmons [karen@chescof.org](mailto:karen@chescof.org).

04/10/24

# CC250 STRATEGIC PLAN

## i. BACKGROUND

July 4, 2026 marks 250 years since the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

In 2016, Congress created the U.S. Semi quincentennial Commission and its nonprofit partner the America250 Foundation, noting that July 4, 2026 will be the **peak** of the 250th commemoration.

<https://www.america250.org/>



**America 250 Mission:** To commemorate our 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary with **inclusive programs that inspire Americans to renew and strengthen our daring experiment in democracy.**

**America250 Vision:** The shared experiences of America250 will ignite our imaginations, elevate our diverse stories, inspire service in our communities, and demonstrate the **lasting durability of the American project.**

**AmericaA250 Aims:** Reach “all Americans and each American” through a decentralized, grassroots commemoration initiative



**America250PA Commonwealth mission is:**

<https://www.america250pa.org/1-HOME>

To engage **All Pennsylvanians** in **All 67 counties** to be certain that this commemoration is most inclusive.

We strive to make 2026 **E.P.I.C.** as we **EDUCATE, PRESERVE, INNOVATE and CELEBRATE** Pennsylvania’s rich history, culture and future through programs, projects and events that align with these platforms and focus areas:

Agriculture • Arts & Culture • Commerce & Workforce • Diversity • Education & Innovation • Environment • Government • Health & Wellness • History & Preservation • Legacy • Nature • Military, Veterans & Women • Technology • Tourism



Chester County established the **America250PA Chester County Commission (CC250)** by resolution on November 10, 2021 to:

§ Coordinate activities with America250PA in Chester County

§ Help build the foundation for celebrating the nation’s 250 anniversary

§ Prepare specific steps for celebrating the nation’s heritage.

As outlined in the resolution, the Commission may:

§ **Gather input and information** from the general public, municipalities, and other partners about Chester County’s history

§ **Assess historic sites** and **recommend enhancements** for improving capacity

§ Develop and implement an **interpretive framework** for **historic tourism**

§ Prepare and implement **countywide marketing**

§ **Support partnerships** between **Chester County schools and heritage sites**, and **encourage civic engagement**

§ Encourage, help organize and co-promote **on-going programs and events** for the 250th celebration

§ Identify **financial support** for the **250th celebration** and **related tourism efforts.**

## #1: MISSION OF AMERICA250PA CHESTER COUNTY

(Approved by unanimous vote of the full Commission 4/6/23)

**To inspire and engage all our communities in commemoration of America’s founding, connecting Chester County’s stories to the nation’s past, present, and future.**

When crafting the mission, the CC250 Commission chose words carefully:

- **inspire, engage** action verbs emphasize involvement in the process
- **communities** we want a very inclusive word (rather than resident, citizen, etc.)
- **commemoration** we chose this rather than “celebrate” after much discussion over the fact that there are both positive and negative aspects of our collective history, not all of which should be celebrated
- **America’s founding** this is the purpose of 250
- **Chester County** the charge is place specific, engaging local people and highlighting local events and places

## #2: TAG LINE

**MAKE HISTORY ★ INSPIRE & ENGAGE  
START NOW**

## #3A: VISION

(Drafted by Beverly Sheppard)

***What will be the legacy of an inclusive and successful 250<sup>th</sup> commemoration in Chester County?***

Chester County residents will take pride in the many contributions the County has made to developing and protecting American democracy and will be renewed in their desire to continue their commitment to building a more perfect union together.

## #3B: DESIRED OUTCOMES

(Amercia250 Report to The President, 1/31/22. Replaced US with ChesCo)

To honor the boldness of our nation's founders, CC250 ambitiously envisions a 250th anniversary that promotes **unity, education, and civic engagement**.

This requires the participation of all throughout Chester County. This milestone anniversary gives each and every person the opportunity to **strengthen common bonds, hear each other's voices**, and re-dedicate ourselves to the **ongoing pursuit** of our **country's founding principles** on our continuing journey to form a **more perfect union**.

Throughout Chester County, CC250 commemorations and celebrations will lead to these outcomes:

- Inspire pride in the **American spirit**
- Educate and foster a **deeper understanding of our founding principles**, our **democratic institutions**, and Chester County's **unique role in America's history before its founding, and after its founding to the present day**
- Spark **civic engagement** and community **volunteerism**
- Encourage people to come together to **promote the common good**
- Honor and thank active-duty **military, veterans** and their families for their **service** and their **sacrifices**
- **Spark engaging, revolutionary programs**, activities and events throughout Chester County
- **Strengthen the ties** between our historic sites, historic societies, and historic commissions in promoting our shared heritage and common mission
- Increase **cultural heritage tourism**
- Encourage and engage a **lasting advocacy** for the preservation of the physical evidence of Chester County's history, before, during, and after America's founding
- Make a **lasting legacy impact** in Chester County's **pride in its cultural heritage resources and civic engagement** for generations to come.

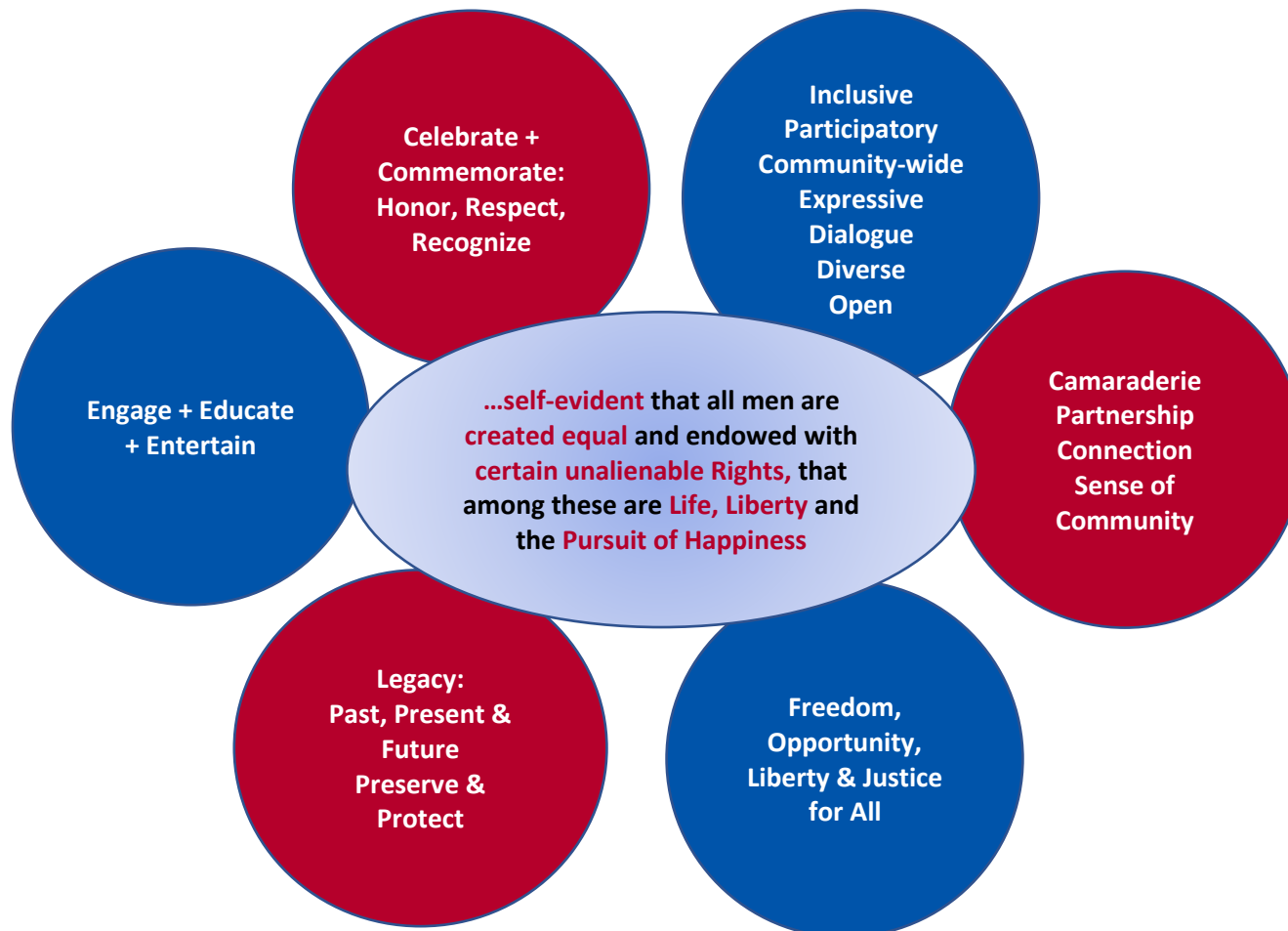
*Commemorating our 250th anniversary with inclusive programs  
that inspire Americans to renew and strengthen our daring experiment in democracy.*

## #4: CORE VALUES

These core values and key operating principles underlie our decisions and initiatives:

Phrases from the Declaration of Independence: *...self-evident that all men are created equal, and endowed with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness*

- Inclusive, participatory, community-wide, expressive, diverse, open, dialogue
- Camaraderie, partnership, sense of community, connection, promote the common good
  - Celebrate + Commemorate, honor, respect, recognize
    - Engage + Educate + Entertain
  - Freedom, Opportunity, Liberty & Justice for All
  - Legacy: past, present & future; preserve, protect



## #5: TOP AMERICA250 THEMES THAT RESONATE WITH CHESCO

CC250 Commissioners believe these America250 national themes will strongly resonate with Chester County people, visitors and partners planning 250 events and activities. The themes and discussion questions are taken directly from **The Field Guide for the Semiquincentennial, Making History at 250**, by the American Association for State & Local History, 2021, [www://aaslh.org/250](http://www://aaslh.org/250). The CC250 Commission first reviewed these themes in October 2022, and re-visited and re-ranked them in April 2023.

### **POWER OF PLACE**

Explore places that have been preserved for their historic value & understand what happened there during the Revolutionary Era.

Explore how diverse people experienced & influenced the events of the American Revolution in different ways.

Explore how our natural environment (our land, waterways & natural resources) has shaped events, such as settlement, The Revolution, expansion, economic development, innovation, quality of life.

### **THE AMERICAN EXPERIMENT, UNFINISHED REVOLUTIONS & WE THE PEOPLE**

How “revolutionary” was the American Revolution? What kind of nation did it create?

What is the American Dream? Who can share in the “American Dream?” How?

What rights & responsibilities does American citizenship include? Who has been excluded from full participation & representation in our democracy? Why? What can be done?

For much of our history, the U.S. has excluded people—women, free & enslaved African Americans, Indigenous people, immigrants, people with disabilities, the poor, and many others—from full participation & representation in the nation’s political, economic & cultural life. What stories should be more widely included in our Revolutionary history?

Before, during & after the Revolution, people have fought for their rights to life, liberty & the pursuit of happiness; working to secure the blessings of liberty for themselves & their posterity. When and how have members of our community advocated for liberty & equality in social, political & economic areas? What has caused setbacks? Progress?

Understand who has lived in each community historically (from indigenous people to now), along with developments & contemporary challenges related to life, liberty & the pursuit of happiness.

## #6: HERITAGE PLACES & RESOURCES UNIQUE TO CHESTER COUNTY: CHESCO HERITAGE THEMES

At its January 2023 planning retreat, the CC250 Communications Committee compiled this collection of phrases that resonate with Chester County.

Ideas, Birthplace, Tradition, Foundation, Original, Authentic • Covered Bridges, Stone Farmhouses and Barns • Revolutionary Battlefields • Scenic, Gardens, Horticulture, Woods and Forests, Open Space • Farmer's Markets, Century Farms, Amish Farms • Crossroads, Waterways, Railroads • Dupont, Gunpowder, Science, Technology, Health Sciences • Agriculture, Mushrooms • Horses, Fox Hunts • Education, HBCUs • Mason Dixon, Underground Railroad • Women's Rights, Women's Suffrage • Quakers, Meetinghouses • Temperance • Beer, Distilleries, Wineries • Potato Chips • Abundance, Prosperity, Wealth

The January 2024 Chester County Heritage Tourism Plan compiled by Heritage Strategies' Peter Benton, Elizabeth Watson and Heather Reiffer highlights these Heritage Tourism Themes unique to Chester County:

They are ranked in order of CC250s general sense of how readily the theme can be tied into the 250 values of the American Revolution—Life, Liberty & Pursuit of Happiness, Past, Present & Future.

- THE PHILADELPHIA CAMPAIGN (ChesCo) aligns closely with the POWER OF PLACE (national theme).
- EVOLVING VALUES & SOCIO-CULTURAL LANDSCAPE (ChesCo themes) tie into the WE THE PEOPLE, UNFINISHED BUSINESS & THE AMERICAN EXPERIMENT (national theme)
- CREATIVE EXPRESSION (ChesCo theme) can readily convey and communicate EACH of the items noted above.

### Heritage Tourism Themes Unique to Chester County

**PHILADELPHIA CAMPAIGN:** From Brandywine to Valley Forge, the Philadelphia Campaign was a turning point in the American Revolution. The Chester County landscape played a central role in the unfolding of events.

**IRON & STEEL:** Early iron furnaces & forges flourished in the region. They were the birthplace of Pennsylvania's three centuries of industrial prominence.

**EVOLVING VALUES/PATHWAY TO FREEDOM:** The varied experiences & perspectives of peoples have shaped our social conscience & laid the groundwork for the diversity & social values that continue to influence Chester County today. This includes the Pathway to Freedom/Underground Railroad, Women's Suffrage, among others.

**NATURAL LANDSCAPE:** Chester County's natural resources shapes its past, present & future development. This includes Agri-tourism.

**SOCIO-CULTURAL LANDSCAPE:** Chester County preserves rare insights into daily life in the 18th, 19th, & 20th centuries through its evolving agricultural landscape as well as the character of its communities & structures.

**CREATIVE EXPRESSION:** Arts & culture have long flourished in Chester County in many forms. Some internationally recognized visual artists have been inspired by the beauty of the landscape.



## #7: BEYOND 250: OUR DESIRED LEGACY 2026 ONWARD

Long after the conclusion of 2026's successful semi quincentennial commemoration, CC250's lasting legacy includes these four areas:

### 1-KNOWLEDGE/INCLUSION

- People will have a deeper awareness, knowledge, appreciation, sense of pride and commitment to ongoing learning and understanding of Chester County's **past, present and future roles in this civic arc to a More Perfect Union.**
- **Everyone can see their story included as an important part of American history and civic engagement,** understanding the value of inclusive narratives about the past, present and future.

### 2-VALUE

- People will **value history** for its **relevance to modern challenges** and societal problem-solving.
- **History and civics education,** both formal and informal, will be **promoted, enhanced, and restored** to a place of prominence in American life.

### 3-PROJECTS

- **Special projects** whose initiation and completion were accelerated by the 250 commemorations will **endure as lasting legacies,** such as The Philadelphia Campaign, site-specific interpretive programs, and other initiatives elevating history and civic engagement.

### 4-INFRASTRUCTURE

- History, heritage, preservation, cultural expression, civic organizations, and civic dialogue of all types and sizes will emerge **stronger, better supported, and inclusively engaged with their increasingly diverse communities, into the future.**
- Awareness and respect for Chester County's rich history will increase support of the **heritage infrastructure,** including sustainable public and private funding of heritage sites, preservation, history, culture, and civics.

## #8: SUMMARY: CC250 OVERARCHING GOALS & AIMS



CC250's overarching goal is to **promote** interactive, inclusive, compelling experiences to commemorate and celebrate America's 250th anniversary throughout 2026. Our Chester County communities and visitors will:

- encounter the many ways in which Chester County participated in and influenced our nation's past, and
- elevate our understanding of our continuing journey to build a more perfect union.

We will draw upon Chester County's unique array of Heritage **Sites**, combined with Community **Events** and compelling History and Civics **Outreach & Education** initiatives, focusing on:

- **Philadelphia Campaign Trail, Iron & Steel Trail, Pathway to Freedom** & our **Natural Landscape/Agriculture** to highlight **The Power of Our Place;**
- **our Socio-Cultural Landscape, Evolving Values & Creative Expression**, to examine our continuing journey of **The American Experiment & Unfinished Revolutions** by and for **We the People.**

## #9: APPROVALS/NEW IDEAS

Discussed & approved by CC250 Commission 4/9/23; updated by Officers 9/23

### MEETINGS

1. CC250 Full Commission meets a few times/year, in person & virtually. Meetings are open for public comment.
2. Officers meet in alternate months between full Commission meetings.
3. Committees, work groups & outreach groups meet monthly, in person & virtually. Standing meeting times are desired.
4. Meetings are supported, organized & administered by CC250 Project Coordination team.

### APPROVAL CHAIN

1. Full CC250 Commission approves Strategic Plan.
2. Committees, work groups & outreach groups, supported by CC250 Project Coordinators, implement activities toward Goals as agreed upon in Strategic Plan.
3. Committees, work groups & outreach groups update on progress & refinements in relation to plan, at Full Commission meetings.

### NEW ITEMS (not included in approved Strategic Plan) need approval of the full Commission:

1. Individual brings item to the attention of the appropriate Committee Chair &/or CC250 Project Coordinators.
2. Committee Chair & CC250 Project Coordinators meet to understand scope, timing and urgency of issue; clarify with individual as needed.
3. If time sensitive, CC250 Project Coordinator brings to Officers decide if full CC250 e-vote is merited; if so, Project Coordinator implements.
4. If item can wait until next Commission meeting, Project Coordinator adds it to agenda for full-Commission review, discussion, motion.

*Approvals have different levels, such as administrative items, being a spokesperson for various media/events, budget and expenditure of funds.*

# #10: CC250 COMMISSION FUNCTIONAL ORG CHART & COMMITTEE GOALS for CY24

<b>Chester County Commissioners</b> Hon. Josh Maxwell    Hon. Marian Moskowitz    Hon. Eric Roe Robert Kagel xxx, County Administrator    Erik Walschburger, Deputy County Administrator	
<b>CC250 Commission Officers</b> Chair Michelle Kichline 1st Vice Chair Winifred Moran Sebastian Esq 2nd Vice Chair James Garrison Secretary MaryFrances McGarrity	<b>CC Planning Commission Staff</b> Brian O’Leary, Executive Director David Blackburn, Heritage Preservation Coordinator GIS, IT, Tech, Comm, Admin

CC250	<b>Entire Commission: Strategic Planning: Review/Reaffirm Overall Plan &amp; Annual Goals.</b>				
COM-MITTEE Name	<b>HERITAGE SITES LEGACY PROJECTS COMMITTEE</b>	<b>250 REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES COMMITTEE</b>	<b>COMMUNITY PARTNER OUTREACH COMMITTEE</b>	<i>HERITAGE EDITING tbd Work Group</i>	<b>NOM COM</b>
Goal	-SUPPORT THE STAKEHOLDER GROUPS & HERITAGE SITES WITHIN THE 4 PRIMARY CHESCO HERITAGE THEMES OUTLINED IN THE CHESCO HERITAGE TOURISM PLAN -ASSURE THAT THE HERITAGE SITES KNOW 250 IS COMING -IF THEY DESIRE, HELP HERITAGES SITES GET VISITOR READY BY CONNECTING WITH CC250 INFO, IDEAS & POSSIBLE RESOURCES	UNDERSTAND 250 INITIATIVES ACROSS THE REGION & RECOMMEND TO CC250 COMMISSION WHAT COULD BE IMPLEMENTED IN CHESTER COUNTY & WHY IT WOULD ADD VALUE TO CC250	ATTRACT/ENLIST, ORIENT, SUPPORT & PROMOTE COMMUNITY ORGS THROUGHOUT CHESCO, ENCOURAGING THEM TO DEVELOP & PRESENT ACTIVITIES, PROGRAMS & EVENTS IN THE SPIRIT OF AMERICA250 IN THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES. CC250 IS A PROMO PARTNER		
Actions	-Meet with 4 primary theme stakeholder groups & heritage sites to understand the current status, plans, activities, priorities, resources acquired & needs -Provide CC250 FR Team with overall sense of heritage site funding gaps and priorities -If/when CC250 infrastructure funding secured, help CCPC & CC250 Grants Team to allocate \$ strategically -Assist CCPC & CVB & heritage sites with infrastructure coordination (signage, site improvements)	-Review 250 initiatives as they become known to CC250 (from PA, Fed, other Commissions) -Determine pros/cons to offering “as is” to ChesCo, possible local/regional replication, or not interested -Present recommendations to CC250 Commission	-Get the word out to non-heritage community orgs & partners & the public that “250 is Coming” -Provide opportunities to connect with info, ideas and possible resources -Make sure CC250 co-promotion role is clearly understood & implemented -Oversee CC250 ambassadors, organizing and supporting them to spread the word that 250 is Coming, to inspire & engage community partners	Write & edit CC250 heritage articles for website & possible e-newsletter	Nominate officers  Review members
Leadership	M. Slouf w/R. Williams – R. Spackman	R. Spackman - M. Kichline - B. Levine – B.O’Leary	WM Sebastian - L. Manion – MF McGarrity - J. Green – J. Garrison - L.Hawkins – J. Scanlon – M. Slouf	J.Dorchester B.Mowday	K. Sipple R.Spman - B.OLeary
Mtg Time	Check in @weekly to determine next steps needed in 4 focus areas	Forward emails regularly on other 250 initiatives to explore; zoom as possible 250 ideas emerge	Zooms 4 <sup>th</sup> Thurs monthly at 4 Prioritize Outreach needs, resources to develop; schedule	As needed	As needed

<b>OUTREACH TARGET MARKETS &amp; CC250 AMBASSADORS</b>																	
Army of Outreach Ambassadors: 2024 Q1/Q2 Aware Q3/Q4 Engage	Heritage Phila Camp	Heritage Path to Freedom	Heritage Iron & Steel	Heritage Agriculture	Heritage Lenape	Her&Com Municipal	Commty Elected Officials & Govt	Commty Libraries & Seniors	Commty Educ Inst	Commty Military & VetSvc	Commty People of Color	Geo NorthCC (Phx Ch)	Geo SouthCC (SCC Ch)	Geo SSouthCC (Oxf Ch)	Geo CentralCC (WC Ch)	Geo C/E CC (Ext Ch)	Geo WestCC (WCh)
		B. Mowday C. Hepp J. Christ F. Fonseca J. Spiers R. Spackman R. Williams B. Levine	L. Hawkin t3 MS Boyle B.Jackmon K.Marshall J.Heidrick M.Forbes-Gauhwien J. Fazekas D. McKay	J. Ziegler B. Cohen D. Blackb J.Erbb S.Momyer K.Quillman E. Shean-Hammond	B. OLeary MF McGarr K. Sipple J. Dorchester A. Lane S. Gimber	B. Sheppard C. Hepp t3 E. Watson	B.OLeary D.Blackb MF McGarr WMSébast J.Garrison	A. Scully T. Nelson B. Brain	J. Green L. D-Harley B. Sheppard	J. Scanlon M. Kichline M. Mosk J. Maxw E. Roe Zeb Davnrt G. Fiori J. Green L. D-Harley B. Sheppard	PKahan C. Hepp MFMcGarr	L.Hawkin t3 MS Boyle RFGunthr DBkmm TRRobinson ZDavenport KBoyer VMiles DRoland LDeBaptiste	BCohen L.Manion MFMcGarr J.Garrison S.Hamley	MF McGarr S. Hamley L. Hawkins	WMSebstn K. Sipple L.Hawkins S. Hamley T3	L. Manion S. Hamley MS Boyle J. Christ J. Green D Bkmm RFGunthr	L. Manion S. Hamley J. Scanlon
<b>Staff Impl</b>	HPR	HPR	HPR	HPR	HPR	HPR	KAS w/AS BOL	KAS w/TN, SS	KAS w/TN	KAS w/SS	KS w/Timmy Nelson	KAS w/HB, SS, TN, MJ	KAS w/HB, SS, TN, MJ	KAS w/HB, SS, TN, MJ	KAS /HB, SS, TN, MJ	KAS /HB, SS, TN, MJ	KAS /HB, SS, TN, MJ
	Geo: Chambers of Commerce + Main Street Programs + Mayors: Businesses, Community Groups, Arts/Culture/Heritage, Parks/Preserves, Scouts, Social Justice, Service Clubs, Faith-Based/Religious via Ministerial Alliances, Hospitality: Restaurants, Taverns, Hotels, B&Bs																

**STAFF: Promotional Implementation**

Website & Social Media: daily photo, video, wording  
Collateral material design, develop, distrib; post online  
Promote editorials, articles  
Zoom & in-person info sessions, gatherings, forums

**STAFF: Fundraising Implementation**

Case statement develop & customize. Prospect research & rank  
Cultivate & Solicit: Govt & Elected Officials - Foundation Proposals  
Public appeal/social media donations  
M. Kichline Honorary Chair w/  
Regional Captains for Corp/Bus & Individual Major Donors

**CC250 Project Management Coordination: Chester County Community Foundation**

Karen Simmons, CC250 Program Coordinator, [karen@chescocf.org](mailto:karen@chescocf.org) Heather Reiffer, CC250 Senior Program Associate, [hpreiffer@gmail.com](mailto:hpreiffer@gmail.com) Bob Ferguson, CCCF EVP Finance

**Outreach:** Timmy Nelson, Hugh Bleemer, Steph Stevens, Malcolm Johnstone

**Marketing:** Beth Krallis, Paige Mardsen, WCU Marketing & Communications Interns

**CC250 Fundraising Associates:** Connie Carter, Corrine Sylvia, Angela Scully, Jason Arbacheski

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Committee  
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separate document.

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## ATTACHMENT #1: DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

In Congress, July 4, 1776

**The unanimous Declaration of the thirteen united States of America,** When in the Course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the Laws of Nature and of Nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

We hold these truths to be **self-evident**, that all men are **created equal**, that they are endowed by their Creator with **certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness**.—That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, --That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security.—Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States. To prove this, let Facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has refused his Assent to Laws, the most wholesome and necessary for the public good.

He has forbidden his Governors to pass Laws of immediate and pressing importance, unless suspended in their operation till his Assent should be obtained; and when so suspended, he has utterly neglected to attend to them.

He has refused to pass other Laws for the accommodation of large districts of people, unless those people would relinquish the right of Representation in the Legislature, a right inestimable to them and formidable to tyrants only.

He has called together legislative bodies at places unusual, uncomfortable, and distant from the depository of their public Records, for the sole purpose of fatiguing them into compliance with his measures.

He has dissolved Representative Houses repeatedly, for opposing with manly firmness his invasions on the rights of the people.

He has refused for a long time, after such dissolutions, to cause others to be elected; whereby the Legislative powers, incapable of Annihilation, have returned to the People at large for their exercise; the State remaining in the mean time exposed to all the dangers of invasion from without, and convulsions within.

He has endeavoured to prevent the population of these States; for that purpose obstructing the Laws for Naturalization of Foreigners; refusing to pass others to encourage their migrations hither, and raising the conditions of new Appropriations of Lands.

He has obstructed the Administration of Justice, by refusing his Assent to Laws for establishing Judiciary powers.

He has made Judges dependent on his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices, and the amount and payment of their salaries.

He has erected a multitude of New Offices, and sent hither swarms of Officers to 14rity our people, and eat out their substance.

He has kept among us, in times of peace, Standing Armies without the Consent of our legislatures.

He has affected to render the Military independent of and superior to the Civil power.

He has combined with others to subject us to a jurisdiction foreign to our constitution, and unacknowledged by our laws; giving his Assent to their Acts of pretended Legislation:

For Quartering large bodies of armed troops among us:

For protecting them, by a mock Trial, from punishment for any Murders which they should commit on the Inhabitants of these States:  
For cutting off our Trade with all parts of the world:  
For imposing Taxes on us without our Consent:  
For depriving us in many cases, of the benefits of Trial by Jury:  
For transporting us beyond Seas to be tried for pretended offences  
For abolishing the free System of English Laws in a neighbouring Province, establishing therein an Arbitrary government, and enlarging its Boundaries so as to render it at once an example and fit instrument for introducing the same absolute rule into these Colonies:  
For taking away our Charters, abolishing our most valuable Laws, and altering fundamentally the Forms of our Governments:  
For suspending our own Legislatures, and declaring themselves invested with power to legislate for us in all cases whatsoever.

He has abdicated Government here, by declaring us out of his Protection and waging War against us.

He has plundered our seas, ravaged our Coasts, burnt our towns, and destroyed the lives of our people.

He is at this time transporting large Armies of foreign Mercenaries to compleat the works of death, desolation and tyranny, already begun with circumstances of Cruelty & perfidy scarcely paralleled in the most barbarous ages, and totally unworthy the Head of a civilized nation.

He has constrained our fellow Citizens taken Captive on the high Seas to bear Arms against their Country, to become the executioners of their friends and Brethren, or to fall themselves by their Hands.

He has excited domestic insurrections amongst us, and has endeavoured to bring on the inhabitants of our frontiers, the merciless Indian Savages, whose known rule of warfare, is an undistinguished destruction of all ages, sexes and conditions.

In every stage of these Oppressions We have Petitioned for Redress in the most humble terms: Our repeated Petitions have been answered only by repeated injury. A Prince whose character is thus marked by every act which may define a Tyrant, is unfit to be the ruler of a free people.

Nor have We been wanting in attentions to our British brethren. We have warned them from time to time of attempts by their legislature to extend an unwarrantable jurisdiction over us. We have reminded them of the circumstances of our emigration and settlement here. We have appealed to their native justice and magnanimity, and we have conjured them by the ties of our common kindred to disavow these usurpations, which, would inevitably interrupt our connections and correspondence. They too have been deaf to the voice of justice and of consanguinity. We must, therefore, acquiesce in the necessity, which denounces our Separation, and hold them, as we hold the rest of mankind, Enemies in War, in Peace Friends.

We, therefore, the Representatives of the united States of America, in General Congress, Assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the Name, and by Authority of the good People of these Colonies, solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be Free and Independent States; that they are Absolved from all Allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the State of Great Britain, is and ought to be totally dissolved; and that as Free and Independent States, they have full Power to levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and to do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do. And for the support of this Declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes and our sacred Honor. ###