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May 30, 2023

Name

Chairwoman

The Cowles Charitable Trust

P.O. Box 50027

Staten Island, New York, 10305

Dear Ms. Cowles Schroth:

The Osborne Association (Osborne) is seeking \$25,000 in support from the Cowles Charitable Trust for its Young Adult Services educational programming for youth who have been involved in the criminal legal system. Given the Cowles family's generations-long commitment to education and social justice, I hope that this program will be of interest to your trustees.

Organization and scope. Osborne is a New York nonprofit founded in 1933 to honor Thomas Mott Osborne. Osborne serves individuals, families, and communities affected by the criminal legal system. Through our programs, we offer opportunities for people to heal from and repair harm, restore their lives, and thrive. We challenge systems rooted in racism and retribution and fight for policies and practices that promote true safety, justice, and liberation. Each year, we serve more than 10,000 justice-involved people, their children, and family members, as well as tens of thousands of people who visit Osborne-run visiting centers in prisons. We work in courts, NYC jails, 36 state prisons, and sites in the Bronx, Brooklyn, Harlem, Buffalo, and Newburgh. We recently entered the supportive housing field with the launch of our Marcus Garvey Supportive Housing Program in Brownsville, Brooklyn, and will soon open up our Fulton Community Reentry Center in the Bronx.

Statement of need. The young people Osborne works with are like young people everywhere: impulsive, short-sighted, eager to be accepted, and full of an idealism they take pains to conceal. They are also, specifically, African-American and Latinx youth, residing in Bronx, Harlem, and Brooklyn neighborhoods that have borne the brunt of racially unjust, economically punishing forces and show the consequences in their discouraging statistics, which include the City's highest rates of poverty, "disconnected youth," unemployment, and crime. For these youth, not only can an arrest and its consequences disrupt schooling, employment, and housing, but they also act as a tripwire, setting off negative repercussions that last a lifetime. A criminal record significantly lowers a person's chances of being hired, their hourly wage earned, and their lifetime earning power. The civil legal fallout, depending on the jurisdiction and nature of the conviction, includes barriers to financial aid, college

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admissions, military service, certain professions, elected office, jury service, public housing, government benefits, and the vote.

Fortunately, the young people in Osborne's programs bring to this context the strengths of young people everywhere: intelligence, creativity, irrepressible energy, and the capacity for empathy, optimism, and joy. They show resilience and faith in the future. They take brave risks at Osborne, beginning with the risk of trusting us. Osborne staff work to deserve that trust every day, as they champion these young people, build on their strengths, and help them turn away from self-fulfilling negative prophecies and towards self-determined adult lives.

Program objectives. We are seeking Cowles Charitable Trust's support for the continued operation of our Young Adult Services. From our offices in Harlem, Brooklyn, and the South Bronx, Osborne engages young people who are involved in the criminal justice system or are living in circumstances that place them at very high risk of such involvement. Reaching more than 200 youth between the ages of 16 and 24 each year, our Young Adult programs are designed to intervene at a critical point of risk, when each participant's future truly is at stake. The program's objectives are to: reduce and prevent criminal legal system involvement among participants; promote economic well-being; practice civil, honest, and respectful ways of interacting; develop critical thinking and communication skills; and learn both to seek help and to hold themselves accountable for the course of their lives.

Program activities. All of the programs use adult mentors and effective peer-group processes to create alternative communities in which young people can build the skills they will need in adulthood, connect to education, training, and employment, and simply let down their guard and experience a sense of belonging and trust. Young people are enrolled in our services for, on average, 12 months, and participate in the following activities during their engagement in the program:

- Group and individual mentoring led by credible messengers
- Alternative to Violence Project conflict resolution education
- Connections to high school equivalency and higher education
- Paid internships
- Hard skills training, tailored to their career interests and resulting in marketable credentials
- College tours
- Trauma treatment

Osborne believes that these youth have the right to pursue their dreams and participate in the world in a meaningful way. We hope the Cowles Charitable Trust will support this vital work.

Sincerely,

Name

Title