



EMERGING LEADER FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITY, 2023-2025
Recognizing Suicide and Shifting Narratives in Rural Communities



Host Organization:	CeaseFirePA Education Fund
Location:	Northeast PA or Southwest PA
Dates:	October 15, 2023 – October 14, 2025
Salary:	\$60,000 / year, plus benefits

Stoneleigh Emerging Leader Fellowship

The [Stoneleigh Emerging Leader Fellowship](#) is a two-year, full-time, hands-on position for early career professionals. Fellows work collaboratively with a host organization and the [Stoneleigh Foundation](#) to execute a project that advances the missions of these organizations and enhances Fellows' professional skills and leadership development. Fellows are also supported by a cohort of peer Emerging Leaders who participate in Foundation programming.

The Project: *Recognizing Suicide and Shifting Narratives in Rural Communities*

Three out of four Americans incorrectly believe mass shootings, community violence, and unintentional shootings are the largest source of gun deaths, when in fact, suicide by guns accounts for the greatest share. Many Pennsylvanians are stunned to learn that sixty percent of gun fatalities in the Commonwealth result from suicide. This misunderstanding, which challenges the dominant narrative in areas with high rates of gun ownership, results in a low proportion of rural residents ranking gun violence as a problem in their community.

To address this knowledge and narrative gap, the Fellow will work with [CeaseFirePA Education Fund](#) to develop a network of survivors, gun owners, and local leaders who recognize firearm suicide as dangerous to their communities. The Fellow will uncover narratives about how high gun ownership increases suicide risk to shift the localized understanding of gun violence and educate decision-makers and community members about this silent crisis. Specifically, the Fellow will:

- **Identify perceptions about firearms and suicide in five rural counties** through quantitative data gathering; community forums; and extensive interviews with community leaders, suicide prevention advocates, mental health organizations, coroners, public health experts, and other local partners.
- **Compile a report summarizing public perspectives on firearm suicide**, combining data with qualitative analysis and storytelling.
- **Create a network of credible messengers** who can shape the narrative around gun suicide in their communities and provide them with narrative-shifting training and support.
- **Elevate a new narrative around gun suicide** to educate decision-makers and community members about this epidemic.

Candidate Qualifications

Candidates should have strong interpersonal, relationship-building, and communications skills. The ideal candidate will be empathetic, goal-oriented, and a strong writer and verbal communicator. In addition, experience in community organizing, project management, and storytelling for policy change would be beneficial. Lastly, we prefer candidates from the community they will work in or from other rural communities.

We strongly encourage a diverse pool of candidates to apply, including women, people of color, people who identify as LGBTQ, people with disabilities, and people who have lived experienced of firearm violence and/or system involvement. We invite candidates to include in their cover letters a statement about how their unique backgrounds and experiences might contribute to their perspectives on and execution of the Fellowship Project.

Application Process

[Please apply here with the below material.](#) If you have questions, contact Josh.Fleitman@CeaseFirePA.org.

- A resume or CV
- Two written references preferred
- A cover letter articulating why you would like to participate in the Fellowship, how it will advance your professional goals, why this project interests you, and what prior experience and training you bring that prepares you to lead this Fellowship project

Candidates chosen for an interview will be contacted directly by CeaseFirePA Education Fund. One final candidate will be recommended to and interviewed by the Stoneleigh Foundation in July 2023. In September 2023, Stoneleigh staff will present recommended candidates and projects to its Board of Directors for their final determination. The approved candidate will begin the Fellowship on **October 15, 2023**.

About CeaseFirePA & CeaseFirePA Education Fund

[CeaseFirePA](#) works to end the gun violence epidemic by advocating for Pennsylvania's most important and impactful gun violence prevention legislation. CeaseFirePA galvanizes the public to advocate for solutions, partners with those most impacted by gun violence, engineers rapid response campaigns, and holds politicians accountable for the votes they cast and legislation they draft, ensuring that those closest to the issues are receiving the support they need and bringing groups of all kinds together from all across the state.

[CeaseFirePA Education Fund](#) is a 501(c)3 and sister organization to CeaseFirePA. The Education Fund is dedicated to ensuring not another life is lost to gun violence. It builds awareness about the impacts of gun violence in the Commonwealth by lifting up the voices of survivors and analyzing data on the drivers of violence in the Commonwealth. It runs public education campaigns to foster civic engagement and build diverse coalitions that reflect the full toll of this public health crisis. It also helps decision-makers understand the real-world impacts of their actions and inaction.