



For Immediate Release

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NYS awards \$80,000 grant to Lifespan of Greater Rochester & Ibero-American Action League to support elder abuse initiatives

State grant to provide services to Latino community to prevent elder abuse and financial exploitation.

Forty-two percent of Latinos surveyed have been victims of attempted assault.

ROCHESTER, September 19, 2013 - Lifespan of Greater Rochester Inc. and Ibero-American Action League Inc. today announced the award of an \$80,000 grant from the William B. Hoyt Memorial Children and Family Trust Fund, a program of the New York State Office of Children and Family Services for elder abuse outreach, public education and intervention services. The agencies will work collaboratively to launch two initiatives to fill gaps in the system of protection for victims of elder abuse in Monroe County.

Lifespan will employ a social worker to investigate and intervene in cases of elder abuse referred by hospitals, skilled nursing facilities and other healthcare facilities. Victims of elder abuse who find themselves in healthcare facilities such as hospitals and nursing homes are typically not eligible for Protective Services for Adults. The Lifespan project will ensure that older adult victims of mistreatment and exploitation are provided with appropriate protective services while they remain in residential facilities.

The elder Latino population in Monroe County has been steadily growing. Latinos now account for 7.8 percent of the total population of Monroe County, or 55,000 individuals. Approximately eight percent of Rochester's Latino population are older adults (60 years of age or older.) In a survey conducted by Ibero-American Action League in December 2012 and January 2013, older Latinos reported that they had been subjected to mistreatment at alarmingly high rates. A total of 42 percent of respondents reported that they or an elderly individual they knew had been hit or was the victim of an attempted assault. Another 14 percent responded affirmatively to a question about threats with a gun or a knife. Twenty-nine percent reported that they had been financially exploited.

In 2012, the number of older Latinos referred to Monroe County Protective Services for Adults or to Lifespan's Elder Abuse Prevention Program for the investigation of elder abuse was fewer than 20. Through the Trust Fund project, Ibero has hired a bilingual, bicultural social worker who will work in conjunction with Lifespan's Elder Abuse Prevention staff to educate the Latino community about elder abuse and to investigate and intervene in cases of Latino elders alleged to be abused, neglected or exploited.

Hilda Rosario Escher, president/CEO of Ibero, said, "Ibero is very pleased about this opportunity to partner with Lifespan and continue the effort to prevent elder abuse in the Latino community."

Ann Marie Cook, Lifespan president/CEO, said, "Lifespan looks forward to partnering with Ibero and with health care organizations to reach vulnerable populations of older adults who have been victimized by abuse, neglect and exploitation."

As our population continues to age, we have to look at the increasing safety needs for at-risk elder individuals," said Judy Richards, program director for the Trust Fund at the state Office of Children and Family Services. "Funding for elder

abuse services is limited and the Children and Family Trust Fund is proud to be a constant voice to support community-driven services through numerous collaborations with partners across the state and here in the Rochester area.”

Elder abuse is any form of mistreatment that results in harm or loss to an older person. The mistreatment may take the form of physical abuse, neglect, psychological abuse, financial exploitation or sexual abuse.

In 2011, Lifespan, in partnership with Weill Cornell Medical College and New York City Department for the Aging, released the results of a study on the prevalence of elder abuse throughout New York State. It found that 7.6 percent of older adults in the state reported being the victim of at least one form of elder mistreatment in a one year period. The study showed that financial exploitation was the most commonly reported form of elder abuse and that only one in 24 elder abuse cases was ever reported to authorities.

For further information about the grant award and the elder abuse projects funded by the New York State Children and Family Trust Fund, please contact Art Mason, (585) 287-6410 or amason@lifespan-roch.org at Lifespan or Elisa DeJesus, (585) 256-8900 or Elisa.DeJesus@iaal.org at the Ibero American Action League.

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