



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, contact:

Brian Paff, (312) 432-2239 or bpaff@eriehouse.org

Michael Reese Health Trust Grant Funds Domestic Violence Project

A \$40,000 grant will strengthen efforts at Erie House to provide legal assistance, counseling and support to immigrants who are survivors of domestic violence.

January 11, 2019 (CHICAGO)—The Michael Reese Health Trust (Michael Reese) provided Erie Neighborhood House with a \$40,000 grant to help fund its Domestic Violence Project for the 2019 calendar year.

The initiative is a unique collaboration between the Citizenship & Immigration and Proyecto Cuidate programs at Erie House. Together they are able to coordinate services to provide free mental health counseling, case management, and legal consultations and representation in immigration cases for survivors of domestic violence or sexual assault who may not otherwise have access to such services.

“Both the mental health staff and legal services team work with survivors to determine their unique goals and provide services in accordance with their desired outcomes,” explains Jane Lombardi, director of citizenship and immigration services at Erie House. “This collaboration began because of input from survivors.”

Lombardi and her colleagues partnered with allied organizations and volunteers to conduct more than 1,400 immigration legal consultations last year, including 36 consultations for survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault applying for U-visas and VAWA (Violence Against Women Act) support. Fourteen of those individuals received representation from Erie House in their immigration cases.

For its part, Proyecto Cuidate provided counseling and mental health services to 12 such clients, with duration of care ranging from 4 sessions to a year or more. What has developed is both a bridge and a referral loop between these two programs, connecting clients with both case management *and* mental health resources.

Erie House hopes to expand its reach as word spreads about the multi-faceted services it is equipped to provide and as access increases through grants like the one Michael Reese has provided.

“This collaboration can eliminate extra barriers for individuals receiving both immigration and mental health services, both of which are very much needed in our community,” says Rosa Sanchez, program manager for Proyecto Cuidate. “Not many agencies have both supports available.”

“This is a holistic approach that seeks to build greater well-being in the lives of people in our community,” says Erie House executive director Kirstin Chernawsky. “We are so grateful for the investment Michael Reese is making in the Domestic Violence Project.”

For more information on the Citizenship & Immigration and Proyecto Cúidate programs at Erie House, please visit www.eriehouse.org.

About Erie Neighborhood House

Erie Neighborhood House (ENH) is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization that reaches nearly 18,000 people annually, empowering them to build better lives while strengthening their communities. ENH offers Chicago’s Latino and diverse low-income residents a range of community-based education programs. With forward-thinking leadership, ENH is committed to continuing its legacy of cost effective, award-winning programming. For more information, please visit www.eriehouse.org.

-END-