October 24, 2018

**PRESS RELEASE**

Livingston County Catholic Charities (LCCC) recently received the second-year funding from a 2-year grant of $90,000.00 from the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation for our 3 senior service programs: Be Our Guest Adult Day, Volunteer Caregiver and Resource Advocacy. The grant monies were awarded for general operations in support of our older adult programs serving caregivers.

Over 80% of the seniors LCCC serves in the three senior specific programs live at or below 150% of the national poverty level. Therefore, LCCC’s Volunteer Caregiver and Resource Advocacy programs are offered free to county seniors. LCCC’s Be Our Guest Adult Day is offered **o**n a cost-sharing basis with the average client paying $58.56 for an 8-hour day – leaving a **$97.36/day gap** in the cost to provide services.

Support from the Area Agency on Aging 1-B, Livingston County, the Livingston County United Way and the Diocese of Lansing addresses much of this shortfall, but $32.08 per day for each Be Our Guest participant must be made-up through fundraising efforts. Across the three senior-serving programs, this equaled a $102,590 gap to be filled through fundraising efforts. Thus, the gift from the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation has a significant impact on these programs.

Realizing how rewarding yet demanding the role of the caregiver can be, the Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation honors the caregiver by supporting community organizations that provide resources, respite, education and needed skills for the caregiver. We are thrilled to have been selected by the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation as a grant recipient and look forward to their continuing support in assisting caregivers who are tasked with the 24/7 care of their loved one. The grant strengthens LCCC’s ability to continue to be a valuable partner and asset to the caregiver and family members as they work to provide a stable, safe and comfortable living environment for the senior.

As the number of caregivers for our aging population continues to grow tremendously, this 2-year grant provides LCCC with a significant amount of support in serving the caregivers of seniors in Livingston County. According to the Family Caregiver Alliance (FCA) a study done by the National Alliance for Caregiving and AARP (2015), over 34 million people in the U.S. have provided care to an adult 50 years of age or older. FCA also notes that those providing sole care can have a higher rate of negative mental health and physical health consequences.

The majority of the caregivers are a family member or other loved one, many of whom are juggling jobs, children and many other responsibilities. In persons with dementia and related conditions, this results in full-time care. The caregiver is often tasked with providing most or all activities of daily living: hygiene, feeding, food preparation, bathroom, dressing, etc.

Without programs like LCCC’s three senior service programs, caregivers and family members would have to make the hard decision of placing their loved one into a more costly, full-care facility vs. caring for them at home with support services.

Be Our Guest Adult Day, the only adult day program in Livingston County, offers the caregiver the ability to care for a loved one at home and either find some respite during the day or allows them the ability to maintain their job while knowing their loved one is being cared for in a safe and stimulating environment. Resource Advocacy and Volunteer Caregiver provide the caregiver and senior with resources to meet their basic needs; get connected to local, state and federal resources; obtain rides to medical appointments; receive friendly visits; and in-home respite care – all support services for the caregiver & senior.

Mark Robinson, Executive Director, shares his gratitude for this award and what it means for the people of Livingston County, “We have provided Be Our Guest Adult Day for 14 years and the other senior-serving programs for over 30 years. We are very committed to the older adult population and their caregivers. All of us at Livingston County Catholic Charities are grateful to the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation for this grant and for the other support that the Foundation is providing to Caregivers across the region.”