



July 25, 2022

Diana Pryntz, Executive Director
Deaf Refugee Advocacy Inc
POB 10335
Rochester, NY 14610

Dear Ms. Pryntz:

Lifespan is pleased to provide this letter of support in support of Deaf Refugee Advocacy (DRA)'s response to the Monroe County American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Funding Opportunities RFP. Since its formation, DRA has offered essential on-going community support for extremely at-risk citizens within the Monroe County area: deaf refugees, immigrants, and asylum-seekers (RIAs).

DRA's project, if funded through the ARPA Funding Opportunity, will have a significant impact on reducing barriers faced by deaf, deafblind and hard-of-hearing RIAs that were made evident and exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. These systemic barriers, which include but are not limited to language, cultural, and accessibility, can be overcome through DRA's efforts to provide programming on language and cultural competency, health, safety, and employment to individuals and their families. As a result of these sign language-centric services, deaf RIAs' skills, support networks, and sense of belonging will increase, engaging them as equitable and contributing members of the Monroe County community.

Full funding of DRA's ARPA submission will significantly meet the needs of a population that has been historically underserved, due to the unique intersectionality of people who are deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing refugees, immigrants, and asylum-seekers. Lifespan believes in the importance of DRA's work and the ultimate impact it aims to achieve. By addressing these inequities, DRA's transformational approach will ultimately benefit deaf RIAs, their families, and the community members, employers, and service providers they engage with, strengthening Monroe County for all.

Lifespan serves all older adults and family caregivers. We have been working with members of the deaf community to increase access to services. This proposal will further our communities' efforts to ensure all residents receive appropriate services.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ann Marie Cook".

Ann Marie Cook
President/CEO