

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-3203

July 29, 2022

Monroe County
ARPA Coordinator
Department of Planning and Development
50 West Main Street
Rochester, NY 14614

Dear ARPA Coordinator:

I am pleased to write in support of St. Joseph's Neighborhood Center (SJNC)'s application for the American Rescue Plan Act Funding Opportunities in response to the recent Monroe County Request for Proposals (RFP).

Over its almost 30-year history, SJNC has delivered primary health care, dental, mental health counseling, and social services to thousands of uninsured and under-insured people in the Greater Rochester region. The organization does not accept private or public insurance reimbursements and relies upon individual donations from community members, as well as grant funding. SJNC is a vital partner and collaborator with dozens of community-based organizations, the two major health systems in our region—University Rochester Medical Center and Rochester Regional Health System, numerous Colleges and Universities, and the Monroe County Department of Public Health.

The Neighborhood Center is housed in three conjoined buildings that are each well over 100 years old. While these former homes, which were renovated and repurposed years ago, provide a welcoming and inclusive environment, they are in desperate need of renovation and repair. Priorities include a new roof and elevator, additional insulation to prevent ice damming, and renovation of the waiting area, exam rooms, and dental operatories. Providing this funding would not only provide vital support to SJNC, but it would be a significant investment in the overall health of the Greater Rochester community.

With funding, SJNC would expand on its long history of innovation and to continue in its vital role as the “safety net for the safety net.” When individuals have nowhere else to turn, they seek refuge, support, and health services from the Neighborhood Center. In the context of their recent strategic plan, they aim to partner with community-based organizations to reach more potential patients/clients and to provide services to those that are directly impacted by racism, gun violence, depression, COVID, inadequate access to health care, and much more. They hope to collaborate with faith-based communities, and neighborhood gathering places—such as barbershops and salons—to meet folks “where they’re at” both literally and figuratively. At a time when the primary care and mental health services are stretched to a breaking point, and wait lists for services are exorbitantly long, SJNC provides unheralded access of just a few days for the most serious and urgent of matters and a few weeks for more routine care.

I applaud SJNC for their foresight and sincerely hope the application meets with your approval.

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my Grants Coordinator in my Washington, DC office at 202-224-6542.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Charles Schumer". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator