



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Shelley B. Mayer

## Senator Shelley Mayer Announced \$20,000 in Funding for Legal Services Program at the Community Resource Center in Mamaroneck

SHELLEY B. MAYER October 3, 2019

| ISSUE: **COMMUNITY, IMMIGRATION SERVICES, FUNDING**



MAMARONECK, NY -- On Thursday, October 3rd, State Senator Shelley Mayer announced \$20,000 in new funding for immigration legal services program at the Community Resource Center in Mamaroneck. Jirandy Martinez, Executive Director of Community Resource Center (CRC), along with CRC's board members, staff, clients, supporters, and attorneys gathered to celebrate the additional funding for legal services and talk about the increasing need for free legal services for the growing immigrant population in Westchester, now over 25% of the population.

The new funding will be used to support the hire of a new staff attorney to assist clients in their immigration cases involving naturalization, family petitions, deferred action for childhood arrivals (DACA) renewals, green card renewals, U-visas, and Special Immigrant Juvenile Status (SIJS) cases. The funding will help CRC's Case Managers and advocates continue to respond to the critical needs of Westchester's immigrant population.

At the event, several clients of the CRC spoke and shared their stories including Cesar Olivas, Maria Marmolejo, and Edgar Garza. CRC staff noted the difficulty clients have navigating immigration proceedings without trained support, and how the addition of a full time staff attorney to assist with immigration legal proceedings will allow the center to serve additional clients.

**State Senator Shelley Mayer** said, "I am pleased to support the critical work of the Community Resource Center in Mamaroneck with this additional funding to hire a part time attorney who can assist CRC clients seeking immigration legal services. There is a growing and diverse immigrant population in the 37th District and Westchester, and I commend the Community Resource Center for responding to community needs with dynamic programs and services. Thank you to Executive Director Jirandy Martinez, the Board of Directors, and staff for all of your tireless work to meet the growing needs of the community."

"We applaud Senator Shelley Mayor for her leadership and her \$20,000 investment in support of legal services. We look forward to allocating this funding to our legal service program to continue to empower one of Westchester's most vulnerable communities—immigrant families. We know that all individuals fare better with legal representation, but this is especially true of immigrants at this time. This new funding underscores how we can collectively work together to build support at all levels. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with our elected officials and community partners to protect our communities," said **Jirandy Martinez, Executive Director of Community Resource Center**.

**Assemblymember Steve Otis (D-Rye)** stated, "The Community Resource Center provides vital services to families on the Sound Shore. Whether through critical legal services provided in this grant, or other educational, language and support services supported by charitable donations and state funding obtained in previous years, CRC's work is indispensable to families in Mamaroneck and nearby communities."

**Mamaroneck Mayor Tom Murphy**, “I am grateful that Senator Mayer has secured funds to advocate for the rights of our immigrant residents in these troubled times. This will help keep Mamaroneck the diverse welcoming community we all cherish.”

“In Westchester County and across New York State, what we see is a steady increase in demand for legal services and a heavy saturation and decline in immigration attorney availability. What we need more than anything is attorneys who are culturally competent. It is critical that the legal support we provide meet clients where they are,” said **Janet Fry**, **Deputy Executive Director of Community Resource Center**.