



July 25<sup>th</sup>, 2022

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

Dear Ms. Pryntz:

The Office of Community Outreach and Engagement from Wilmot Cancer Institute is pleased to provide this letter of support for 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 the 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 their unique intersectionalities of people who are deaf, deafblind, and hard of hearing refugees, immigrants, and asylum-seekers. Wilmot Cancer Institute 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.

We witnessed firsthand the value of DRA during the COVID pandemic when they assisted with pop-up vaccine clinics to ensure access for the deaf, deafblind and hard-of-hearing RIAs these invisibilized populations. DRA has been a constant partner representing the voices of RIAs and advocating for services that these populations are entitled to. WCI COE is an ongoing collaborator with the deaf community and fully supports this application.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at 585.285.5560 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Candice A. Lucas', enclosed within a large, light blue oval scribble.

Candice A. Lucas, EdD, MBA  
Chief Community Impact Officer, Community Outreach and Engagement  
University of Rochester Medical Center, Wilmot Cancer Institute