August 1, 2017

**PRESS RELEASE**

Livingston County Catholic Charities (LCCC) was recently awarded 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 senior programs serving caregivers.

This 2-year grant will provide LCCC with a significant amount of support in serving the caregivers of seniors in Livingston County. 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 $38.87 for an 8 hour day – leaving a **$104.97/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 $37.48 per day for each participant must be made-up through fundraising efforts. For fiscal year 2015-16, this equaled $87,761 needing to be filled through fundraising efforts.

The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation, realizing how demanding and overwhelming the role of the caregiver can be, honors the caregiver by supporting community organizations that provide resources, respite, education and needed skills. We are thrilled to have been selected by the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation as a grant recipient and look forward to their partnership in assisting caregivers who are tasked with the 24/7 care of their loved one. The grant will allow LCCC 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.

With over 34.2 million caregivers for adults 50+ years of age in the U.S. (according to the Family Caregiver Alliance) the need is vast and growing. Over 85% of the caregivers are a relative or loved one with many juggling jobs, children and more. The caregiver is often tasked with providing most or all activities of daily living – hygiene, feeding, food preparation, bathroom, dressing, etc. In persons with dementia and related conditions, this results in full-time care.

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. Additionally, caregivers are at a higher risk of both the mental health and physical health issues from the stresses of 24/7 caregiving.

Be Our Guest Adult Day, the only adult day program in Livingston County, offers the caregiver the ability to care of a loved one at home and either find some respite during the day or allows them 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, shared his excitement with this award, “All of us at the agency are very grateful to the Wilson Foundation for this gift. Due to rising costs and related factors, it has become more difficult for us to fully support these services, yet the need continues. This two-year gift provides us the opportunity to maintain current service levels and to continue to explore other options for long term planning and stabilization.”