



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 18, 2025

MEDIA CONTACTS:

AARP New York: Selma Betancourt, sbetancourt@aarp.org

GRANTEE CONTACT: Mary Ellen Smith, mesmith@cscrochester.org, 585-703-2759

AARP Awards Grant to Cancer Support Community at Gilda's Club Rochester as Part of Nationwide Program to Strengthen Communities

Rochester, NY—AARP today announced that Cancer Support Community at Gilda's Club Rochester has received a \$5,000 [2025 Community Challenge](#) grant, as part of AARP's \$4.2 million commitment to fund 383 quick-action projects aimed at making communities more livable for people of all ages, with a focus on the needs of older adults.

The Community Challenge grant supports the organization's objective to empower cancer patients who are 50 and older in the use of digital technology. Through its Digital Sherpa program, Cancer Support Community at Gilda's Club Rochester aims to educate adult cancer patients on to how to safely use technology as a tool to help them through their cancer journey.

"AARP New York is proud to work with communities across the state to help make them more livable for people of all ages," said **Beth Finkel, AARP New York State Director**. "Cancer Support Community at Gilda's Club Rochester's project will bring real improvement to Rochester by offering monthly digital empowerment seminars and one-on-one support to help cancer patients aged 50 and older navigate technology. We're excited to see this come to life."

To assist cancer patients with digital empowerment, Cancer Support Community at Gilda's Club Rochester will offer monthly seminars on navigating the digital world and provide one on one support for patients. Patients and their care partners can learn basic internet and social media skills. They can also learn how to access their patient portals and find information and support regarding their illness, well as have their specific technology-related questions answered by a technology facilitator. Digital Empowerment workshops will focus each session on a specific technology platform or website such as: How to Navigate Your Patient Portal; How To Access the Internet; Identifying Credible Resources; Using Social Media to Connect and Learn; Using Mobile Devices to Improve Health; Using Telemedicine; and Accessing Mental Health and Support Group Resources.

“Navigating technology for older people can be intimidating and challenging given all the nuances of each platform. For cancer patients it can be even more so,” stated **James F. Love, Cancer Support Community at Gilda’s Club Chief Executive Officer**. “For those battling cancer, the navigation of some websites like MyChart, or even hospital and medical center websites, and the internet in general, can be confusing and frustrating. Through our Digital Sherpa program, the workshops will focus on specific technology topics, applications, and uses to help our adult members learn how to use the internet safely and, ultimately, be more comfortable in the use technology as a valuable resource to support their cancer journey.”

Now in its ninth year, the Challenge has awarded \$736,188 through 63 grants in New York since 2017 to nonprofit organizations and local government entities across the state. Grant projects will be funded in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

View the full list of grantees and their projects at aarp.org/communitychallenge. Learn more about AARP’s work to support livable communities at aarp.org/livable.

###

About AARP

AARP is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering Americans 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With a nationwide presence, AARP strengthens communities and advocates for what matters most to the more than 100 million Americans 50-plus and their families: health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment. AARP also works for individuals in the marketplace by sparking new solutions and allowing carefully chosen, high-quality products and services to carry the AARP name. As a trusted source for news and information, AARP produces the nation's largest circulation publications, AARP The Magazine and AARP Bulletin. To learn more, visit www.aarp.org/about-aarp/, www.aarp.org/español or follow @AARP, @AARPenEspañol and @AARPadvocates on social media.

About Cancer Support Community at Gilda’s Club Rochester

The Cancer Support Community at Gilda’s Club Rochester, founded in 1959, is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to providing personalized support for anyone impacted by cancer including cancer patients of any age, family members and caregivers. Cancer Support Community at Gilda’s Club Rochester offers free programs designed to enhance emotional and mental well-being, promote a healthy lifestyle, encourage social connections, provide information and education, and referral assistance. Annually, Cancer Support Community at Gilda’s Club Rochester serves over 4,000 people and offers more than 1,000 free programs to meet the educational, social, emotional, and mental health needs of those navigating the challenges of a cancer journey. For more information, please call 585-423-9700 or visit www.cscrochester.org or follow @cscrochester on social media.