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Friday, 21 October 2011 10:37

Eight community-based service providers have been selected to develop New York City's first Innovative Senior Centers, including one specifically for adults with vision problems and the first center for LGBT seniors in the nation. The new contract awards were announced on Wednesday by Michael R. Bloomberg, Deputy Mayor for Health and Human Services Linda I. Gibbs and Department for the Aging Commissioner Lilliam Barrios-Paoli.

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The awardees are:

- Bronxworks (Bronx)
- Lenox Hill Neighborhood House (Manhattan)
- YM & YWHA (Manhattan)
- Selfhelp Ben Rosenthal Senior Center (Queens)
- SNAP (Queens)
- JCC of Staten Island
- SAGE (Citywide for the LGBT community)
- Visions (Citywide for individuals who are visually impaired)

The Innovative Senior Center model, conceived in partnership with the Council of Senior Centers and Services, will offer a comprehensive array of services. These centers, which will open in January, are intended to deliver on the commitment made by the City in August 2009 when the Mayor, the Speaker and the New York Academy of Medicine launched Age-Friendly NYC, a blueprint aimed at making New York a more livable City for its growing senior population. \

Using public and private funds, the City will provide innovation grants to these first eight organizations for enhanced programming that will include robust health and wellness programs and provide seniors with additional access to health care services, arts and cultural programs, as well as technology and volunteer opportunities.

"The needs of seniors have evolved since centers were created 50 years ago and now is the time to re-envision the one-size-fits-all approach that has traditionally shaped many of our centers," said Mayor Bloomberg. "We will continue innovating our City services to help our growing senior population lead healthier, more dynamic lives and make New York the most age-friendly city in the 21st century."

"These innovative senior centers are the latest achievement in the City's Age-friendly NYC efforts and further demonstrates the administration's commitment to addressing the needs of the City's growing number of seniors," said Deputy Mayor Linda Gibbs.

"After a competitive process, we have found the most qualified providers to enhance and transform our senior center network," said Department for the Aging Commissioner Barrios-Paoli. "We've set the bar very high and I am confident that these providers can create and implement quality programming for the City's older adults."

"We are very excited about the innovative senior centers and would like to thank the Mayor, the Deputy Mayor, and the Commissioner for the Department for the Aging for their commitment to older New Yorkers," said CSCS Executive Director Igal Jellinek. "This process has been extremely collaborative and truly marks the success of this initiative."

Enhancing senior centers to better serve a larger, more active and diverse senior population is a key part of creating a more age-friendly city. While still providing meals and opportunities to

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09/01 - 10/31
 Human Services Workshops/GSS host various workshops

09/26 - 12/30
 CAMBA - Entrepreneurial Assistance Program: 60-Hour Business Plan

10/20
 Barrier Free Living's 30th Anniversary Celebration

10/20
 Methodist Home for Nursing and Rehabilitation - 160th Anniversary Gala

10/20
 TURNING THE PAGE: STRATEGIES IN EARLY LITERACY PROMOTION

10/20
 Food Bank for Westchester to Host 21st Annual "An Evening in Good Taste"

10/20
 A Night Out For HeartShare's Respite/Recreation Programs

10/22
 Comunilife's 22nd Anniversary Breakfast

10/22
 Life's WORC Building For Their Tomorrow Walk

10/22
 Join us in celebrating The Mental Health Association of Westchester's 65th anniversary

socialize with their peers, Innovative Senior Centers will be held accountable for producing vibrant programs, high participation rates and better health outcomes for older New Yorkers. Innovative Senior Centers will work with individual members to obtain baseline health information upon enrollment and will measure critical health outcomes over time.

The centers will encourage health and wellness by educating older adults on topics such as nutrition and methods for managing chronic diseases, as well as through fitness and recreational activities such as swimming and community gardening. Innovative Senior Centers will offer flexible and expanded hours and additional transportation options that will better allow seniors of all ages to access their facilities. To meet the individual needs of the communities they serve, some centers have proposed offering dinner meals, evening and weekend hours, café-style flexible meal times, and meal vouchers to offer their members greater flexibility. Innovative centers, particularly in areas such as outer Queens and Staten Island, will provide extensive transportation services to allow additional seniors from neighboring communities to access to their center's programming.

The announcement of sponsors to operate Innovative Senior Centers followed a new, streamlined procurement process that is the first of its kind in City government. The method differed significantly from the traditional Request for Proposals process by shortening processing time, reducing the volume and complexity of paperwork and promoting innovation in the development of programs and services.

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