



ILLINOIS STATE SENATOR OF THE 25TH DISTRICT

Karina Villa, MSW

State Senator - 25th District

(630) 326 - 9319 (EN)

(630) 326 - 9419 (ES)

IL 25TH DISTRICT NEWSLETTER: FEBRUARY 3RD, 2022



Dear Friend,

Tuesday marked the start of Black History Month as well as the beginning of the Chinese Lunar New Year. If you're wishing someone a happy Chinese New Year, here's how to say it: "Gong hei fat choy" is the most common greeting in Cantonese, which is spoken in parts of southern China and Hong Kong. It translates to "wishing you great happiness and prosperity." In Mandarin, the same greeting is "gong xi fa cai."

As part of Black History Month, Gail Borden Public Library in Elgin will host virtual interviews on Black excellence at noon every Thursday in February on Facebook, gbpl.info/fbvirtual. Attendees will learn about what drives Black community members to strive for excellence and celebrate their achievements. Featured guests include Elgin's Poet Laureate Emeritus Chasity Gunn and Monique Howery, chef and proprietor of Moni's Soul food Fiesta.

Become a CASA Advocate

Thinking of becoming a CASA Volunteer? Have you heard about our mission and are not sure what serving as a court-appointed special advocate looks like? Join Illinois CASA for a thirty-minute virtual meeting on February 18th at 12 pm to find out more about the role of volunteers who advocate on behalf of children who have experienced abuse and neglect. [Registration](#) is required.

Connect Illinois Broadband Grant (Round 3)

The Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity announced the third round of grant funding for projects that increase Illinois's broadband network to make it more accessible, equitable, or further innovate the network. There is \$350 million total being dispersed through this

round of funding, and applicants can receive up to \$10 million. To learn more about this grant opportunity click [HERE](#).

Back to Business (B2B) Grant Recipients

There is still a remaining \$139 million in grant funding yet to be dispersed, so don't fear if you're a small business that applied for B2B, but has yet to receive funding. However, I want to highlight and congratulate some businesses that did receive funding in my district with this last round that was released. In September my office partnered with DCEO, Diana Alfaro, and Aurora Hispanic Chamber of Commerce, Karina Garcia, to canvas small businesses to be made aware of the program, so far of these businesses Monarca Gifts, Vanity Hair Salon, Los Girasoles, Nails de Angel, La Cocina de Maria, and El Coco Loco. So far businesses in my district have received a total of \$1.65 million in funding, and I can't wait to see the results as more funding from this program is released.



AgeGuide Funding Opportunity

AgeGuide Northeastern Illinois is soliciting Letters of Interest from non-profit and local government organizations qualified to receive Federal/State of Illinois financial assistance grants to provide services for older adults (age 60+) as authorized under the Older Americans Act of 1965 (Public Law 89-73) in its 8-county Planning and Service Area consisting of DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will counties. The service provider must adhere to AgeGuide's General Service Requirements in addition to service-specific requirements. For further information about grant requirements and the application process, visit AgeGuide's webpage: www.ageguide.org/rfp **Letters of Interest** should be sent to RFPS@ageguide.org no later than **February 16, 2022**.

Stress-Busting for Family Caregivers Program

Join this free online program beginning Tuesday, February 8, in the evening from 6:30 - 8 PM. This program is hosted by the Lake County CaregiverNet, but is open to all caregivers in DuPage, Grundy, Kane, Kankakee, Kendall, Lake, McHenry, and Will counties. The program consists of 90-minute virtual sessions that occur online once per week for 9 weeks in a small group setting with two trained group facilitators.

The Stress-Busting Program teaches:

- The impact of stress on your health and how it relates to caregiving
- How to deal with stress through relaxation techniques and problem-solving
- How to care for yourself while providing better care for your loved one

To register, contact Chris at (847) 596-8226 or email LCCaregiverNet@gmail.com.

Share your Story with the WoodStock Institute

The Woodstock Institute is a research and advocacy group that focuses on consumer financial protection and community development. They played a key role in the development of the Predatory Loan Protection Act, which protects vulnerable communities from predatory lenders. To ensure that their work reflects the needs of the community, the Woodstock Institute is looking to hear from individuals who have been impacted by predatory and discriminatory financial practices. If

you are interested in sharing your story, more information can be found [here](#).

IHDA Affordable Housing Preservation Program Funding

This program opened on January 18th, 2022, and will allow for existing affordable housing units contracted through IHDA to submit requests to receive subordinate funding for outstanding capital improvement needs on the unit. Must be a current unit with existing income and occupancy restrictions to learn more or apply visit: [Property Owners, Managers, & Other Partners - IHDA](#). The deadline to submit an application for this program is February 25th at 5pm.

What's Next?

Our office partners with State Representative Maura Hirschauer and co-runs four advisory committees: Environmental and Agriculture, Mental Health, Seniors, and Education. These committees are a limited public forum led by volunteer chairs and seek to create compassionate conversation among the voices of the 25th/49th districts in order to help build our legislative agenda and grow our knowledge in these areas. Our Education Advisory Committee will meet on February 10th at 7pm. Please email education.49th@gmail.com to receive the zoom link and agenda. Our Senior Advisory Committee will meet on February 11th at 10am. Please email seniors.49th@gmail.com to receive the zoom link and agenda.

My staff and I look forward to hearing from you. I encourage you to reach out to us at 630-326-9319 (English), 630-326-9419 (Spanish) or constituentservices@senatorvilla.com.

Be well and stay warm!



Karina Villa, MSW
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