

Latino Community Development Group Receives Award for Longtime Commitment to Lancaster, PA

*Spanish American Civic Association, a South-Central Pennsylvania Stalwart, Draws Acclaim
for Its Variety of High-Impact Initiatives*

(PHILADELPHIA, October 3, 2013)—The 40-year-old Spanish American Civic Association (SACA) of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, has won this year's Justice Grant from Opportunity Finance Network (OFN).

OFN makes its Justice Grant annually to an organization whose mission supports economic, political or social justice in the U.S. It will present this year's Justice Grant to SACA at a luncheon celebration on Thursday, October 17, during OFN's annual Conference in Philadelphia.

The Spanish American Civic Association for years has been a vibrant presence in Lancaster, a city of 60,000 in south-central Pennsylvania, where about 40 percent of the population is Latino.

SACA today provides and perpetuates crucial services, community development, and cultural unity through a broad array of initiatives.

-- Human services and education programs include: the operation of a longstanding senior center that serves 6,000 meals a month; a 26-bed alcohol-and-drug facility that is the first in-patient center for Latino men in Pennsylvania; outreach treatment for HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted illnesses; a work-force development program that includes a new state-of-the-art center for vocational-technical training; and a neighborhood charter school.

-- SACA neighborhood revitalization programs have brought previously-blighted streets back to life. The organization maintains a robust affordable rental apartment program and has built 40 new owner-occupied townhouses over the past three years alone, several of which were sold to Lancaster public school teachers.

-- It maintains a widely followed 24-hour radio station (WLCH 91.3 FM) with a broad combination of local, national, and international programming that serves its Latino audience with public affairs, news, and entertainment. A recent companion project provides public-access TV programming via an in-house television studio.

Daniel Betancourt, president of the Lancaster-based CDFI Community First Fund, which nominated SACA for this year's Justice Grant, said SACA's founder and CEO, Carlos Graupera, deserves special recognition for his steadfast management of the association and his ability to create consensus and collaboration across ethnic lines.

"Carlos has been a visionary leader, working tirelessly for more than 40 years in support of social, economic, and political justice for low-wealth Latino residents," said Betancourt, whose organization is a Member of OFN. "Carlos continues to advocate for political justice for immigrants today. He has insisted on more representation by Latinos on civic and corporate boards that influence the economic health of the community."



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Opportunity Finance Network, the leading network of private financial institutions, creates growth that is good for communities, investors, individuals, and the economy. Members of OFN are community development financial institutions (CDFIs) that deliver responsible lending to help low-wealth and low-income communities join the economic mainstream. Through 2011, OFN's network originated more than \$30 billion in financing in urban, rural, and Native communities, and financed 940,000 housing units, 83,000 business and microenterprises, and 9,000 community facilities. More information is available at: www.opportunityfinance.net.