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New York City Emergency Management

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NYC EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT PRESENTS THE READY NEW YORK OLDER ADULT CENTER OF THE YEAR AWARD TO SAGE CENTER BRONX

Empowering Older Adults in Readiness: SAGE Center Bronx excels as 'Ready New York Older Adult Center of the Year'

March 13, 2025 – New York City Emergency Management (NYCEM) and the New York City Department for the Aging (DFTA) presented SAGE Center Bronx with the Ready New York Older Adult Center of the Year Award during a ceremony on Wednesday, March 12. The 12th annual award recognizes an older adult center in the five boroughs that has made an ongoing commitment to preparing older adults for emergencies. The award ceremony included remarks from NYCEM Commissioner Zach Iscol, DFTA Commissioner Lorraine A. Cortés-Vázquez, and Bronx Borough Deputy President Janet A. Peguero. The celebration was filled with Bingo, raffles, cake, and giveaways. There was also the distribution of readiness kits at the ceremony. SAGE Center Bronx received the award for their excellence in preparing their community for emergencies.

SAGE Center Bronx at Crotona Pride House provides many critical services to neighborhood residents, including free or low-cost meals, computer literacy training, and daily cultural and social events. More of their outstanding programs and activities include ongoing emergency preparedness classes, exercise and Pilates classes, and regular visits from the local firehouse and scheduled fire drills. Two members were affected by a fire and the center purchased clothes, food, and household items to help support them through a difficult situation. Their renowned programming has even led to some members moving closer to SAGE Center Bronx to participate in their programming regularly. The center's "**Bingocize**" program, a fusion of fitness, health, education, and Bingo has even helped improve the mental health of older adults. SAGE Center Bronx is also an official New York City Cooling Center, meaning when the city is experiencing extreme heat, older adults can seek refuge at the facility to 'beat the heat.'

"SAGE Center Bronx has displayed outstanding work in the LGBTQ+ community and beyond, we are thrilled to recognize the facility for their continuous effort in conducting emergency preparedness classes, exemplifying their hard work, compassion, and resilience," **said NYC Emergency Management Commissioner Zach Iscol**. "Older adult centers are pivotal in providing an array of programs and services to their communities. As we experience more severe weather, it's critical that New Yorkers know what to do in the event of a disaster. During heat emergencies, SAGE Center Bronx also serves as an official New York City Cooling Center. Thanks to the center's dedication to emergency preparedness, we know older adults in this community are better prepared."

"At the opening of Crotona Pride House in 2023, it was clear that SAGE's long-standing tradition

of serving older adults and the LGBTQ+ community, would take place at this new center by creating a welcoming environment for all,” said **Department for the Aging Commissioner Lorraine Cortés-Vázquez**. “Not only have they fulfilled that vision, but during one of the hottest summers in our city’s history, this center opened as a cooling center during every Emergency Heat activation, including over the July 4th weekend. I congratulate them on their commitment and thank Commissioner Iscol and our colleagues at NYC Emergency Management for selecting Crotona Pride House as Older Adult Center of the Year.”

“The people of this community have been incredibly kind and welcoming,” said **Cherise Sherriffe, Interim Director of SAGE Center Bronx**. “Places like SAGE is unique safe space for the LGBTQ+ and immigrant residents that attend the Center. The success of the Center is a direct result of this continuous support from the community; I’m grateful to be a part of this incredible network of people.”

About SAGE Center Bronx

SAGE is the country’s largest and oldest organization dedicated to improving the lives of LGBTQ+ older adults. Founded in 1978 and headquartered in New York City, SAGE is a national organization that offers supportive services and consumer resources to LGBTQ+ seniors and their caregivers. SAGE Center Bronx is located within the same building as the Crotona Pride House, a seven-story residential building that provides some of the city’s only subsidized housing tailored towards LGBTQ+ older adults, is closely affiliated with the residents. The center, formerly located in the Fordham neighborhood, opened its location at 1784 Prospect Ave. during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic and celebrated its official opening in September 2023.

About the Ready New York program

- The Ready New York program outlines three important strategies to preparing for emergencies: Get Ready: Make a Plan – Have at least two emergency contacts – one local and one out-of-area – who you can call in an emergency. Practice your plan with everyone in your home.
- Get Set: Prepare a Stay-at-Home Kit – During emergencies that require you to stay at home, it is important to have extra food and water for everyone in the house and a battery-operated radio for news updates.
- Get Ready to Go: Pack a Go Bag – During emergencies that require you to leave your home, have a Go Bag with emergency supplies.

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