



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Samra G. Brouk

## Senator Brouk Announces Funding For Ibero-American Action League

SAMRA G. BROUK August 2, 2024

| ISSUE: **ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES, CCRISIS SERVICES, ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE**



**ROCHESTER, NY** - Today, State Senator Samra G. Brouk (SD-55), Chair of the New York State Senate Mental Health Committee, announced funding for the Ibero-American Action League’s SMART Recovery Program– the only program of its kind in Rochester that provides mutual “peer support specialists” in the Spanish language for individuals recovering from addiction.

The announcement brought together community members and celebrated Senator Brouk awarding \$50,000 in funding to the Ibero-American Action League. The Ibero-American Action League provides care management services for vulnerable community members. This funding will allow them to continue care management and expand their peer support programming for individuals with mental and substance abuse disorders.

Ibero's SMART Recovery is a mutual peer support program offered in the Spanish language which helps individuals recovering from a variety of addictions. The program elevates self-reliance and matches individuals in need with a peer who can work one-on-one to ensure that the individual's basic needs are met.

A peer support specialist is a person with lived experiences with mental health or substance abuse disorders and is trained to aid others with those same conditions. Peer support workers are an effective, culturally competent way to help individuals with mental health and substance use needs. Senator Brouk's advocacy for Daniel's Law ([S2398](#)) seeks to similarly ensure that individuals experiencing mental health crises receive compassionate responses through peer support.

**Senator Samra G. Brouk (SD-55), Chair of the Senate Committee on Mental Health:** "We know that compassionate, culturally competent responses to an individual experiencing a mental health crisis or recovering from addiction is the best way to serve our community. Trained peer specialists, with shared language, culture, and lived experiences, are uniquely positioned to guide individuals with trauma. I am proud to fund and support a culturally-informed program at Ibero that provides the only Spanish speaking peer support program in Rochester. This work amplifies the ground work that is being done to elevate trauma-informed, culturally competent approaches to mental health statewide."

**Angelica Perez-Delgado, Ibero President and CEO:** “We often turn to family, faith, and community when dealing with mental health and substance abuse issues. This grant will enable us to expand our capacity to support the development of bilingual Peer Engagement Specialists and Family Navigators, and to raise awareness of the unique needs of Latino and other BIPOC communities, which are crucial for delivering effective treatment. We extend our gratitude to Senator Brouk for her support in helping us innovate in an area where bilingual peers are still limited.”

**Lucia Colindres, Ibero Chief Program Officer:** “Peers are essential to mental health and recovery teams, offering both lived experience and specialized training to effectively support and guide others. Their unique capacity to build understanding and connection underscores the critical need for funding to sustain and expand programs like ours. At Ibero, a grassroots organization, this model is particularly effective as we work closely with our community, with many of our staff reflecting the communities we serve.”

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2023-S2398**

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- Introduced
  
- ◦ In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
  
- ◦ On Floor Calendar Assembly

- On Floor Calendar Senate

- ◦ Passed Assembly

- Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Establishes a statewide emergency and crisis response council

January 20, 2023

In Senate Committee **Finance**

Sponsored by **Samra G. Brouk**

Do you support this bill?