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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: SEPTEMBER 29, 2015

THE MARY KAY FOUNDATION AWARDS CAYUGA/SENECA COMMUNITY ACTION AGENCY, INC. \$20,000 GRANT FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS

Local Shelter is One of 150 to Receive Funding in Advance of Domestic Violence Awareness Month

AUBURN, NEW YORK, September 29, 2015 – Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency’s Domestic Violence Services Department received a \$20,000 grant from The Mary Kay Foundation in advance of Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October. The Foundation has awarded \$20,000 in grants to 150 domestic violence shelters in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico for a total of \$3 million.

While more than half of the grant recipients use the unrestricted funds for basic operating expenses, others hire much needed personnel, complete repairs and facility renovations or add programs and resources based on the unique needs of their shelter and the clients they serve. Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency will use the grant funding to provide critical support for its Financial Empowerment Program.

“We are incredibly grateful for support from The Mary Kay Foundation and its commitment to break the cycle of domestic violence,” said Laurie A. Piccolo, Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency’s Executive Director. “These funds will expand our Financial Empowerment Program funded in the first instance through the Zonta Club of Auburn. The program includes financial literacy, credit repair, match savings and micro-lending to support financial self-sufficiency and independence among survivors of domestic violence.”

Patty Weaver, Domestic Violence Services Coordinator, said, “Many batterers deny their victims access to financial resources, engage in tactics that destroy their credit, sabotage their employment efforts, and engage in other means of financial control. All of these economic abuses make it difficult for survivors to attain financial independence from their batterer. With support of The Mary Kay Foundation and the Zonta Club of Auburn, CSCAA’s Financial Empowerment Program will provide significant support to assist survivors of domestic violence with moving toward financial self-sufficiency.”

"Mary Kay has a long-standing commitment to prevent and end domestic violence," said Anne Crews, board member for The Mary Kay Foundation and Vice President of Public Affairs for Mary Kay Inc. "While progress has been made in the United States in meeting the needs of the thousands of domestic violence survivors who seek help each and every day, there remains a significant gap between funding and resources. We know from our work with shelter directors across the nation that the Foundation's annual grants are a lifeline for many shelters and continues to impact an epidemic that touches one in every four women."

Since 2000, The Mary Kay Foundation has donated \$35.6 million to domestic violence organizations through its annual shelter grant program. Each year, grants are awarded to at least one domestic violence shelter in every state with the remaining grants distributed based on state population. U.S. territories including Puerto Rico, Guam and the Virgin Islands have also received funding through the Shelter Grant program. Approximately 625 domestic violence shelters applied for funding this year.

About The Mary Kay Foundation

The Mary Kay Foundation was created in 1996, and its mission is two-fold: to fund research of cancers affecting women and to help prevent domestic violence while raising awareness of the issue. The Mary Kay Foundation has awarded \$64.2 million to shelters and programs addressing domestic violence prevention and cancer researchers and related causes throughout the United States. To learn more about The Mary Kay Foundation, please visit www.marykayfoundation.org or call 1-877-MKCARES (652-2737).

About Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency, Inc.

Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency, Inc. is a private, not-for-profit that was incorporated in 1965 through the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, to fight the war against poverty locally. The Agency serves both Cayuga and Seneca Counties, with a staff of more than 130 employees. The mission of the Cayuga/Seneca Community Action Agency, Inc. is to respectfully assist people to achieve and sustain self-sufficiency through direct services, education, and community partnerships. The Financial Empowerment Program is an integral part of the portfolio of services available through the Agency's Domestic Violence Services Department. Other services include operation of a 9-bed Emergency Shelter, 24/7 Crisis Hotline (315-255-6221), Transitional Housing Assistance Program, Supervised Visitation/Safe Exchange, court accompaniment, crime victims compensation assistance, advocacy and education.

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