

Guardian Angels Graduate in Rochester

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(ABC 6 NEWS) - The streets of Rochester may soon be a little bit safer thanks to the newly-formed Rochester Chapter of the Guardian Angels.

After training since February, the first class out of Rochester graduated today.

◆For the Guardian Angels, growth and development in the past 8 years has mostly been in cities of 100,000 population or less,◆ said Founder of the Guardian Angels, Curtis Sliwa.

These seven Rochester Guardian Angels have been training since early this year.

"Well, we all worked hard for what we're going to achieve today,◆ said Rider.

Members like Rider, who wish to be referred to by their aliases, say graduating is the first milestone in what will be a life long commitment.

"You know, the police seem to be overwhelmed. And when I heard the Guardian Angels may come, I decided I would sign up," said Rider.

The angels are sworn to secrecy in regards to their patrol efforts.

Rider says he can't speak about when or where they will patrol, but he did say they will start foot patrols immediately.

"Drug deals are happening on every corner, in schools, you know. We want to put an end to it,◆ said Rider.

"I think some people have a perception that it's almost like vigilantes. I don't think that's the case,◆ said Mayor Ardeell Brede.

The Angels aren't armed with weapons but are trained in hand-to-hand combat, CPR, and first aid.

Mayor Brede says he believes the group will help police.

"Basically, I just want to learn a little bit more about what's being planned,◆ said Brede.

"We're going to be the eyes and ears of the police department. We're going to help them,◆ said Rider.

And hopefully put their months of training to good use.

The group does not have a set meeting date yet, but LaPlante says it will be sometime in September.

Anyone interested in joining the Rochester Guardian Angels can call him at (507) 272-0544.