



**\*\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE\*\*\***

**August 6, 2016**

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## **LEADING ELECTED OFFICIALS, LARGEST PHYSICIAN-LED HEALTHCARE NETWORK COME TOGETHER TO ADDRESS HEALTH ISSUES IN THE USA'S "LEAST HEALTHY" DISTRICT**

*Senator Gustavo Rivera; Councilmembers Vanessa Gibson, Ritchie Torres Unite with Advocate Community Providers, Community Organizations to Promote Health and Health Literacy Where It's Needed Most*

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**(The Bronx, New York)** – Advocate Community Providers (ACP), a network of over 2,000 independent physicians citywide serving a Medicaid population of nearly 100,000 Bronx residents concentrated in largely Hispanic and African American low-income communities, was joined today by State Senator Gustavo Rivera, Councilwoman Vanessa Gibson and Councilman Ritchie Torres – at a community health fair culminating a week of health education activities – to address residents of Community District 3 on management and care of persistent health issues in the community.

A recent New York City Community Wellness Report found that District 3 is the unhealthiest community in the state of New York and one of the least healthy in the country, plagued with the highest rates of several severe health issues including diabetes, obesity and tobacco use. Community physicians and partners in the Advocate Community Providers network were onsite to provide free health testing and stress the importance of healthy routines and behaviors in managing and preventing severe health problems.

“Advocate Community Providers believes that consistent engagement and active participation of the community is necessary to address the chronic health issues - such as obesity, diabetes and tobacco use – that afflict our communities,” said **Moisés Pérez-Martínez, Direct of Workforce, Community and Government Relations for Advocate Community Providers**. “Our Health Week has been an opportunity to highlight the health resources available to Bronx residents and come together as one community to build the health literacy and awareness that will lead to a healthier Bronx.”

“I’m excited to join Advocate Community Providers as they celebrate the start of their annual Health Week,” said **State Senator Gustavo Rivera**. “In launching a beautification project at Butler Houses and in hosting a “Get Focused” pop up store, Advocate Community Providers are not only mobilizing community residents to improve their neighborhood, but they are also helping children get excited about reading and exercising, which will improve their health.”

“As communities in the Bronx continue to suffer from health disparities and lack of access to adequate services, it is imperative that we put together all the resources on-hand to help residents make health conscious decisions. By promoting healthy lifestyles through outreach efforts, publicity and events, like health fairs, we can continue to elevate our communities and improve health outcomes,” said **Councilmember Ritchie Torres of the Bronx**.



“I want to commend Advocate Community Providers for their leadership in hosting a Community Health Fair for families in District 16 in the Bronx. Recognizing the Bronx faces health disparities and accessing quality and affordable healthcare, it is important for community organizations to promote health and wellness, health education and activities for families that promote leading healthy lifestyles. I am thankful for the partnership of my Colleagues in government working with Advocate Community Providers, Health First and United Healthcare to focus on health and ensure that we are working together to strengthen families and build a healthier and more vibrant borough of the Bronx,” said **Councilmember Vanessa Gibson of the Bronx**.

At today’s event, the Citizen’s Committee for New York City gave a contribution of \$750 to the Church of St. Augustine Our Lady of Victory for a community garden at the Butler Houses to promote healthy eating and educate about food justice. Additionally, Get Focused, one of ACP’s partner organizations – which hosts book fairs in which students earn points to “purchase” their favorite books by completing fitness challenges guided by certified trainers – held a pop-up shop for attendees.

**Peter H. Kostmayer, CEO of Citizens Committee for New York City** said, “We are fortunate to live in a city where hundreds of locally-based grassroots groups identify serious local issues and in short order put together impactful initiatives that improve quality of life for families. Citizens Committee is proud to support the community gardening efforts of the Healthy Habits Committee at Claremont Village and thrilled to provide this dedicated group of volunteers with a \$750 Neighborhood Grant. Childhood obesity and diabetes are largely preventable, especially when addressed at an early age, and the fresh local produce grown by local residents show that they themselves are providing public health solutions, protecting the lives of children, and expanding awareness about the importance of nutritious whole foods in our diet.”

As part of Bronx Health Week, Advocate Community Providers and its partner organizations held health education programming and clinics throughout the week, including free health screenings, seminars on healthy eating and food justice and exercise classes. ACP also partnered with local, health-conscious businesses to provide promotional discounts to give Bronx residents the opportunity to sample healthy products and services.

Partner businesses included:

- Next Level Martial Arts
- Retro Fitness
- Associated Supermarket
- Met Fresh Supermarket
- Yuderka Santana’s Fruit Stand

**\*\*Photos from today’s event will be available at [www.acppps.org/acphealthfair](http://www.acppps.org/acphealthfair)\*\***

### **About Advocate Community Providers**

Advocate Community Providers (ACP) unites 2,000 individual, independent physicians with 950 hospital partners and community-based organizations dedicated to health, wellness and social services in lower-income, underserved Hispanic, Asian and African-American communities throughout New York City. Representing 650,000 patients across four boroughs of New York City,



ACP was created in partnership with Northwell Health (formerly North Shore-Long Island Jewish Health System). ACP's mission is to convene safety-net providers, partners and other stakeholders to create a culturally competent patient-centered, comprehensive and coordinated service care model to meet the needs of individuals and families participating in Medicaid. ACP is one of 25 Performing Provider Systems (PPS) in New York's Delivery Reform Incentive Payment program (DSRIP) to transform the State's Medicaid system. DSRIP's goals include reducing avoidable hospitalizations and ensuring that patients and their families with Medicaid switch to a community-based care system that emphasizes preventative care over reliance on the emergency room.

For more information on ACP or DSRIP, visit <http://www.acppps.org/>.

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