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Mayor Steven Fulop and the Department of Health & Human Services Awarded \$200,000 Grant from New Jersey Health Initiatives and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to Support the Partnership for a HealthierJC

Jersey City One of Ten Grants Awarded Statewide; Partnership for a HealthierJC Engages More than 60 Community Representatives in Developing Programming to Improve Health Initiatives for Residents Citywide

JERSEY CITY – **Mayor Steven M. Fulop** and the **Department of Health and Human Services** announced today that the City of Jersey City has been awarded one of ten four year, **\$200,000 grants** from **New Jersey Health Initiatives** and the **Robert Wood Johnson Foundation** to support **Mayor Fulop’s Partnership for a HealthierJC** as the administration continues to expand health programming for city residents. The grant funds support multi-sector, community-focused coalitions under *NJHI: Building a Culture of Health in New Jersey – Communities Moving to Action*, an initiative to strengthen communities across New Jersey to make sustainable system changes and policy-oriented, long-term solutions for healthier living.

Spanning the full geography of the Garden State the 10 recipients will serve as laboratories for innovative approaches to sustaining healthy communities. These 10 projects were selected to encompass a diverse group based on their location in the state, whether urban or rural, and which populations they serve.

“We are thrilled and honored to be one of ten cities in the state to receive this grant from New Jersey Health Initiatives and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation as we push toward our goal of becoming an even healthier city,” said **Mayor Fulop**. “The Partnership for a HealthierJC is aggressively developing a roadmap for health by challenging local institutions to raise the bar to make healthy living a key component of all programming and this funding will go a long way toward reaching that goal.”

Grant funded communities have received \$50,000 for their first year, with an additional \$150,000 granted in total over the final three grant years (provided the coalition members raise at least \$35,000 in matching funding during the final two years of the initiative). During the first year, teams from each coalition will participate in a Boundary Spanning Leadership Institute, to develop tools and build skills to work on multi-faceted community issues, culminating in the development of an action plan to collectively address the most pressing needs of their community.

Established in July 2013 by Mayor Fulop through the Department of Health and Human Services, the Partnership for a HealthierJC is tasked with increasing health programming for city residents and expanding community and healthcare stakeholder involvement. The Partnership currently includes more than 60 members representative of community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, neighborhood block associations, community volunteers, farmers’ markets, healthcare providers, national and statewide organizations, institutions of higher education, cultural groups, public housing providers, local businesses and business districts, and various other community health partners.

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Grant partners with the City of Jersey City include the Department of Health and Human Services, the Jersey City Medical Center, the Jersey City Housing Authority, New Jersey City University and the Jersey City Parks Coalition, who will all serve on the Community Coalition and participate in the Boundary Spanning Leadership Institute.

“Jersey City Medical Center, a Barnabas Health facility, would like to thank New Jersey Health Initiatives and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation for selecting the Partnership for a Healthier Jersey City as a grant recipient,” said **Joseph F. Scott, FACHE- President and CEO, Jersey City Medical Center**. “We are pleased to work collaboratively with Mayor Fulop and the Department of Health and Human Service to develop a blueprint for health citywide that will ensure increased resident participation in programs designed to improve health, while also assisting our coalition to lessen health disparities so we can provide the right care from the right professional at the right time and place.”

Some of the key accomplishments of the Partnership include reaching more than 2,000 WIC clients with grocery store tours; leveraging a donation of 120 Earth Boxes from Garden State Urban Farms to promote urban farming in low-income neighborhoods and at affordable housing sites; enrollment of more than 5,000 individuals in the federal healthcare marketplace; administration of summer and afterschool meals programs to 70 sites citywide; hosting the season premiere of the Dr. Oz Show to provide free heart health screenings to hundreds of residents; and, securing five gold medals through Michele Obama’s *Let’s Move! Cities, Towns and Counties Program*.

Additionally, the Partnership has played an instrumental role in implementing Jersey City’s mandatory Earned Sick Leave legislation, as Mayor Fulop made Jersey City the first municipality in New Jersey to enact such legislation; adoption of the Smoke Free Parks ordinance; establishment of Employee Wellness Wednesdays; and, hosting a Professional Development Day for daycare providers to review city programming and to exchange ideas about best practices in infant, toddler and preschooler care.

“Building a culture of health at the community level requires collaboration – individual groups can’t solve health challenges working in isolation,” said **NJHI Director Bob Atkins, PhD, RN, FAAN**. “We’ve found that communities across New Jersey are already forming coalitions of diverse organizations, including hospital systems, local health and human service agencies, schools, businesses, elected officials, public health officers, and engaged citizens. We’re hoping to add to the long-term strength of those community coalitions through not just funding, but also training and coaching.”

As part of the grant award, the Partnership will work to coordinate the efforts among stakeholders who have a shared interest in enhancing community health across Jersey City and are representative of the broad categories of clinical, behavioral, environmental and socioeconomic factors influencing public health.

The Partnership continues to conduct outreach and educational activities that empower residents, organizations and businesses to act independently to improve the health status of their home or workplace. The Partnership’s comprehensive health literacy efforts include monthly health workshops, screenings, health fairs, trainings, and conferences. This continued education and training will further strengthen the Partnership and its membership to impact a much larger segment of Jersey City population, including the 140,000 members of the local labor force.

About the Partnership for a HealthierJC

The Partnership for a Healthier JC was established in July 2013 by Mayor Fulop as a vehicle to foster collaboration among organizations with overlapping goals and objectives, build community-wide capacity to identify and address public health needs, and coordinate action towards a healthier Jersey City. Over the past 18 months, the development of the Partnership as the community engagement arm of the Department of Health and Human Services has strengthened coordination among public health stakeholders and helped to streamline critical public health initiatives across the City. The formation of the Partnership has catalyzed multi-sector stakeholder innovation by providing greater flexibility and response capabilities among organizations working to address community health needs.

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About New Jersey Health Initiatives

New Jersey Health Initiatives (NJHI) is a statewide grantmaking program of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, located on the Camden campus of Rutgers University. This program office is funded through a grant to the Rutgers Institute of Health, Health Care Policy and Aging Research. NJHI supports innovations and drives conversations to build healthier communities through grantmaking across the State of New Jersey. To meet the many health needs of our state's diverse populations, regions and communities, the NJHI program encourages collaboration across sectors in our state's communities to foster deep relationships committed to long-term change affording everyone the opportunity to live the healthiest life possible. NJHI's mission mirrors that of the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation -- to improve the health and health care of all Americans. NJHI does this by striving to build a Culture of Health right here in New Jersey, the Foundation's home state, that will enable all to live longer, healthier lives now and for generations to come.

About the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation

For more than 40 years the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has worked to improve health and health care. We are striving to build a national Culture of Health that will enable all to live longer, healthier lives now and for generations to come. For more information, visit www.rwjf.org. Follow the Foundation on Twitter at www.rwjf.org/twitter or on Facebook at www.rwjf.org/facebook.