



## **MEDIA INFORMATION**

### ***Corporate Marketing & Public Relations***

*D'Youville Health Professions Hub  
301 Connecticut St. · Buffalo, New York 14213*

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Catholic Health, D'Youville College and FeedMore WNY to Open Food FARMacy at Sisters Health Center D'Youville**

[Sisters Health Center D'Youville](#) located in the [college's Health Professions Hub](#) on Buffalo's Westside, will be adding a much needed resource and service for the local community – nutritional food. A collaboration between Catholic Health, D'Youville College and FeedMore WNY, the center's "Food FARMacy" is a unique and innovative service enabling primary care providers to link patients at risk for food insecurity to nutritional food; ongoing education regarding diet, exercise, and symptom management; and needed support to change behaviors and improve health outcomes.

While there are many causes of food insecurity, the most common are un- or under-employment, poverty, lack of access to SNAP/food assistance programs, and medical or health costs. Pre-pandemic, Buffalo was recognized as the third poorest major city in the country with more than one-third of its residents living at or below the federal poverty line.

"Proper nutrition is a cornerstone to the overall health of our patients as well as preventative care for those with food insecurities in our community," said Joyce Markiewicz, Executive Vice President/Chief Business Development Officer for Catholic Health. "The addition of the Food FARMacy at the Hub provides a much needed resource that will enable us to offer a more holistic approach to care for patients and their families."

In line with its mission of providing accessible food to the WNY community, a dietician from FeedMore WNY will work with Sisters Health Center patients to help educate them on proper nutrition and to assess their ongoing health relative to desired outcomes. Area residents and students who are in-need will be able to get the same full service offerings from the Food FARMacy, but must opt-in to participate in programming, which includes working with a FeedMore WNY dietician.

"Hunger and health are interconnected, and we know that food insecurity impacts health status, including putting individuals at greater risk for chronic diseases," Tara A. Ellis, president and CEO of FeedMore WNY, said. "We are proud to partner with Catholic Health and D'Youville College on this innovative program that will provide access to nutritious food and comprehensive services so our vulnerable neighbors can improve and maintain good health."

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D'Youville College graduate assistants completing studies in Nutrition and Dietetics will assist with scheduling, follow up calls, order fulfillment, health tracking, nutrition education and more.

“The Food FARMacy is a shining example of the type of collaboration we envisioned when founding our Health Professions Hub,” said Lorrie A. Clemo, PhD, D'Youville President. “We are thrilled to be part of such an important partnership that has come together to meet a pressing community need.”

The funds for this project were made possible through a generous two year grant from UnitedHealthcare's Empowering Health commitment to expand access to care and address social determinants of health for underserved communities and uninsured individuals. To date, the Empowering Health program has invested more than \$40 million in grants across the country since its launch in 2018, including \$1 million this year in New York. Other funders include the Vogt Family Foundation, EPIC and the Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition.

In year one, the Food FARMacy anticipates serving approximately 2,000 individuals; 1,000 patients through Food FARMacy referrals, and 800 walk-in community members. The first phase of the Food FARMacy, launching fall 2021, will include the distribution of healthy food and supportive educational sessions followed by additional programming.

#### ***About Catholic Health, D'Youville College and FeedMore WNY:***

- [Catholic Health](#) is one of the largest providers of healthcare in Western New York. As the region's quality leader, our network includes four hospitals across five campuses; four long term care facilities; three home care agencies; and numerous diagnostic, treatment, rehabilitation, and specialty services. Catholic Health was named the 2020 Healthcare Company of the Year in Western New York, across our five Joint Commission Certified hospitals. With more than 9,000 associates and 1,500 physicians part of healing ministry dating back 170 years, we work tirelessly to live our mission: to reveal the healing love of Jesus to all.
- [D'Youville College](#) is Western New York's top private healthcare educator, located in the heart of the diverse West Side of Buffalo. More than 3,000 students study each year across 50 majors in undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programs. Healthcare related programs include pharmacy, nursing, physician assistant, dietetics, nurse practitioner, mental health nurse practitioner, and chiropractic. D'Youville College has been recognized for inter-disciplinary study, health equity research, student experience, and innovation in education.
- [FeedMore WNY](#) offers dignity, hope and a brighter future by providing nutritious food, friendship and skills training to its Western New York neighbors in need. Through its food bank distribution center and partner hunger-relief agencies, as well as its Meals on Wheels services, other targeted feeding programs and RISE workforce development program, FeedMore WNY alleviates hunger and assists community members of all ages throughout Cattaraugus, Chautauqua, Erie and Niagara counties. In 2020, FeedMore WNY distributed enough food to provide nearly 16 million meals to those in need.

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