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P R E S S R E L E A S E

For Immediate Release

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Foundation Funds Innovative Women's Groups

The Foundation for Community Health has recently funded an innovative and collaborative program that will help the immigrant community in eastern Dutchess County.

The Foundation has funded Catholic Charities Community Services, located in Dutchess County, to assemble various women's groups of "Kinship Circles" in eastern Dutchess County. The groups will meet monthly and the women will be encouraged to see themselves as a resource to each other, sharing their collective experiences and identifying the kinds of information that they want to learn through presentations that will be arranged by them and for them. Solange Muller, MPH, the principal researcher on *The Immigrant Health Initiative: A Study of Health Care of Recent Immigrants in Dutchess County, New York* that was partially funded by the Foundation for Community Health, will work with the groups to help improve their knowledge about healthcare services, nutrition, chronic diseases, prenatal care, and the establishment of a primary care provider.

This project is in response to one of the major findings of the study indicating that immigrant women are the entry point for engaging the entire family in primary care and eventually leading them to regular preventive health visits. In addition, the Kinship Circles will help to address another key finding of the study by creating a supportive environment that will help to ease the feelings of loss and isolation that is created by the stress of separation from family, community and the culture in their native countries.

Over the past several years, the Foundation for Community Health has made a significant commitment to improving the health and well-being of the underserved immigrant community. It has convened meetings and brought providers together to discuss issues and to explore possible solutions as well as awarded grants and conducted research. Funding the study and the consequent Kinship Circles is an example of their ongoing effort. The full study, and a corresponding Issue Brief recently published by the Foundation, can be viewed on their website at www.fchealth.org.