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HHS LAUNCHES NORTH HARTFORD COMMUNITY GARDEN PARTNERSHIP *Strengthening Roots in the North End with Saint Francis Care, UConn School of Medicine, Hartford Food System*

NEWS RELEASE

The Hartford Department of Health and Human Services, in partnership with Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center, the UConn School of Medicine, Hartford Food System, and Knox Parks Foundation announced the opening of a new community garden initiative on Monday, June 20.

As a way to further strengthen our roots in North Hartford, this partnership established a new community garden on the site of the Burgdorf/Bank of America Health Center and the Hartford Department of Health and Human Services. This effort will bring together staff, clients and neighborhood families to foster strong relationships that are focused on health.

“Our partners work with us every day to build a ‘Healthy Hartford.’ What better way to collaborate than to grow fresh vegetables and offer our neighbors and clients a learning experience coupled with healthy food?” said Carlos Rivera, Director.

"We are proud to be collaborating with the City of Hartford and UConn in planting a garden at the Burgdorf/Bank of America Center on our Mount Sinai Campus. The vegetables cultivated will in turn be distributed to the community through the Saint Francis Food Bank. It's a wonderful way to keep the community healthy while broadening the education provided on our campus," said Christopher Dadlez, President and Chief Executive Officer, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center.

“We are thrilled to join together and get our hands dirty in this community service project designed to strengthen our own roots in the neighborhood we serve. As the fruit trees and vegetable plants grow, so will our relationships with local families,” stated Bruce E. Gould, MD.

Support, expertise and planting supplies were provided by the Hartford Food System and the Knox Parks Foundation, leaders in the establishment of community gardens.

Speakers at today’s ceremony included:

- Monty MacNeil, D.D.S., M.Dent.Sc., Dean, UConn School of Dental Medicine
- Donna Benzinger, B.S.N., R.N., Director of Ambulatory Services, Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center
- Bruce E. Gould MD, FACP, Medical Director, Burgdorf Health Center, and UConn School of Medicine Associate Dean for Primary Care
- Carlos Rivera, MPH, LCSW, MBA, FACHE, Director, Hartford Department of Health and Human Services, on behalf of Mayor Pedro E. Segarra.

For more information please contact Evelyn Mantilla, Communications Manager at (860) 757-4729.

