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Contact: Trish Hrina
Public Relations & Marketing
Phone: (330) 841-3301 or (330) 509-1238

Northside Medical Center to House Valley's New Community College

August 3, 2009/ Youngstown- Forum Health, the parent company for Northside Medical Center (NMC) in Youngstown, has entered into an agreement to host Eastern Gateway Community College (Eastern Gateway)-- a new school currently in development to become the Mahoning Valley's first community college.

"We're pleased to be the home for this innovative, new educational effort", says Forum Health president and CEO Walter "Buzz" Pishkur. "We believe this partnership will greatly enhance access to education in our community. Ultimately, this will lead to a better-trained workforce, which will lead to new businesses coming to our area and, finally, a more robust local economy. We will see the positive results of this arrangement for years to come."

Under the new agreement with the State Chancellor's office, NMC will provide space in its Medical Education Building to house Eastern Gateway's administrative offices and several classrooms. The new community college is designed to spread-out operations to several existing buildings in the Valley as opposed to constructing new buildings in a campus model. Pishkur praises this concept because it allows more of the college's funds to be used for instruction rather than construction.

Dr. Laura Meeks, President of Jefferson County Community College, Chancellor Eric Fingerhut and all the education partners are to be congratulated for working collaboratively to bring this community college to our valley!

NMC has an extensive history in education. It is the region's largest and oldest teaching hospital, tracing its beginning back to 1881. The Medical Education Building was established in partnership with another area education institution-- North East Ohio Universities College of Medicine (NEOUCOM). It is the main facility for NMC's six medical residency programs--which trains doctors from all over the world--as well as a dental clinic that serves thousands of low-income valley residents. Pishkur notes the residency program is responsible for attracting physicians to the Youngstown area where about 60% of them stay to practice. Pishkur says medical education has been a vital element in providing high-quality healthcare to the Valley.

Eastern Gateway Community College is scheduled to begin classes August 24, 2009.

Forum Health operates Northside Medical Center, Trumbull Memorial Hospital and Hillside Rehabilitation Hospital and is the second largest employer in the Mahoning Valley with nearly 4,000 employees.

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