

## COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

Serving Ulster County New York, and Surrounding Communities

(unless otherwise noted, all phone #'s are in 845 area code)

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Business Spotlights, Community Announcements,  
Events, Press Releases, Workshops, and Much More**  
(Updated April 14, 2009)

### **April 17 - Catskill Hudson AHEC to Launch HealthMatch Pilot Program in Ellenville**

Catskill Hudson Area Health Education Center (Catskill Hudson AHEC) will launch HealthMatch, an innovative community-specific health professional recruitment service, at a press conference on Friday, April 17th at 10:00 a.m. The event will be held at the Catskill Hudson AHEC office at 598 State Route 299, Highland, NY. \*

HealthMatch was developed by Catskill Hudson AHEC earlier this year to encourage healthcare, business and civic leaders to work collaboratively to increase local access to quality healthcare by recruiting healthcare professionals into the community to live and work. HealthMatch:

- Educates local stakeholders to take responsibility in promoting better community health and become ambassadors in the effort to bring healthcare professionals to the community.
- Conducts need assessments to determine what type of and how many healthcare professionals are needed in each community.
- Works with communities to develop strategies for raising private and public support, including that from local, state and/or federal grants.
- Assists communities to market themselves as desirable neighborhoods for healthcare professionals to live and work.
- Develops collaborative partnerships with local hospitals, industry and foundations to establish financial pools dedicated to providing financial incentives for healthcare professionals to relocate to the area.
- Assists new healthcare providers with managed care credentialing and contract negotiations; the selection of computerized practice management and electronic health record systems; staff recruitment; office set-up; marketing and advertising.

Catskill Hudson Area Health Education Center is one of nine AHECs statewide whose initiative is to find solutions to the drastic shortages and serious lack of diversity within New York State's healthcare workforce. Strategies include introducing young people and adult career seekers to various healthcare career options, developing opportunities for future health professionals to receive their clinical training in underserved areas, providing continuing education and professional support to health practitioners, and recruiting health professionals to underserved communities.

"The return on investment from HealthMatch is huge," said Kathryn Reed, Executive Director of Catskill Hudson AHEC. "The community reaps substantial benefits in terms of increasing quality healthcare that is available locally, higher paying jobs for both providers and their support staff; and an overall healthier workforce because of improved

healthcare access. A more intangible, but no less important benefit is the renewed sense of community that results when people come together for a common purpose.”

Catskill Hudson AHEC is thankful for the many local officials who wrote letters of support for HealthMatch and aided in the acquisition of a \$200,000 HEAL NY Grant to stimulate and subsidize health-planning efforts by stakeholders working collaboratively to promote healthy communities. Funds from this grant will be directed specifically towards a HealthMatch demonstration project with the community of Ellenville in Ulster County . Government officials, who have had a focus on healthcare issues in Ulster County and, in particular, the Ellenville community, are Assemblyman Peter Lopez, Assemblyman Kevin Cahill, Assemblywoman Nancy Calhoun and State Senator John J. Bonacic.

"Attracting and retaining physicians and other health care professionals in our rural communities remains a high priority," said Assemblyman Pete Lopez, who represents an expansive and largely rural district in the mid-Hudson, northern Catskills, and Southern Tier. "In last year's state budget we added funding to support the Doctors Across New York program. Today's announcement with the Catskill Area Health Education Center (AHEC) will strengthen our hand as we work to bring these much-needed health care professionals to our region. I applaud Catskill AHEC's passion and commitment to the health and well-being of our families."

“Catskill Hudson AHEC understands that the key components of quality health care are affordability and access,” said Assemblyman Kevin Cahill. “They play an invaluable role in our health delivery system in the Catskill and Hudson Valley region by coordinating providers and ensuring that people receive the proper care they need when they need it. HealthMatch will build upon their success and I salute them for this initiative.”

“Attracting and retaining qualified doctors, nurses, and other medical providers is key to ensuring we have quality healthcare in the Hudson Valley ,” said Senator Bonacic. “I was pleased to support the funds which have been obtained and look forward to continuing to advocate for better healthcare in the communities of the Hudson Valley .”

“During these uncertain economic times, it is essential that all sectors of society come together to achieve common goals, such as providing quality health care services,” said Assemblywoman Nancy Calhoun. “The Catskill Hudson Area Health Education Center is a positive force in the Mid-Hudson region and with this funding, the Center will be able to fulfill its goal of bringing health care organizations, businesses and social groups together to educate the public and positively impact the residents of the 96th Assembly District.”

Catskill Hudson AHEC is devoted to improving the quality, geographic distribution and retention of healthcare professionals and to stimulate interest in health professions careers through education throughout its 11 county service area. The counties Catskill Hudson AHEC serves are Columbia , Delaware , Dutchess, Greene, Orange , Otsego, Putnam, Rockland , Schoharie, Sullivan, and Ulster . For information on Catskill Hudson AHEC, visit their website at [www.chahec.org](http://www.chahec.org) .

\*Directions: Catskill Hudson AHEC is located approx. 2 miles directly off of the Poughkeepsie Exit #18 of the NYS Thruway on Route 299.

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