

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 10th, 2019



Cleveland Clinic, Ascension Michigan and Catholic Health Announce Innovative \$20 Million Partnership to Benefit Caregivers

Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation funding innovative model to support caregivers and help improve retention rates

Detroit, MI – Cleveland Clinic, Ascension Michigan, Catholic Health and the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation announced today an innovative partnership aimed to better support healthcare caregivers.

The program, called Transformational Healthcare Readiness through Innovative Vocational Education (THRIVE), was conceived by Cleveland Clinic and will be piloted across three regions — Cleveland Clinic in Northeast Ohio, Catholic Health in Western New York, and Ascension Michigan in Southeast Michigan — over the next three years to demonstrate how health systems can better support caregivers. The program will be supported by a cumulative investment of more than \$20 million, including more than \$15 million in grants from the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation.

Healthcare is projected to be the largest employment sector in the U.S. economy by 2026, and the fastest growing occupations in the sector are “direct care” or “front-line” caregivers. But despite the number of job openings, recruitment and retention of caregivers remains a pervasive challenge. Many caregivers may also face barriers to success which can lead to high rates of turnover.

The THRIVE model is a collaborative and strategic approach to better support caregivers through implementing new screening tools, tailored life skills support and enhanced training.

“THRIVE is a great opportunity for the Foundation to help facilitate and support an unprecedented partnership between three health systems working within three major cities and regions to better support, recognize and value caregivers,” **said David O. Egner, president and CEO of the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation.** “The program sits at the intersection of two of our grant-making focus areas - caregivers and workforce development. And with caregiver recruitment and retention being a challenge that exists beyond the Foundation’s two primary geographies of Western New York and Southeast Michigan, our hope is for THRIVE to serve as a sustainable model that can be implemented nationwide.”

“We strive to be the best place to work in healthcare and the THRIVE model furthers our commitment to support caregivers’ personal growth and development by leveraging innovative education strategies, realistic simulation experiences and integrated spaced learning technology,” **said Kelly Hancock, DNP, RN, NE-BC, Executive Chief Nursing Officer at**

Cleveland Clinic. “We are very excited to work with Ascension Michigan, Catholic Health and the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation to launch this new model.”

“As one of the largest providers of healthcare in Western New York and a quality leader in our community, this is a great opportunity to partner with other like-minded organizations who understand the vital role these caregivers play in meeting the growing needs of the sick and elderly in nursing homes and home care settings,” said **Joyce Markiewicz, Catholic Health Executive Vice President and President & CEO of Home and Community Based Care.** “We are grateful to the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation for supporting our collective efforts to create better training opportunities and address other workforce issues that will give our caregivers the tools and resources they need for long term success.”

“We are looking forward to working on this innovative project with these health systems to help increase the retention of caregivers within the rustbelt region. Ascension Michigan cares for our communities through more than 150 sites of care across 30 counties, and we are ready to create a support system for entry-level caregivers,” said **Dr. Joseph Cacchione, Ascension Michigan CEO and Chief Executive Officer, Ascension Medical Group.** “Caregivers have long served as the backbone of healthcare and it is time that we all work together to build their support systems.”

The core of THRIVE will include a screening to proactively identify caregivers most at risk of encountering work readiness and success barriers, providing 1:1 coaching through caregiver support specialists, and implementing THRIVE curriculum during the few months after a new hire starts.

###

About the Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation:

The Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation is a grantmaking organization dedicated primarily to sustained investment in the quality of life of the people of Southeast Michigan and Western New York. The two areas reflect Ralph C. Wilson, Jr.'s devotion to his hometown of Detroit and greater Buffalo, home of his Buffalo Bills franchise. Prior to his passing in 2014, Mr. Wilson requested that a significant share of his estate be used to continue a life-long generosity of spirit by funding the Foundation that bears his name. Based in Detroit, the Foundation has a grantmaking capacity of \$1.2 billion over a 20-year period, which expires January 8, 2035. This structure is consistent with Mr. Wilson's desire for the Foundation's impact to be immediate, substantial, measurable and overseen by those who knew him best. For more information visit www.rcwjrf.org.

About Ascension Michigan:

In Michigan, Ascension operates 15 hospitals and hundreds of related healthcare facilities that together employ over 20,000 associates. Across the state, Ascension provided over \$272 million in community benefit and care of persons living in poverty in fiscal year 2018. Serving Michigan for over 140 years, Ascension (www.ascension.org) is a faith-based healthcare organization dedicated to transformation through innovation across the continuum of care. As one of the leading non-profit and Catholic health systems in the U.S., Ascension is committed to delivering compassionate, personalized care to all, with special attention to persons living in poverty and those most vulnerable. In FY2018, Ascension provided nearly \$2 billion in care of persons living in poverty and other community benefit programs. Ascension includes approximately 156,000 associates and 34,000 aligned providers. The national health system operates more than 2,600 sites of care – including 151 hospitals and more than 50 senior living facilities – in 21 states and the District of Columbia, while providing a variety of services

including physician practice management, venture capital investing, investment management, biomedical engineering, facilities management, clinical care management, information services, risk management, and contracting through Ascension's own group purchasing organization.

About Catholic Health:

Catholic Health (www.chsbuffalo.org) is one of the largest providers of healthcare in Western New York State. Founded in Buffalo, NY, in 1998, it is the regional leader in quality and patient safety. Its continuum of care includes four hospitals on five campuses; four long term care facilities; three home care agencies; and dozens of diagnostic, treatment, rehabilitation and specialty centers located throughout Erie and Niagara counties. An economic engine in the Buffalo-Niagara region, Catholic Health is one of area's largest employers, contributing nearly \$2 billion in economic benefit for the community at large and \$126 million in community benefit and charity care to serve vulnerable populations. Its more than 9,000 associates and 1,500 physicians are part of healing ministry dating back more than 170 years, including Buffalo's first hospital. Among its many services, Catholic Health is known for excellence in cardiovascular care, stroke care, women's services, orthopedics, neuroservices, and rehabilitation, featuring Western New York's only Joint Commission Comprehensive Stroke Center, a regional Heart Center and Neonatal Intensive Care Services.

About Cleveland Clinic:

Cleveland Clinic is a nonprofit multispecialty academic medical center that integrates clinical and hospital care with research and education. Located in Cleveland, Ohio, it was founded in 1921 by four renowned physicians with a vision of providing outstanding patient care based upon the principles of cooperation, compassion and innovation. Cleveland Clinic has pioneered many medical breakthroughs, including coronary artery bypass surgery and the first face transplant in the United States. U.S. News & World Report consistently names Cleveland Clinic as one of the nation's best hospitals in its annual "America's Best Hospitals" survey. Among Cleveland Clinic's 66,000 employees are more than 4,200 salaried physicians and researchers and 16,600 nurses, representing 140 medical specialties and subspecialties. Cleveland Clinic's health system includes a 165-acre main campus near downtown Cleveland, 11 regional hospitals in northeast Ohio, more than 180 northern Ohio outpatient locations – including 18 full-service family health centers and three health and wellness centers – and locations in southeast Florida; Las Vegas, Nev.; Toronto, Canada; Abu Dhabi, UAE; and London, England. In 2018, there were 7.9 million total outpatient visits, 238,000 hospital admissions and observations, and 220,000 surgical cases throughout Cleveland Clinic's health system. Patients came for treatment from every state and 185 countries. Visit us at clevelandclinic.org. Follow us at twitter.com/CCforMedia and twitter.com/ClevelandClinic. News and resources available at newsroom.clevelandclinic.org.

Media Contacts:

Kelci Hobson
BerlinRosen Public Affairs
[646-200-5332](tel:646-200-5332)
Kelci.hobson@berlinrosen.com

Carly Strachan
Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation
313-460-8100
Carly.strachan@rcwjrf.org