



First Niagara Teaches Financial Literacy to Refugee Youth

-- Afterschool program helps students learn about and understand economic issues --

BUFFALO, N.Y., March 18, 2014 – The First Niagara Foundation and Jericho Road Community Health Center are partnering to provide afterschool program support for local refugee students and create education opportunities that will enrich their academic and social skills.

Jericho Road Community Health Center provides a medical home for refugee and low-income community members in Buffalo, facilitating wellness and self-sufficiency by addressing health, education, and economic barriers. In addition to providing safety-net medical care to approximately 12,000 patients across the East and West sides of Buffalo, Jericho Road is committed to providing more holistic care by addressing factors of poverty through community programming. Their Hope Refugee FLY (Focused Learning for Youth) Program provides supplemental educational programming to enable refugee students to overcome educational gaps, achieve graduation and pursue long-term goals. The program is staffed by a program coordinator, and a team of AmeriCorps ABLE Members, serving 30 students in grades six through nine. FLY students hail as refugees from various African and Asian countries, including Somalia, Burundi, Iraq, Nepal, and Burma. Because low literacy and limited English proficiency complicate refugee youth's ability to thrive academically and socially, FLY works with refugee youth in a supportive environment to enrich their academic and life skills.

First Niagara employee volunteers have created a financial literacy workshop to help students in the afterschool program to better understand money management issues. A First Niagara Relationship Banker fluent in Laotian and a Senior Teller fluent in Spanish will both be on hand to assist with the class. This is in conjunction with a new funding commitment of \$10,000 that First Niagara is making to Jericho Road Community Health Center to better serve our community's refugee youth.

“First Niagara is committed to making a difference in Western New York and empowering our community to thrive,” said Elizabeth Gurney, Executive Director of the First Niagara Foundation. “We are proud to work with Jericho Road Ministries to create a safe, nurturing environment where students will have the opportunity to overcome barriers to achieve academic and real life success.”

“We are thrilled that First Niagara is continuing their partnership with us,” says Director of Community Programs, Anna Ireland PhD. “This grant provides sustaining support for our

program and is a long-term investment into the future of our city. The power of educational opportunity and mentoring relationships in the lives we touch through FLY is invaluable.”

About The First Niagara Foundation

First Niagara Foundation is a not for profit corporation founded in 1998. The Foundation is committed to supporting organizations in the communities in which we live and work with specific focus on youth and education, community development and neighborhood revitalization. In 2012 the Foundation contributed more than \$10 million in charitable grants to community partners. For more information, visit www.firstniagara.com/community.

About First Niagara

First Niagara, through its wholly owned subsidiary, First Niagara Bank, N.A., is a multi-state community-oriented bank with approximately 420 branches, \$38 billion in assets, \$27 billion in deposits, and approximately 5,800 employees providing financial services to individuals, families and businesses across Upstate New York, Pennsylvania, Connecticut and Massachusetts. For more information, visit www.firstniagara.com.

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