



ST PETER'S HEALTH  
PARTNERS

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## **Capital Roots and St. Peter's Health Partners Collaborate under \$500,000-a-year NYS-DOH grant**

**ALBANY** - Capital Roots and St. Peter's Health Partners will collaborate over the next five years to improve the health and well-being of communities throughout the Capital Region. Details of the partnership were announced today at a press conference at Pine Hills Elementary School in Albany.

The New York State Department of Health, through its new Creating Healthy Schools and Communities program, awarded Capital Roots and St. Peter's Health Partners two grants which will provide a total of \$500,000 annually for five years.

With this funding, Capital Roots and St. Peter's Health Partners will work collaboratively to advance multiple health initiatives across the Capital Region with a particular focus on the cities of Albany, Troy, Cohoes, Rensselaer, Schenectady, and Watervliet. Capital Roots will focus on communities, and St. Peter's Health Partners will concentrate on schools.

New York State Commissioner of Health Dr. Howard Zucker welcomed the partnership, stressing the importance of such work in New York's Capital Region.

"The partnership between Capital Roots and St. Peter's Health Partners is exactly what we need as we work together to overcome some of the most challenging health issues of our generation," Zucker said. "Together, they will have a bigger impact, and help to create healthier communities in the Capital Region."

"This grant has already expanded Capital Roots' reach into communities without access to fresh, affordable food. We are looking forward to the opportunities that will be created over the next five years with this funding," said Amy Klein, Capital Roots' Executive Director. "Our partnership with St. Peter's Health Partners will ensure that we are approaching wellness in the Capital Region from a holistic point of view and creating a necessary crossroads between healthy communities and healthy schools."

"Children are our most precious resource," said Norman Dascher Jr., chief executive officer of Samaritan and St. Mary's hospitals, and vice president of Acute Care Troy for St. Peter's Health Partners. "We are proud to be awarded this grant from New York state, and we look forward to working with the school districts and

communities in partnership with Capital Roots. Working together, our organizations can significantly impact the health and well-being of our schools, our children, and our surrounding communities.”

In the communities, Capital Roots will be increasing the number of healthy retail opportunities. This will be done through unique programming that falls under Capital Roots’ core group of programs, including the Veggie Mobile®, Healthy Stores, Virtual Veggie Mobile® (online marketplace), as well as through policy development and new interventions that will increase healthy, affordable food options. Additionally, Capital Roots will be working with citizens, stakeholders, and municipalities in each community to work on bringing complete streets philosophies—including roadways, sidewalks, and urban trail systems that take into account the safety and accessibility for all users, not just motorists—and infrastructure projects to neighborhoods. This work will enable families and individuals to not only easily access new healthy options in their neighborhoods, but additionally foster a safe environment of moving around their neighborhoods to obtain the recommended amounts of physical activity.

In the schools, St. Peter’s Health Partners will be working at both the district-wide level, as well as directly with individual school buildings, to foster an environment of increased physical activity and access to healthier food options. This work includes ensuring school districts have strong, comprehensive wellness policies that meet the federal and state mandates along with furthering their healthy environment to continue to promote academic success. This policy work includes building new wellness policies and assessing current policies, staff training and development, and communication and implementation of wellness policies. St. Peter’s Health Partners offers resources to implement curriculum-based physical activity in the classroom, training programs for physical activity before and after school, healthy fundraising ideas that meet New York state guidelines, and tools to replace food as rewards. This work assists school districts in bridging the gap between unfunded mandates to achieve academic success in an overall healthy environment.

Together, Capital Roots and St. Peter’s Health Partners will provide resources, education, and support to create awareness and make significant progress in empowering students, families, and neighbors to make choices that lead to healthier individuals and healthier communities.

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*Capital Roots, formerly Capital District Community Gardens, is a 40-year-old nonprofit organization that nourishes healthy communities with 51 Community Gardens, the Veggie Mobile® produce markets, Healthy Stores, the Produce Project, Squash Hunger and more. Capital Roots is headquartered at the Urban Grow Center in Troy, a regional facility focused on urban agriculture and produce distribution to four counties. Learn more at [www.capitalroots.org](http://www.capitalroots.org).*

*St. Peter’s Health Partners is the largest, most comprehensive not-for-profit network offering high quality, advanced medical care, primary care, rehabilitation and senior services provided through Albany Memorial Hospital and St. Peter’s Hospital in Albany; Samaritan Hospital and St. Mary’s Hospital in Troy; Sunnyview Rehabilitation Hospital in Schenectady; as well as The Eddy system of continuing care and The Community Hospice. SPHP also includes St. Peter’s Health Partners Medical Associates, a non-profit, physician-governed, multi-specialty group that is a full affiliate corporation of SPHP. With more than 350 practitioners, SPHP Medical Associates is one of the region’s largest multispecialty physician group practices. For more information, please visit [www.SPHP.com](http://www.SPHP.com).*

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