

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Chicagoland Community-Based Organizations Awarded Grant to
Build Community Capacity for Community-Engaged Research**

Chicago, IL-

A collaboration of eleven diverse Chicagoland community-based organizations is pleased to announce the receipt of a \$250,000 grant from The Chicago Community Trust for the *Partnership for Empowering Research by Chicago Communities about Health* (PERCH). PERCH will use novel approaches to support the development of research teams that will conduct community-based participatory research on health related topics.

The PERCH participating organizations are: Apostolic Faith Church, Asian Health Coalition of Illinois, Centro Romero, Chicago Youth Programs, Chinese Mutual Aid Association, Greater Humboldt Park Community of Wellness, Healthcare Consortium of Illinois, Healthy Southeast Chicago, Logan Square Neighborhood Association, Roberto Clemente Student Health Center, and Westside Health Authority. During the 18-month funded period, each organization will assess its research skills and interest areas and its readiness to engage in research partnerships. Organization-specific capacity-building and action plans will be developed to increase research capacity and skills as equal research partners. In addition, the plans will be designed to enable each organization to serve as community-engaged research teachers, mentors, and ambassadors to organizations and residents of their communities. In these ways, PERCH will build on current strengths to provide new infrastructure and leaders for ongoing community participation in research.

“This grant helps to build community infrastructure,” shared Lucy Gomez-Feliciano, Health Organizer at Logan Square Neighborhood Association. “Investing in the capacity of our organizations and leaders helps us to level the playing field and become active knowledgeable team members in this type of work.”

PERCH’s work will assist its academic partners to shift towards better models for community research. The desired shift will be *away* from models in which research is conducted in the community by academics who take away information to answer their own questions, and *towards* models in which research is done in partnership with community to answer shared questions, and in which the information gained is shared with the community in a way that facilitates improvements in community health.

Organizations engaged in PERCH are all members of the Steering Committee of the **Alliance for Research in Chicagoland Communities** (ARCC). ARCC’s mission is growing equitable and collaborative partnerships between Chicago area communities and Northwestern University for research that leads to measureable improvement in community health. ARCC is a program of the Community-Engaged Research Center at the Northwestern University Clinical and Translational Science Institute, which is funded in part by a grant from the National Institutes of Health. For more information about ARCC: <http://www.nucats.northwestern.edu/centers/cerc/>.

For 93 years, **The Chicago Community Trust** has connected the generosity of donors with the needs of the community by making grants to organizations working to improve metropolitan Chicago. With assets of \$1.8 billion, the Trust made a record-breaking \$114 million in grants in 2007. From strengthening community schools to assisting local arts programs, from building health centers to helping lives affected by violence, the Trust works to enhance our region. To learn more about The Chicago Community Trust, visit: www.cct.org.