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NEW GRANT FUNDING PROMISES IMPROVED OUTCOMES FOR BREAST CANCER PATIENTS IN CENTRAL NEW YORK

Saint Agatha Foundation to Distribute Unprecedented \$2.3 Million Investment to Provider Partners

SYRACUSE, NY – Saint Agatha Foundation today announces \$2.3 million in grant funding to eight partners in care. This represents a record-breaking investment by the Foundation, and is expected to greatly expand access to high-quality care for breast cancer patients in Central New York across Broome, Cayuga, Chenango, Cortland, Jefferson, Madison, Oneida, Onondaga, Otsego, Oswego, Saint Lawrence, and Tompkins counties.

Since 2004, Saint Agatha Foundation has focused its grantmaking on providing financial assistance to individuals facing breast cancer in Central New York. The Foundation remains committed to providing direct support for breast cancer patients, and with this investment is expanding support to initiatives that advance breast cancer prevention and early detection.

“We are incredibly proud to partner with these eight provider organizations to improve care for people facing breast cancer,” said **Kathy Mezzalingua, Board President, Saint Agatha Foundation**. “When breast cancer took my daughter Laurie from us too early, she asked me to ‘just help women.’ And that’s what we’re doing with this new round of grant funding. We can’t wait to see the impact.”

The provider partners receiving these capital grants are: Cortland Memorial Foundation at Guthrie Cortland Medical Center (Cortland, NY); Mohawk Valley Health System (Utica, NY); Oswego Hospital (Oswego, NY); Guthrie Lourdes Hospital (Binghamton, NY); Rome Health (Rome, NY); Samaritan Medical Center Foundation (Watertown, NY); St. Joseph’s Hospital Health Center (Syracuse, NY); and UHS Foundation (Binghamton, NY).

“Breast cancer represents the largest patient population we serve at the Mohawk Valley Health System Cancer Center,” said **Cindy Christian, Executive Director, MVHS Cancer Center**. “Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of the St. Agatha Foundation, we will be able to purchase a state-of-the-art linear accelerator chosen for its advanced capabilities in treating breast cancer. This remarkable investment will help us provide more precise, personalized care for women across our region, giving patients access to leading-edge treatment close to home. We are deeply grateful to the St. Agatha Foundation for their unwavering commitment to our community and for the hope, healing, and support they continue to provide to breast cancer patients and their families.”

The funding will be used largely for technology upgrades in each partner’s facilities, to better detect, diagnose, and treat breast cancer. These include advanced imaging technology and specialized diagnostic imaging, precision surgical navigation tools, and systems for tumor localization and radiation therapy. Bringing this advanced technology to these remote communities will promote early detection, improve the patient experience to support healthy outcomes for people across Central New York.

“The donation from Saint Agatha Foundation enables Samaritan to continue to lead local breast care with the purchase of our first Contrast-enhanced mammography (CEM) equipment,” said **Thomas H. Carman, President and CEO, Samaritan Medical Center**. “This important diagnostic tool is another way we can find breast cancer faster and lead to treatment more effectively. There are so many medical

advancements in early cancer detection and Saint Agatha Foundation has removed a huge barrier of cost for Samaritan to continue to build our equipment, strengthen our breast care team, and help our patients. “

“This investment in Oswego Hospital from Saint Agatha Foundation is a game-changer for patients in Oswego County,” said Margaret Barclay, Executive Director, Oswego Health Foundation. “The grant funding will allow our medical center to upgrade from a 2D mammography unit to 3D imaging. This not only empowers our staff to detect breast cancer earlier — thereby improving patients’ treatment options — but also eases the burden all around with fewer callbacks and follow-up testing expected.”

Saint Agatha Foundation currently partners with 28 different 501(c)(3) public charities to fulfill its mission of providing support, comfort, and care to breast cancer patients across Central New York. Through grants to local hospitals, medical care providers, and even non-medical providers, breast cancer patients may qualify for payment of bills for unmet financial needs — ranging from treatment and procedures, to co-payments and medications, to transportation and non-medical living expenses.

“On behalf of St. Joseph’s Health, we are beyond grateful to receive a one-time grant from Saint Agatha Foundation to support the purchase of a 3-D digital full-field mammography system,” said **Vincent J. Kuss, MBA, MS, Vice President for Development, St. Joseph’s Health Foundation**. “The system will provide low radiation doses, and improved comfort, aiming to boost detection rates of masses and microcalcifications. This system is also designed to provide advanced technology to enhance visibility of lesions in dense breast tissue whereas other units cannot. St. Joseph’s Health is continually inspired by the dedication and generosity of Saint Agatha Foundation, who continues to be a significant resource to breast cancer patients throughout our Central New York Community.”

“On behalf of Rome Health and the communities we serve, I thank Saint Agatha Foundation for its generous support of our MRI upgrade,” said **AnneMarie Czyz, Ed.D., RN, President | CEO, Rome Health**. “The new technology will increase our imaging capacity, shorten wait times for diagnostic exams, and preserve local access to advanced breast imaging and MRI-guided breast biopsies. This investment will have a lasting impact on the health and peace of mind of the patients and families we serve.”

Saint Agatha Foundation disburses grant funding to providers three times per year. This marks the Foundation’s largest investment in capital improvements, with previous gifts — including donations to Crouse Hospital for state-of-the-art mammography machines — complementing its primary support for direct patient assistance. Interested 501(c)(3) organizations based in the Foundation’s 12 counties of operations should visit: www.saintagathafoundation.org/for-providers/

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About Saint Agatha Foundation

Saint Agatha Foundation was founded in 2004 to provide support, comfort and care to breast cancer patients. We help individuals — particularly the under-insured and uninsured — in the Central New York area by providing financial assistance to cover a range of costs for treatment and recovery. Learn more about Saint Agatha Foundation’s resources for patients and funding opportunities for providers: www.saintagathafoundation.org