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**NEW BRONX CHARTER SCHOOL TO OFFER EMT CERTIFICATION,
PREPARE STUDENTS FOR CAREERS IN HEALTH CARE**

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The Dr. Richard Izquierdo Health and Science Charter School to be First Charter School to Offer Career and Technical Education Program Geared Toward Health Services Professions

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School to Partner with Urban Health Plan for Support and Professional Development

January 11, 2010 (Bronx, NY)—When the Dr. Richard Izquierdo Health and Science Charter School opens its doors next fall, it will be the first charter school in New York City to offer a Career and Technical Education program geared specifically toward preparing students for jobs in the health care sector, including Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certification. The New York State Board of Regents authorized the school at its latest meeting.

“Health care is one of the fastest growing and most lucrative sectors in the country, and yet the Bronx has one of the lowest rates of high school graduates entering this field,” said John Xavier, principal of the school. “Lack of education and opportunity are keeping our students out of this sector, and our goal with the Dr. Richard Izquierdo Health and Sciences Charter School is to change that.”

The school, which will open in September 2010, will initially serve 100 students in grade six. Each year the Izquierdo Health and Science Charter School will add one grade, eventually growing to serve 700 students in grades 6-12. The school will combine a strong science and mathematics curriculum with career education in health science, and students will have the opportunity to enroll in EMT certification courses. Students will take multiple science courses every year in addition to mathematics, English, Latin, history and dance or martial arts. As the school grows to capacity it will develop a comprehensive after-school program that will provide fine and performing arts, including music, drama and film, and boys and girls team sports, including baseball, basketball and soccer.

“The school was created to provide a quality education that would free the children of the South Bronx from the bonds of poverty and ultimately provide quality health care and a happy and healthy community,” said Dr. Richard Izquierdo, who founded the school and has been a prominent pediatrician, family physician, and community and public health advocate for the past 40 years. “Our communities need this type of school,” Dr. Izquierdo continued.

To support its curriculum, the school will partner with the Urban Health Plan, Inc. (UHP), which will provide professional development to enhance the health and science curriculum and create an effective career education model. The school will have access to UHP’s human resources in order to draw highly qualified instructors and mentors from a workforce that includes nearly 400 employees and 80 medical professionals. UHP will also provide professional and academic opportunities to students through seminars, site visits, health career counseling and an internship program and summer and part-time job opportunities.

“The beauty of this school is that upon graduation, not only will students be ready academically to enter college, they will also be prepared to enter a number of health careers,” said Paloma Hernandez, President & CEO of Urban Health Plan.

Open house information sessions for students and parents will begin at the end January at Urban Health Plan's El Nuevo San Juan health center in the South Bronx (1065 Southern Boulevard) and will continue through the winter and into the spring, when the school will hold a reception to introduce itself more formally to the community. For further information please contact: Dr. Richard Izquierdo Health & Science Charter School c/o NYC Charter School Center 111 Broadway, Suite 604, New York, NY 10006, by phone: 212.227.2763, or e-mail: info@HealthScienceSchool.org

About Urban Health Plan

Urban Health Plan is a network of federally qualified community health centers based in the South Bronx and Queens. Its mission is to improve the health status of underserved communities. In 2009, UHP served over 33,000 patients at four clinic sites, five school-based clinics, and four off-sites. It is recognized by United States Department of Health and Human Services as one of the top 20 family health centers in the country. It was recognized by Hispanic Magazine as one the top 25 Hispanic non-profit organization in the United States. It has served the Hunts Point, Mott Haven and other surrounding communities of the Bronx since 1974.