

NIAGARA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

PRESS RELEASE

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The Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo has awarded the Niagara County Health Department a grant in the amount of \$30,000 for the "Community LOOW Project." The grant will be used to support construction and analysis of a GIS database of multi-agency and property owner investigations of the LOOW site, and evaluation of that data by independent experts.

The \$200,000 two-year project was created to address a complex history of LOOW contamination with equally complicated government supervision. "A consolidation of data is the first step to overcoming jurisdictional fragmentation at the LOOW site," said Public Health Director Paulette Kline. "This is the first time in decades that one project has attempted to consolidate relevant data from the entire LOOW site for all chemical and radiological investigations in combination with geological evaluations." The Niagara County Health Dept. developed this initiative in collaboration with members of the community, elected officials, agencies, and the Univ. of Buffalo to address public concerns about the LOOW site and high rates of unexplained area illnesses.

Lee Simonson, Chairman of the Economic Development Committee of the Niagara County Legislature, stated, "This project comes not a moment too soon, as we attempt to wrap our minds around the complexities associated with this wasteland. This is the epitome of a brownfield, but at a dimension far greater than our local capacities to address. Our future physical and economic health will depend heavily on the results of this project and will help us immeasurably in focusing on the real issues we're confronting."

Niagara County Legislature Vice Chair Clyde Burmaster (Porter) welcomed news of the latest grant saying, "The Community Foundation of Greater Buffalo is an important and highly regarded private Foundation in WNY with a rigorous evaluation process. Congratulations to Niagara County Health for securing a \$30,000 grant from this important institution, which adds to \$70,000 already pledged by the Towns of Porter and Lewiston, Niagara County, State Sen

Maziarz, Assemblywoman DelMonte, the WNY State Delegation and the University of Buffalo. Now it's time for the Federal Government to step up and provide its share," referring to a \$95,000 appropriation request to Congresswoman Louise Slaughter, Sen. Clinton and Sen. Schumer for FY 2006.

Ann Roberts, co-founder of the Niagara Health-Science Report, Inc. noted, "Complex and limited agency jurisdictions over the years by various state and federal agencies have produced uncoordinated risk assessments on isolated parts of the LOOW, leading to millions of dollars of federal, state and private monies spent on areas that may not have reflected the highest risk to public health. Looking at the big picture will give the community confidence in the effectiveness of clean-up efforts at the LOOW site."

The Community Foundation for Greater Buffalo was established in 1919 to enhance and encourage long-term philanthropy in the Western New York community. At the close of 2004, the Community Foundation's assets were \$129 million. Each year, the Foundation manages, invests and directs funding to Western New York nonprofit organizations and in 2004 distributed \$7 million in funds to 525 nonprofits, including more than \$900,000 scholarship aid to approximately 1,000 WNY college students.