

Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 22, 2012

MEDIA CONTACTS:

Anne Banner, GW (202) 994-2261

Feygele Jacobs, RCHN (212) 246-1122 ext 712

Bellber Fellowship Announced Postdoctoral Awards Dedicated to Supporting Health Center Research and Scholarship

WASHINGTON and NEW YORK— The Geiger Gibson Program in Community Health Policy at the George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services, in collaboration with the RCHN Community Health Foundation, has announced the establishment of the **Julio Bellber Fellowship in Community Health Policy Research**. The Fellowship, named in honor of RCHN Community Health Foundation's President and CEO, is part of a \$1.75 million gift from the Foundation to the School of Public Health and Health Services' Department of Health Policy announced in June, 2011. This is the second of two major gifts from the Foundation, which help support the Geiger Gibson Program in Community Health Policy in the School's Department of Health Policy.

Established in 2005, the RCHN Community Health Foundation has as its central aim the advancement of community health centers, focusing its efforts on addressing challenges and establishing opportunities to sustain health centers so that they can continue to offer essential, high quality care in at-risk communities. Its President and CEO, Julio Bellber, is recognized nationally as one of the leading figures in the health center movement.

"The Department of Health Policy has enjoyed a long and successful relationship with the RCHN Community Health Foundation. Our partnership has enabled robust research that demonstrates the critical role played by community health centers in caring for the nation's most vulnerable populations. The newest gift, and in particular, this Fellowship named in honor of the Foundation's distinguished President & CEO Julio Bellber, will help advance a new generation of community health policy scholars," said Paula Lantz, Chair of the Department of Health Policy.

The two-year postdoctoral fellowship is designed to give critical early career support to scholars whose focus, like that of health centers, is on improving health and health care for populations most at risk for disparate access to health care and health outcomes. Bellber Fellows will receive strong mentoring from respected researchers and practitioners in the areas of health policy and health services research, as well as an immersion into health center practice and the opportunity to gain deep content knowledge of community health centers and the major policies and programs that bear on their success.

"The Foundation is pleased to have partnered with the Geiger Gibson Program at GW to create an academic home for the study of community health centers, and we believe the Bellber Fellowship is fundamental to the strategy of developing and cultivating policy scholars and leaders." said John Ohlweiler, Chair of the RCHN

Community Health Foundation Board of Directors. “It is fitting that the Fellowship be named in honor of Julio Bellber, who has dedicated his career to leading and supporting health centers both locally and nationally.”

Two to three fellowships will be awarded through 2016. The Department of Health Policy is presently reviewing applications, and expects to announce selection of the first Bellber Fellow in late March of 2012.

###

About the Geiger Gibson / RCHN Community Health Foundation Research Collaborative

The Geiger Gibson Program in Community Health Policy, established in 2003 and named after human rights and health center pioneers Drs. H. Jack Geiger and Count Gibson, is part of the School of Public Health and Health Services at The George Washington University. It focuses on the history and contributions of health centers and the major policy issues that affect health centers, their communities, and the patients that they serve. Additional information about the Research Collaborative can be found online at www.gwumc.edu/sphhs/departments/healthpolicy/ggprogram or at rchnfoundation.org.

About the RCHN Community Health Foundation

The RCHN Community Health Foundation, founded in October 2005, is a not-for-profit foundation whose mission is to support community health centers through strategic investment, outreach, education, and cutting-edge health policy research. The only foundation in the country dedicated to community health centers, the Foundation builds on health centers’ 40-year commitment to the provision of accessible, high quality, community-based healthcare services for underserved and medically vulnerable populations. The Foundation’s gift to the Geiger Gibson program supports health center research and scholarship. For more information on RCHN CHF, visit www.rchnfoundation.org.

About the George Washington University School of Public Health and Health Services:

Established in July 1997, the School of Public Health and Health Services brought together three longstanding university programs in the schools of medicine, business, and education that we have since expanded substantially. Today, more than 1,100 students from nearly every U.S. state and more than 40 nations pursue undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral-level degrees in public health. Our student body is one of the most ethnically diverse among the nation's private schools of public health. <http://sphhs.gwumc.edu/>