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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – News and Calendar Event

Betty Jean Kerr People's Health Centers Hosts

Project Hope Groundbreaking Ceremony for Children & Adolescent Center

St. Louis, Tuesday, February 23, 2016 – Betty Jean Kerr People's Health Centers (PHC) extends to the community an invitation to celebrate the groundbreaking for their new \$6 million dollar children & adolescent health facility. The new children's facility will be a welcome addition to the health centers' campus and will provide increased community access to children and adolescent behavioral health and primary healthcare. The ceremony will be held on Monday, February 29th, at 1:00 p.m. at 5701 Delmar Blvd. The center will be constructed east of the Social Security Administration Center on property owned by the health center at 5647 Delmar Blvd. For 43 years, Betty Jean Kerr People's Health Centers (PHC) has provided high quality primary care services to some of the most vulnerable communities in the St. Louis metropolitan area with dignity and respect. PHC maintains a first class approach to medicine by receiving full Joint Commission Accreditation and receiving the highest possible recognition (Level III) from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA).

The Project Hope facility was designed by Kennedy Associates Inc. (KAI), the long time developer of urban building solutions. The contractors for the new project are Hankins Construction Company for the building and Raineri Construction for parking development requirements. The building will house three floors to accommodate 20,000 square feet of clinical and counseling support programming. With an anticipated completion date of February 2017, PHC staff and the community are excited about a facility designed to address behavioral health needs of children in the St. Louis urban community.

Asked about the importance of the development, Dwayne Butler, President and CEO of Betty Jean Kerr People's Health Centers said, "Children and adolescents behavioral health and primary care

issues are at a crisis point in urban underserved communities. Too often, families recognize their children have behavioral health issues, but are unable to find help or unwilling to access help due to stigma. All too often, these children grow up to lead unproductive lives. It's time we bring this issue to the forefront of our communities overall health discussion and treat behavioral health with the dignity and respect our community deserves."

"The City of St. Louis is proud to invest \$3 million in Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding for Betty Jean Kerr People's Health Centers' Project Hope Facility," Mayor Francis Slay said. "It's a much-needed resource for families in crisis to be able to receive high-quality treatment for their children. Good integrated primary and behavioral healthcare will give them a better chance of being successful in school and life."

Invitations to the groundbreaking ceremony have been sent to a number of prominent community advocates including a number of elected officials to share in this important phase of Building Hope for Kids," said Mark Sanford, Executive Vice President. The public is invited to attend the groundbreaking ceremony with a reception immediately following at Betty Jean Kerr People's Health Centers, 5701 Delmar Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63112. The honorable Mayor Francis G. Slay and U.S. Congressman William Lacy Clay, Jr. will be speaking.

"This groundbreaking ceremony for Project Hope is part of our strategic plan to further develop communities and improve access to healthcare services." said Dwayne A. Butler, CEO and President of Betty Jean Kerr People's Health Centers.

Through the support of U.S. Congressman William Lacy Clay, Jr., the regional Housing and Urban Development (HUD) offices, and Mayor Francis G. Slay of the City of St. Louis, PHC made the strongest inroads into the project. Corporate partners include: Centene Corporation and Ameren Missouri among others. PHC also is grateful for support from The Community Development Administration (CDA), Land Revitalization Authority (LRA), Land Clearance for Redevelopment Authority (LCRA), and the St. Louis City Board of Public Service. This project is the culmination of a number of coordinated programs that have had a positive impact on healthcare for residents of the Metropolitan St. Louis area. This \$6 million dollar project will help create an environment that promotes active living, personal involvement in neighborhood decline reduction strategies, and is a model on how to creatively leverage community resources. For more

information visit: phchopeforkids.com. Betty Jean Kerr People's Health Centers has been in the forefront in the provision of quality health care and supportive services to the underserved for the past **43 years** by providing comprehensive primary care to underserved and uninsured residents.

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This activity is financed in part through an allocation of Community Development Block Grant funds from the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the City of St. Louis' Community Development Administration.