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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

In Victory for Low-Income New Yorkers, NYU Child Study Center Opens Doors to Medicaid Patients

After advocacy groups' campaign on behalf of parents of kids with special needs, NYU designates providers who will accept Medicaid and Child Health Plus

New York, NY, June 1, 2010 – New York Lawyers for the Public Interest (NYLPI), a civil rights law firm whose practice includes health justice and disability rights, along with co-counsel, Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP and LatinoJustice/PRLDEF, announced today that they successfully campaigned for the Child Study Center of the New York University Medical Center to designate certain doctors who will accept Medicaid and other health insurance. Previously, NYU's Child Study Center had a cash-only policy for patients, which meant that they did not accept any insurance at all.

As part of the advocacy campaign, which included threats of litigation, a group of parents represented by NYLPI and co-counsel met with NYU leadership and explained how the cash only policy impacted them and the thousands of other families who were unable to access the Center's state-of-the-art evaluations and medical services for children with disabilities. These services are in extremely short supply across New York City, and without access to the facility at NYU's Child Study Center, many low-income and minority children were unable to obtain the medical attention they needed.

"NYU has taken a step in the right direction towards eradicating a few of the many institutional barriers keeping low-income New Yorkers from accessing quality health care," said Nisha Agarwal, director of NYLPI's Health Justice program. "We still have a long way to go to ensure that all children, regardless of their financial circumstance or background, have equal access to high-quality mental and behavioral health services, but this is one step forward."

As a result of NYLPI's action, the Child Study Center has announced that it will designate certain providers who will begin accepting fee-for-service Medicaid and Child Health Plus. Before this change, children and their parents who could not afford to pay cash for evaluations

and medical services often went without necessary and recommended medical treatment for serious illnesses.

Consider Mikael, 10, whose mother paid \$550 in cash for a neuropsychological exam that diagnosed Mikael with autism and post-traumatic stress disorder. The doctors recommended additional testing, but Mikael's mother couldn't cover the prohibitive costs.

Connor, 10, suffers from severe anxiety, apraxia of speech and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. With a household income of \$15,000 per year, his mother could not afford treatment at NYU. As a result, Connor is receiving treatment by a number of different providers for each of his separate conditions, which has added to his severe anxiety and low self esteem.

According to Lorraine Ali, "No mother wants to be told she can't provide her child with the medical attention he needs. Now I can finally get Eric to a doctor who can treat him. It's the best news we've gotten in a long time."

Although NYU's Child Study Center has agreed to take the important step of accepting fee-for-service Medicaid and Child Health Plus, it does not have plans to accept any Medicaid managed care plans. "There continues to be an acute shortage of evaluative and medical services for children with psychiatric disabilities in New York City," said Kelly McAnnany, director of the Opportunity & Access Program at NYLPI. "We will continue to work with providers and with state agencies to open the doors to quality health care and educational opportunity for low-income children with disabilities."

About New York Lawyers for the Public Interest

Founded in 1976, New York Lawyers for the Public Interest is a nonprofit, civil rights law firm that strives for social justice. In partnership with member law firms, corporate law departments, and other organizations, NYLPI helps underrepresented people develop legal strategies to serve their vision for themselves and their communities. The Health Justice Program at NYLPI focuses on eliminating racism, language barriers and anti-immigrant bias in New York City's health care system.

About Cleary Gottlieb

Founded in 1946 by lawyers committed to legal excellence, internationalism and diversity, Cleary Gottlieb Steen & Hamilton LLP is a leading international law firm with approximately 1,100 lawyers around the world. The firm has ranked in the top 10 of *The American Lawyer's* A-List, a comprehensive ranking based on revenue, pro bono, associate satisfaction and diversity, since the lists' inception in 2003. Cleary Gottlieb has offices in New York, Washington, D.C., Paris, Brussels, London, Moscow, Frankfurt, Cologne, Rome, Milan, Hong Kong and Beijing.

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