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\$1.00



Courtesy Harmony Healthcare Long Island

TOWN OF HEMPSTEAD Deputy Supervisor Dorothy Goosby, center, presented a Certificate of Recognition to Harmony Healthcare Long Island. Accepting the honor were, from left, Savitree Pestano, Julie Harnisher, Tarika James, CEO David Nemiroff, Stacey C. Jackson-Harley and Frank Piscetelli.

Family Health Centers gets a rebranding

By **MOHAMED FARGHALY**
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Family Health Centers, previously known as Long Island FQHC Inc., has undergone a transformation involving changing its name and visual identity to Harmony Healthcare Long Island.

As part of a Dec. 21 news conference, David Nemiroff, president and CEO of what is now Harmony Healthcare Long Island, spoke about the three-year strategic rebranding initiative for the Nassau County-based non-profit. Joining Nemiroff were representatives from

the organization and Hempstead Town Deputy Supervisor Dorothy Goosby.

“We are committed to improving the overall wellness of all individuals in our communities and delivering high quality comprehensive patient centered care, regardless of one’s ability to pay,” Nemiroff said. “Our new name and logo symbolize our dedication to those we serve, supported by our spirited concept of working together as one, in perfect harmony.”

Long Island FQHC Inc. is a non-profit federally qualified

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In setback for village, governor vetoes Cleveland Park plan

By **MOHAMED FARGHALY**
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Gov. Kathy Hochul has taken a side in the tug of war over an athletic field on Cleveland Avenue, meaning the dispute between Freeport village officials and the local school district doesn’t appear to be ending any time soon.

Hochul vetoed a bill sponsored by now-former state Sen. John Brooks and Assemblywoman Taylor Darling that would have authorized the village to sell its Cleveland Avenue greenspace to developers keen on building a distribution warehouse.

Such a bill, if it had become

law, could have been a fatal blow to the Freeport school district, which wants to keep the space as an athletic practice field and recreation area.

The bill from Brooks and Darling would have removed a park easement designation school officials had claimed protected their control of the fields. Without that easement — which village leaders have disputed for decades — would have allowed the village to sell the Cleveland Avenue site to the California-based Panattoni Group.

In her veto, Hochul cited not only the ongoing legal issues between the two government entities, but also what she

described as the lack of a plan to provide guaranteed access to alternative athletic facilities that would be needed to replace Cleveland Avenue.

“These legal issues related to the property demonstrate that this issue is not resolved at the local level and should not proceed at this time,” Hochul said.

Some Freeport neighbors taking the side of the school district collaborated with local unions in an attempt to preserve the North Freeport park.

“For the last 70 years, generations of students and residents have used Cleveland Avenue Field because of its convenient and easily accessible location,”

Freeport school board president Maria Jordan-Awalom said. “In our view, the village has sought to force the district and the community it represents into accepting the loss of Cleveland Avenue Field.”

Village trustees voted to sell the 9-acre park to the Panattoni Group last July for \$49 million. But such a move required

state approval, prompting the legislature to act in an effort to remove the disputed parkland easement of the site.

But that easement wasn’t the only issue holding up the sale. A lawsuit filed last August by state attorney general Letitia James tried to temporarily block the sale, contesting an environmen-

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Courtesy Harmony Healthcare Long Island

PRESIDENT AND CEO David Nemiroff, right, was joined by Harmony Healthcare Long Island staff members at a news conference announcing the new name of Family Health Centers.

A thorough commitment to the community

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

health center providing comprehensive primary and preventive care services to underserved areas or populations.

“We want to make sure anybody can access health care regardless of their ability to pay, even people who are uninsured,” Nemiroff said. “Our real push was to make it easier for people who were uninsured to have access and to learn about us.”

Their community services include adult and family medicine, pediatric care, dental services, women’s health services, specialist services, and a special supplemental nutrition program for mothers, infants, and children.

Harmony Healthcare Long Island received the distinction of becoming the first Federally Qualified Health Center in Nassau County back in 2009. HHLI has facilities in Elmont, Freeport, Hempstead, Oceanside, Roosevelt, and Westbury

“Our goal is to just be a good community partner and support the folks who live and work in our communities,” Nemiroff said.

Providers, including Harmony Healthcare Long Island, are stepping up to relieve the pressure on overburdened local hospitals.

Harmony Healthcare Long Island strengthened its adult and family primary and preventative medical care services,

as well as its mental health services and departments on Long Island.

Along with receiving a five-year funding to address maternal and newborn mortality, the organization has expanded its reach through telehealth and mobile health services allowing virtual consultations with health care professionals, receive diagnoses and treatments without having to travel to a health care facility.

“Right now, with the public health emergency still ongoing, this allows us some flexibility in reaching our patients,” Nemiroff said. “For folks who can’t get in to see their provider, we have the capacity to do a telehealth visit to their phone or their computer or their iPad. We do about 12 percent of our visits that way now.”

Telehealth is used for a wide range of health care services and particularly useful for people who live in rural or remote areas, or for those who have mobility issues.

Recently, the organization has seen an increase in patient care visits, with over 160,000 patient care visits in 2022. According to the organization, the majority of patients served by Harmony Healthcare Long Island live below the poverty level, speak a language other than English and

half of their patients are covered under Medicaid or Medicaid Managed Care.

The long term goal of Harmony Healthcare Long Island includes advancing additional specialty services such as diabetes education, women’s health, pediatric care, and school-based health center initiatives.

Harmony Healthcare is set to unveil its new and improved health care center in Hempstead, which will provide services to over 12,000 patients. The facility has undergone a complete renovation, allowing for an expansion of services.

The objective of the redevelopment center is to make it easier for residents to access top-quality health care locally. Additionally, the company’s dental suite in Elmont has also undergone renovations and will now offer an even wider range of dental services.

“This announcement is a milestone moment for our organization,” Frank Piscitelli, board chair of Harmony Healthcare Long Island said. “We are the definition of a community health care resource, and we needed to pursue a new name that was reflective of who we are as an entity. Our team works together in a harmonious environment to provide the very best care for all — one patient at a time.”

Our goal is to just be a good community partner and support the folks who live and work in our communities.

DAVID NEMIROFF
president and CEO,
Harmony Health
Care

FREEPORT HERALD

HOW TO REACH US

Our offices are located at 2 Endo Blvd. Garden City, NY 11530 and are open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

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