

## **LAURIE M. TISCH ILLUMINATION FUND MAKES \$15 MILLION COMMITMENT TO INSPIRE HEALTHIER COMMUNITIES**

Launches *Healthy Food & Community Change* initiative and the Laurie M. Tisch Center for Food, Education & Policy at Teachers College, Columbia University

**(New York, NY) February 14, 2013** — The Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund today is launching its Healthy Food & Community Change initiative with a commitment of \$15 million over five years to healthy food initiatives across New York City – making it one of the largest donors addressing these problems in New York City.

There are vast disparities in diet-related diseases across neighborhoods where residents have few options to buy healthy foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables, and low-income residents are most severely affected. The Illumination Fund's Healthy Food & Community Change initiative will support novel strategies to increase access, availability, affordability, and knowledge of healthy foods and promote healthy choices, specifically targeting programs in high-need neighborhoods, creating hubs of activities and community engagement.

"The issues are complex, and there's no magic bullet," said Laurie M. Tisch, president of the Illumination Fund. "But there are strategies that have demonstrated progress and promise. We believe that the way to move forward is to empower and engage communities, foster collaboration, and provide the tools to implement change. With our new Healthy Food & Community Change initiative, the Illumination Fund aims to inspire healthier communities."

A flagship component of the Initiative is being announced today at an event at Columbia University: the establishment of the Laurie M. Tisch Center for Food, Education & Policy at Teachers College, Columbia University. Teachers College was the birthplace for the field of nutrition education more than a hundred years ago. The College published the country's first scholarly textbook in nutrition education, created the first nutrition education lab, and helped found the American Society of Nutrition. The new Center launches a new era for the College's program and will provide cutting-edge research, policy evaluation and training for the next generation of nutrition professionals.

"Laurie Tisch's passionate commitment to eliminate health disparities in New York City is reflected in her philanthropic strategy to invest in innovative programs that empower communities with healthier food choices," said Teachers College President Susan Fuhrman. "We at TC are honored that she has made us a key partner in her Healthy Food & Community Change initiative, and we are enormously grateful for her inspiring gift to establish the Laurie M. Tisch Center for Food, Education & Policy at Teachers College. We are confident that her gift will galvanize our efforts to make Teachers College a model for preparing top-flight nutrition professionals and for leveraging groundbreaking nutrition research into more effective food policies. Through better access to and education about food, the Laurie M. Tisch Center also will help to transform the communities that TC and the Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund serve."

Additionally, the Illumination Fund's Healthy Food & Community Change initiative will include a series of new community and public/private partnerships, including:

➤ **Community-based initiatives**

- *Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC NYC), a nonprofit that combines corporate, government and philanthropic resources to help revitalize distressed neighborhoods: Communities for Healthy Food NYC*

- A 3-year initiative to embed healthy food programs into community development programs, combining community education with the creation of healthy food outlets in four low-income neighborhoods.
- *City Harvest: Healthy Neighborhoods Initiative*
  - An integrated group of programs designed to increase the availability of fresh produce in areas across the five boroughs with high rates of hunger and diet-related diseases, and educate residents about healthy dietary choices.
- **Public/private partnerships**
  - *Wholesome Wave and the NYC Health and Hospitals Corporation: the Fruit and Vegetable Prescription Program (FVRx)*
    - Health providers who treat the consequences of unhealthy eating will team up with community food retailers, including farmers markets, to provide limited-income families with prescriptions and coupons to back up medical recommendations for healthy eating.
- **Good Neighbor grants**
  - Grants to NYC organizations working to improve food access, relieve food insecurity and encourage healthy eating.
  - Grantees include the NYC Coalition Against Hunger, Wellness in the Schools and Share Our Strength.

The Illumination Fund 's support of healthy food programs in New York began in 2008 with a partnership with the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene to launch the NYC Green Cart initiative . Today, there are approximately 500 street vendors selling fresh produce in neighborhoods that previously had limited access to healthy foods, creating hundreds of jobs and setting a new national standard for health promotion and economic opportunity that is being adapted in other cities.

Find out more about the Illumination Fund and its Healthy Food & Community Change initiative, visit <http://www.lmtilluminationfund.org/>

#### **About the Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund**

The Laurie M. Tisch Illumination Fund (LMTIF) is a New York City-based foundation that strives to improve access and opportunity for all New Yorkers. Founded in 2007 by philanthropist Laurie M. Tisch, the Illumination Fund plays an active role in supporting innovative approaches to education, the arts, healthy food and civic service in order to illuminate strategies that transform our urban landscape. For more information about the Illumination Fund, visit:

<http://www.lmtilluminationfund.org/>

#### **About Teachers College, Columbia University**

Teachers College, Columbia University, is the oldest and largest graduate school of education in the United States and perennially ranked among the nation's best. Founded 1887, the College has been home to many of the leading figures in American education, including John Dewey, James Earl Russell, Edward Lee Thorndike, Maxine Greene, and Edmund Gordon.

Through its three main emphases – education, health, and psychology -- TC prepares educators, psychologists, policymakers and planners for the challenges they will face in their careers. Under current President Susan H. Fuhrman, TC today has nearly 5,300 students. There are 154 full-time faculty members at the College, 65 full-time instructors and lecturers, and about 100 additional part-time faculty. TC's funded research expenditures in 2011-2012 totaled \$44.5 million.