



**For Immediate Release**

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## NEWS RELEASE

### WHITNEY M. YOUNG, JR. HEALTH CENTER AND EQUINOX DISCUSSING POTENTIAL MERGER

(ALBANY, NY) -- The CEOs of two longtime human service agencies based in the Capital Region are working to finalize a letter of intent to explore the possibility of a merger. Whitney M. Young, Jr. Health Center CEO David Shippee and Equinox, Inc. CEO Virginia Golden announced that the boards of directors of the two organizations have agreed that talks about a possible merger should continue.

“We think exploring this merger makes sense not just for our two organizations but, more importantly, for the people of Albany and the Greater Capital Region we both serve. If we’re able to find ways to provide care and compassion for those people in a more effective and efficient manner, we should explore it,” said Shippee and Golden in a joint statement.

Both organizations are engaging in in-depth reviews of the potential impacts of such a merger. Should the plan move forward to completion, the new organization would combine board members and professional staff. As part of the due diligence process, research of legal and financial implications of the merger will be conducted, as will discussion of the name of the merged entity. Subsequent to those deliberations, the proposal must be approved by each board as well as several governmental regulatory agencies.

Whitney Young Health and Equinox already have a history of collaborating on projects for the betterment of the community. Whitney Young Health has provided HIV and Hepatitis C testing and counseling at select Equinox locations for the last seven years. They are also working on opening a primary care and prompt care clinic, operated by Whitney Young Health, along with an Equinox satellite mental health clinic offering individual and group therapy and other support services at a new mixed-use facility located at 526 Central Ave. in Albany.

“We believe that this plan will enable the combined organization to provide our clients – typically low-income and among our community’s most vulnerable – with a broader set of services, ranging from health care to mental health services to residential opportunities and life skills training,” said Shippee. “At the end of this process we are intent on strengthening the health care and human service safety net for our region’s most vulnerable citizens and this step will allow the enhancement of the infrastructure to achieve that objective. The synergy of the two organizations’ programs and services is expected to foster just that.”

“Our boards and senior staff members are focusing on the details of this plan. There are many decisions yet to be made but we are confident in our direction and our belief that, as a combined organization, we can better serve our clients and patients and continue to be an invaluable community resource,” said Golden.

Both agencies have been stalwarts in the Albany community for years. Whitney Young Health, founded in 1974 as a Federally Qualified Health Center, has been a leader in the development and deployment of high-quality health services to low-income, at-risk populations. Similarly, Equinox, founded in 1947, has provided a wide breadth of services ranging from outpatient mental health and substance use disorder treatment to critical social determinants of health services in the areas of domestic violence, mental health supportive housing, youth outreach and transitional living services for homeless youth. Equinox also partners with the community to provide dinners to nearly 11,000 of our Capital Region neighbors in need through its Annual Thanksgiving Community Dinner – the longest running and one of the largest community dinners in the country.

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**About Whitney M. Young Health Center, Inc.**

Whitney M. Young, Jr. Health Center, Inc. is a community based, 501(c)3 non-profit corporation providing affordable, accessible primary and preventative medical, dental and behavioral health services to the uninsured and medically underserved residents of the Capital Region. Through

multiple medical and dental centers, school-based health centers, addictions programs, a mobile health unit, and numerous outreach programs, WYH serves more than 20,000 men, women and children annually who otherwise have limited access to health care.

WYH has been recognized by the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) as a Level 3 Patient-Centered Medical Home at the Albany, Troy and Watervliet Health Centers. Additionally, WYH has earned The Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval® for Ambulatory Health Care and Behavioral Health Care. For more information, please visit [www.wmyhealth.org](http://www.wmyhealth.org).

### **About Equinox**

Equinox, Inc. is a dynamic human services agency with deep roots in the Capital Region since 1947. Equinox provides compassionate services and life-enhancing opportunities to youth and adults, and their families, impacted by domestic violence, substance abuse and addiction, mental health disorders, homelessness, and the challenges of living amid poverty and violence. Nearly 200 dedicated employees deliver care and support to more than 5,200 individuals annually at 12 locations throughout the Capital Region. In addition, Equinox partners with the community for its Annual Thanksgiving Community Dinner, providing nearly 11,000 meals to our Capital Region neighbors in need for 50 years. For more information, please visit [www.equinoxinc.org](http://www.equinoxinc.org).