



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jeffrey D. Klein

## Senate Co-Leader Jeff Klein and Top Chef Host Padma Lakshmi Announce \$250,000 in Funding to Expand Education Campaign on Endometriosis

JEFFREY D. KLEIN June 30, 2014

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**BRONX, NY** – State Senate Coalition Co-Leader Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester) and *Top Chef* Host and Co-founder of the Endometriosis Foundation of America (EFA) Padma Lakshmi announced \$250,000 in funding secured by Senator Klein to support an education campaign aimed at raising awareness around endometriosis, a painful, and often undiagnosed disorder that affects women. The funding will help the EFA expand the scope of their program, which started last year, statewide.

The announcement was held in front of the Kips Bay Boys & Girls Club on Castle Hill Avenue in the Bronx, which held an educational training at its club late last year. The announcement immediately

preceded an interactive presentation by EFA Education Coordinator Jenny Hancher on endometriosis for nearly 400 young people who are taking part in the Summer Youth Employment Program (SYEP) at the Club House on Randall Avenue.

**Senate Majority Coalition Leader Jeff Klein (D-Bronx/Westchester) said,** “When I launched the Teen Health Awareness Campaign last year, I made a commitment to do everything possible to give our kids the tools they need to make smart choices about their health. Unfortunately, our teen health survey demonstrated that 70% of New York adolescents do not recognize the symptoms or signs of endometriosis. That’s why I am proud to have secured a grant that will go towards interactive programming aimed at raising awareness of endometriosis for our youth statewide. With more information, we can better understand how to recognize and treat endometriosis.”

**Padma Lakshmi, Co-Founder of the Endometriosis Foundation of America, author and Emmy-winning host of Top Chef, said,** "There is no doubt that we must educate our children in a broader, more comprehensive manner. If we are to prepare our youth for a successful future, we must ensure that their physical well being and emotional health are addressed in concert with their academic endeavors. The ENPOWR Project is a critical step in raising awareness about endometriosis among adolescents. Thanks to Senator Klein, we, now, are able to educate young New Yorkers statewide about this healthcare priority. The value of such education not only helps these adolescents but everyone their lives touch.”

“We are thrilled by the progress that The ENPOWR Project has made thus far, and even more excited about its future,” **said Mady Schuman, the EFA’s Executive Director.** “We are honored that Senator Klein has supported the EFA in fulfilling its mission, and that he facilitated the launch of such a critical program. The impact we are making on New York State’s young people is clear. Finally, endometriosis is being recognized as a public health priority, and strides are being made toward improving health outcomes.”

The grants have enabled Endometriosis Nation Promoting Outreach and Wide Recognition (ENPOWR) Project – an educational program started at the beginning of 2013 school year that will now be expanded statewide in 2014 with the new funding secured by Senator Klein. This program seeks to increase endometriosis awareness and reduce the diagnosis delay by educating adolescents about the symptoms and

treatment of the disease. The EFA engages a network of stakeholders from the state's public school systems, private schools and community-based organizations in an effort to reach as many youth as possible. Presentations include differentiated, multimedia content designed to empower youth to disseminate their newly acquired knowledge to others, as well as to seek treatment if necessary.

To date, the ENPOWR project staff members have made 5 presentations in the Bronx and 55 presentations across the other 4 boroughs, Long Island and Westchester. Students who have attended one of the ENPOWR presentations have increased their understanding of basic facts associated with endometriosis by an average of 62 points.

Last year, Senator Klein and Padma Lakshmi announced the kick-off of the Teen Health Awareness Campaign. The campaign focused on reducing adolescent obesity, educating students about the health consequences of short and long-term alcohol and substance abuse, and raising awareness among young women and health professionals about endometriosis.

As part of the campaign, adolescents across New York were surveyed on their own knowledge of the causes, symptoms and treatment. The results revealed 70 % of teenagers who participated were unaware of the symptoms of endometriosis, indicating a profound lack of education on this disorder.