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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National Caregiver Month- Sharing caregivers' journeys

November 1, 2021 GOWANDA, NY- Over the years, Healthy Community Alliance has been touching the lives of caregivers in rural communities by providing them tools and resources to help them in their caregiver role. In honor of National Caregiver Month, Healthy Community Alliance interviewed two caregivers to learn more about their experiences and to bring awareness to their selfless work. The first person interviewed has been a caregiver for nearly 20 years. She helped take care of both her father and husband for many years. She currently takes care of her mother for the past 8 years. During the conversation, she shared some of the daily challenges she faces as a caregiver. The caregiver often finds *it difficult to be able to leave the house* because if she does she has to bring her mother along. She found this *especially difficult during the pandemic in fear of putting her mother's health at risk*. She also shared that she finds it difficult to stick to a set schedule, because often her days don't go as planned. The caregiver has learned *she must be flexible and take tasks day by day* to help with her stress level. Fortunately, she has an invaluable and caring daughter that she can rely on to help watch her mother. When asked what advice she would give to someone who has recently become a caregiver, she replied *if you are having problems don't be afraid to ask for help!*

The second caregiver interviewed has 6 grandchildren and a very supportive husband. She has been a caregiver since she was 19, when she started caring for her grandmother. This caregiver currently cares for her mother and has done so for the past 4 years. She *defines being a caregiver as the person responsible for the health and well-being of another* and we couldn't have said it any better! Being a caregiver is a huge responsibility and she shared some of the difficulties she encounters being a caregiver for her mother. The caregiver explained that simple tasks such as going to out to eat with friends or going to the grocery store is currently a struggle because she must find someone to watch her mother. She relies on her family for help but it can often be difficult since none of them live in the area. When asked what advice she would offer to someone who has recently become a caregiver, she replied *patience is key and to find someone neutral who you can talk to*. It can often be hard to talk to family since they are most likely biased about the situation.

Healthy Community Alliance thanks these wonderful caregivers, and all caregivers, for their tireless and remarkable work. To support caregivers on their journey, Healthy Community Alliance has recently kicked off a new initiative, *Caregiver Tech Solutions*, which provides resources and coaching to link caregivers up with technology solutions to help them along the way. To learn more about how *Caregivers Tech Solutions* can enrich your caregiver journey or support someone else who may be caring for another, call Healthy Community Alliance at (716) 532-1010. For all of the latest information, please visit www.caregivertechsolutions.org.

Healthy Community Alliance is a rural health network dedicated to improving the quality of life for Western New York's rural communities.