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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Chita Rivera Honored at the *Spirit of East Harlem* Gala for LSA Family Health Service

*The evening raised close to \$1 million for health and education programs
for low-income New Yorkers*

October 18, 2017 – New York, NY – The spirit of inspiration filled the room at the Spirit of East Harlem gala for LSA Family Health Service on Monday, October 16th at Guastavino’s in Manhattan. Close to 400 guests attended the glittering event, which honored Broadway legend **Chita Rivera** with a Lifetime Spirit Award. The event also honored **Ralph A. Siciliano, Esq.** with a Community Spirit Award and **The Deerfield Foundation** with a Corporate Spirit Award.

The evening’s festivities raised close to a million dollars to improve the health and wellbeing of families in crisis in the community of East Harlem and surrounding neighborhoods.

One of the highlights of the evening was a **musical tribute to Chita Rivera**, performed by **Doreen Montalvo**. Doreen Montalvo is a theatre/ television/ film performer and recording artist, currently playing Gloria Estefan's mother "Gloria Fajardo" in the hit Broadway musical "On Your Feet" at the Marquis Theatre. She recently released a solo album "American Soul/ Latin Heart," a song from which was pre-selected for 2017 Latin Grammy consideration. She was an original cast member of the Tony Award winning "In The Heights," and is a recipient of a 2007 Drama Desk award for best ensemble.

“I’m thrilled that the Little Sisters of the Assumption Family Health Service has chosen to honor me with their Lifetime Spirit Award,” said Ms. Rivera. “This steadfast organization stands for so many things that I believe in—strength of families, diversity, dignity, justice and so much more.”

“Chita Rivera’s ground-breaking career is deeply inspirational and important to people of Hispanic descent everywhere, but particularly in our community of East Harlem where families, especially children, face profound obstacles to success,” stated Reada Edelstein, CEO of LSA Family Health Service. “Her accomplishments stand as an example of what can be achieved when innate talent is nurtured in a supportive environment and brought to fruition through hard work and commitment.”

The award to Ms. Rivera was presented by Monsignor Kevin Sullivan, Executive Director of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New York.

The Corporate Spirit Award was presented to the **Deerfield Foundation** for its commitment to healthcare initiatives that benefit children from underserved communities and all people that have disease or need healthcare services. **Alexis Cazé**, Partner and Managing Director of the Deerfield Institute and President of the Deerfield Foundation’s Executive Committee, accepted the award on Deerfield’s behalf. **Ralph A. Siciliano, Esq.** was presented the Community Spirit Award. Mr. Siciliano served for many years as the chairman of the board of directors of LSA Family Health Service and remains an active board member, helping to lead the agency through a period of transition and growth.

Guests also heard from Cristian Solano, a father who spoke movingly about how he was helped by LSA when he and his four children faced homelessness and food insecurity. “I do not know if you know what that represents for a person who comes to your doors looking help,” he said, referring to his first time arriving at the agency and receiving a bag of groceries from the food pantry. “I felt that my problems and my situation were not mine alone, that someone wanted to help me.”

LSA Family Health Service, founded by the Little Sisters of the Assumption, strengthens and empowers vulnerable families by meeting their basic needs for food, healthcare, education and a safe home, in the belief that affirming families in their own dignity improves the entire community. It reaches some of the most marginalized families in NYC and helps them overcome the barriers that poverty and isolation pose to family health and wellbeing. More at littlesistersfamily.org.

High-res photos are available upon request. Contact: Asari Beale, comms@lsafhs.org, 646-672-5200.