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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****METROPLUSHEALTH TEAMS UP WITH ARTISTS AND CREATORS TO HELP UNEMPLOYED ASIAN AMERICAN NEW YORKERS IMPACTED BY COVID-19**

*Social media campaign promotes government-sponsored health insurance plans for Asian American New Yorkers who lost coverage due to the pandemic*

**(New York, NY – DECEMBER 21, 2020)** – As COVID cases surge across the city, record rates of unemployment among Asian American New Yorkers have left many in the community without health insurance coverage. To increase awareness of government-sponsored health insurance options, MetroPlus Health Plan, a top-ranked health plan trusted by nearly 600,000 New Yorkers, has teamed up with leading Asian American artists and creators to launch a first of its kind social media campaign. **#MetroPlusYou** will feature curated content and conversations about the impact of the pandemic on their personal and professional lives and how they're staying healthy and optimistic during these challenging times. For more information about MetroPlusHealth or to apply for health insurance, call 1-855-809-4073 or visit [www.metroplus.org](http://www.metroplus.org).

Campaign partners include Broadway star Telly Leung (*Disney's Aladdin*), BuzzFeed producer Inga Lam, YouTuber ActionKid, Chinatown Ice Cream Factory owner Christina Seid, actress Celia Au (Netflix's *Wu Assassins*), journalist and podcast host May Lee and singer/songwriter Rianjali.

"MetroPlus Health is honored to partner with an incredible group of leaders to assist the Asian American community during such a critical time," said Talya Schwartz, MD, President and CEO, MetroPlusHealth. "Through this campaign, we're hoping to reach New Yorkers who may be facing the loss of their healthcare coverage for the first time and don't know where to turn. Our team has the experience, resources and language capabilities to serve the diverse needs of this community."

## **Unemployment and the NYC Asian American Community**

Asian American New Yorkers have seen the highest increase in unemployment of any group in New York City as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. The citywide jobless rate for Asian Americans skyrocketed from 3.4% in February to 25.6% in May, as reported by [the Asian American Federation](#). Additionally, Asian Americans filing for unemployment benefits in NYC rose by more than 6000% during this period. Job losses were particularly high in the industries that employ low-income workers such as apparel manufacturing; beauty and nail salons; laundromats; food services; taxi and rideshare; and retail. For many, the loss of employment also results in the loss of health insurance, leaving them--and their families--vulnerable to preventable illness and the high cost of emergency medical treatment.

## **How MetroPlusHealth Can Help**

For 35 years, MetroPlusHealth has built a reputation for providing access to affordable, health care and is ranked among the highest plans for quality and consumer satisfaction.

MetroPlusHealth offers a range of health plans that are no- or low-cost for members and for which enrollment is open all year long. These include Medicaid Managed Care, Child Health Plus, Medicare, Essential Plans and plans for Small Business.

Most MetroPlusHealth plans cover essential benefits, such as primary care and specialist services, dental and vision care, pharmacy, maternity care, urgent care, hospitalization and emergency services, and even free 24/7 telehealth.

Focusing on mental, physical and financial wellbeing, MetroPlus Health enables members to earn points for completing healthy tasks and redeem them for a variety of merchandise. Other wellness benefits may include gym reimbursement, acupuncture, meditation and more.

In 2021, MetroPlus Health will introduce even more ways for members to get rewarded for leading a healthy lifestyle. Through its enhanced Healthy Living Rewards program, Qualified Health Plan (QHP) members may get up to \$440 value in rewards, including \$180 in gift cards, for completing three simple healthy activities: 1) watch a short video, 2) complete a questionnaire and 3) visit their primary care physician.

“As a Broadway performer, I’ve experienced first-hand the many levels of fear and uncertainty as a result of COVID,” said Telly Leung. “Losing your job is one thing but losing your health insurance during a pandemic is a truly frightening situation. I’m proud to be working with MetroPlusHealth to reach out to a community that’s never had to deal with this issue at such an unprecedented scale.”

“The pandemic has had a devastating impact on Asian American-owned small businesses in the city,” said Christina Seid, Owner of Chinatown Ice Cream Factory, one of neighborhood’s oldest family-owned businesses with additional locations in Flushing and the Lower East Side. “I’m thrilled to team up with MetroPlusHealth to promote such a critical resource to the local Asian American community at a time when they need it most.”

### **About MetroPlus Health Plan**

Since 1985, MetroPlus Health Plan has built a reputation for providing access to affordable, quality health care to residents across New York City. A wholly-owned subsidiary of NYC Health + Hospitals, the nation’s largest public health system, MetroPlusHealth is the plan of choice for nearly 600,000 New Yorkers and has a five-star rating based on the State’s 2018 Consumer’s Guide to Medicaid and Child Health Plus Managed Care Plans in New York City. The plan’s robust network of primary care doctors and specialists includes many independent community providers. Culturally sensitive, and fluent in more than 40 languages, MetroPlusHealth staff is as diverse as the great City it serves. For more information about MetroPlusHealth plans, benefits, and services, visit [www.metroplus.org](http://www.metroplus.org) and join the conversation at [facebook.com/MetroPlusHealth/](https://facebook.com/MetroPlusHealth/) and [twitter.com/ @metroplushealth](https://twitter.com/@metroplushealth).