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**Elected Officials & Empire City Casino Join Forces with New York Blood Center
to Replenish Region’s Critically Low Blood Levels
Area Residents Urged to Participate in September 18th Blood Drive**

(Yonkers, NY - September 12, 2013)– New York Blood Center (NYBC) recently reported that it has less than a one-day supply of O-negative “universal donor” blood, less than a three-day supply of B-negative, and less than a five-day inventory of A-negative blood, and very limited supplies of all other blood types. To help replenish the region’s supply, area elected officials have joined forces with Empire City Casino to hold a blood drive on **September 18, 2013** from **2:00pm to 8:00pm** in the **Good Time Room on the third floor of Empire City** located at **810 Yonkers Avenue in Yonkers.**

Summer is traditionally a critical time for blood supplies but this year levels are especially low and each donation made has the potential to affect the lives of three patients in need. New York State Senators Andrea Stewart-Cousins and George Latimer, along with Assembly Members J. Gary Pretlow and Shelley Mayer, are co-hosting the blood drive and urging their constituencies to participate.

“Our first priority is getting our partner hospitals whatever they need for the care of patients with cancer, leukemia, and those who go to emergency rooms after trauma, but we can’t do it alone,” said NYBC’s executive director of donor recruitment **Andrea Cefarelli**. “We are so grateful to our elected officials and Empire City for all that they are doing.”

“We’re not only the largest private employer in Yonkers, we’re a true community partner for Westchester County & the region,” said **Timothy J. Rooney, Jr.**, Empire City’s general counsel. “When we learned of the need, we wanted to help.”

Blood drive participants won’t only get the satisfaction of knowing they made a life-saving donation, they will also receive a free mini-medical exam on site including information about their temperature, blood pressure and hematocrit level.

Furthermore, as part of NYBC’s “*Give Blood & Join the World’s Biggest Huddle!*” campaign, all presenting donors between May 24, 2013 and January 17, 2014 will be entered into a sweepstakes for one pair of tickets to Super Bowl XLVIII (a prize valued at \$2,500). Additionally, each donor will receive a red Super Community Blood Drive Wristband as well as a small gift from the casino as a token of appreciation.

“When my husband fell ill several years ago, he received 72 blood transfusions in the hospital. It was the generosity of those blood donors that helped keep him alive during that time. Blood donations are always in demand, but today the New York Blood Center’s supply is desperately low. Wednesday’s blood drive is coming at a critical time and I am proud to co-host the event with Empire City Casino and my colleagues in government,” said **Senator Andrea Stewart-Cousins** (D/I/WF – 35th District). “The simple act of donating a pint of blood can save the lives of up to three people. It could save your son, daughter, husband, wife, neighbor or yourself. If you are an eligible donor, please take the time on September 18th to help your fellow New Yorkers by donating blood at the Empire City Casino Blood Drive.”

"A donation of a pint of blood is a donation of the gift of life for those who need it. Empire City Casino is showing, once again, that they are a good neighbor by assisting the New York Blood Center in meeting this critical need," said **Senator George Latimer** (D/WF – 37th District).

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"Transfusions of blood save thousands of lives each and every day. I am so pleased to be part of this most important endeavor, letting the community know that blood is the gift of life and all who donate are giving someone else a chance to see tomorrow," said **Assemblyman J. Gary Pretlow** (D/WF – 89th District).

"I am pleased to partner with Empire City Casino and New York Blood Center in sponsoring a drive to help replenish the blood supply. I am pleased to do my part and I encourage those constituents who are able to join me in donating. I particularly appreciate Empire City Casino, a strong community member, hosting this event," said **Assemblywoman Shelley Mayer** (D/WF/I – 90th District).

To schedule your appointment to participate in the September 18th blood drive at Empire City, call 914-457-2439. To check eligibility to donate blood, contact the NYBC Eligibility Line at 1-800-688-0900. A photograph or signature ID must be presented at the time of donation. NYBC strongly suggests donors eat well balanced meals before giving blood. Prior to the blood donation, the onsite donor specialists will check the blood pressure, temperature, iron levels and pulse of all donors to ensure that they are healthy enough to give blood.

About New York Blood Center:

New York Blood Center (NYBC) is one of the nation's largest non-profit, community-based blood centers. For almost 50 years, NYBC has been providing blood, transfusion products and services to hospitals serving more than 20 million people in New York City, Long Island, the Hudson Valley, New Jersey, and parts of Connecticut and Pennsylvania. NYBC is also home to the Lindsley F. Kimball Research Institute and the National Cord Blood Program at the Howard P. Milstein National Cord Blood Center, the world's largest public cord blood bank. NYBC provides medical services and programs (Clinical, Transfusion, and Hemophilia Services) through our medical professionals along with consultative services in transfusion medicine. Please visit www.nybloodcenter.org for more information.

About Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway:

Empire City Casino, one of the largest entertainment and gaming destinations in the country, features 5,300 of the hottest slots, electronic craps, roulette, baccarat and sic bo; year-round harness racing & International simulcasting from North America's leading harness and thoroughbred venues; nightly live entertainment including party, tribute & Latin bands, dueling pianos, comedy, karaoke & more. A plethora of dining options include authentic Italian cuisine at *Nonno's Trattoria*; trackside dining with live betting at *Empire Terrace Restaurant*; and convenient options at the *International Food Court* or the *Grab 'n Go*. A new \$50 million expansion added *Dan Rooney's*, a high-energy sports bar; *Pinch*, in collaboration with Ducasse Studio, features 100 New York craft beers; and *Alley 810*, a craft cocktail lounge rounds out the entertainment options with retro bowling lanes. Empire City Casino at Yonkers Raceway is located at 810 Yonkers Avenue (at Central Avenue) in Yonkers, New York, Westchester County (I-87 to Exit 2), open seven days a week from 9:00am to 4:00am. Visit www.empirecitycasino.com or call 914.968.4200 for more information.

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