

Community health center will open soon in Groton

By MATT SCHUERMAN
Day Staff Writer

Groton officer wins state award

Groton — A state law enforcement group awarded town patrol Officer Jody A. Grabowski a \$500 Connecticut Law Enforcement Foundation Scholarship Award.

Grabowski, along with acting Chief David A. Vanasse and Capt. Herthel L. Cooper, received the award Wednesday at the annual meeting of the Connecticut Police Chief Association in Farmington.

The award recognized Grabowski's education background and teaching experience.

She teaches rape crisis management and other issues at the Women's Center of Southeastern Connecticut in New London.

The 35-year-old Grabowski came on the Groton force in July 1984. She has a master's degree in forensic science from the University of New Haven in 1988 and a bachelor's of science degree in wildlife management from Unity College in Unity, Maine, in 1980.

She received her senior professional certificate in criminal justice management from UNH in 1991 and is working on her doctorate in criminal justice management at Lasalle University in Mandeville, La.

Groton — A community health center hailed as a step towards alleviating the shortage of doctors and nurses in the region is expected to open on Long Hill Road by early August, the center's administrators said Wednesday.

The clinic, to be run by Community Health Center Inc., will be geared to low-income families and the uninsured but open to all area residents.

The 2,000-square-foot space, at the Medland Professional Building at 333 Long Hill Road, will give area residents an alternative to the CHC clinic in Shaw's Cove in New London.

The announcement follows two years of planning by CHC and the Ledge Light Health District, which serves Groton town and city. CHC administrators said they signed a three-year lease for the property last week and will renovate the facilities over the summer.

"By the number of phone calls that came in from people who didn't have insurance and didn't know where to go or who couldn't get into a doctor's office because pediatricians are closed to new patients, it hit us in the face, the lack of primary-care providers," said

Mary Jane Engle, director of the health district.

The center will be the third such clinic in New London County, along with the New London site and the recently opened Norwich Community Health Center on Washington Street in that city.

The Groton site will have one full-time family practitioner aided by a pediatrician who will come from the center's New London office one or two days a week, according to Mark Masselli, CHC president and chief executive officer.

Maria Montanaro, director of the New London center, will function as director of both sites.

Medicare and Medicaid will be accepted and the uninsured will pay under a sliding fee scale according to family income.

A three-member family earning \$12,590 or less would be charged \$10 for a well-child visit, for example; a family earning \$80,000 or more would pay the full price of \$52.

Montanaro estimated that the New London clinic serves 8,000 registered clients, about 1,000 of whom are from Groton. Administrators said they expected the new center to serve about 2,000 clients in its opening months, drawn by the proximity to their homes or work places.

1707