



## **MEDIA ALERT**

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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **ABILITIES FIRST ANNOUNCES NEW HENRY G. PAGE, JR. AWARD & 2018 COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP BREAKFAST**

**ADAMS FAIRACRE FARMS, DUTCHESS COMMUNITY COLLEGE &  
BILL McBREARTY RECEIVE ABILITIES FIRST AWARDS**

#### **COMMUNITY PARTNERS COMES TOGETHER TO CELEBRATE LOCAL NONPROFIT**

**Poughkeepsie, N.Y.** (May 29, 2018) – Inspired by the personal and professional commitment of the late Henry G. Page, Jr. to individuals with disabilities, Abilities First has renamed the annual Business of the Year Award to the Henry G. Page, Jr. Business Partnership Award. Henry G. Page, Jr., business owner and life-long member of the region passed away in February 2018 at the age of eighty-one. Mr. Page was a pioneer in business and in life, and that included the kindness, acceptance and support of opportunity to adults seeking employment or vocational experience, as well as to the youngest of individuals, to whom he extended a compassionate interest in. The award is presented annually to recognize a business for their outstanding dedication, interest and support in providing job opportunities and being a friend to our neighbors with disabilities.

The first Henry G. Page, Jr. Business Partnership Award will be presented to Adams Fairacre Farms at the annual Abilities First Community Partnership Breakfast to be held, Monday, July 16<sup>th</sup> at The Links at Union Vale in LaGrangeville, NY. Adams Fairacre Farms is being recognized for providing vocational opportunities through employment and training of individuals with disabilities.

“In meeting the needs of our communities, Adams Fairacre Farms considers all aspects of our organization, from accommodating the needs and interests of our customers, to those seeking

employment. Our employees represent the fabric of our community, and that includes providing opportunities to those developing job skills through partnership with organizations like Abilities First,” Gaye E. Mallet, Director Human Resources for Adams Fairacre Farms

The additional awards are as follows:

**2018 Abilities First Innovation Award: DUTCHESS COMMUNITY COLLEGE – THINK AHEAD PROGRAM**

Dutchess Community College is being honored with the 2018 Innovation for setting an example of how the business community can collaborate with Abilities First and others, to create innovative opportunities for individuals with disabilities to reach their greatest potential. Through the Think Ahead program, Dutchess Community College’s leadership and commitment in developing a program focused on the development of job skills and life skills, while enjoying a college experience advances the awareness, understanding, acceptance and opportunity for those with disabilities. Past recipients include Dutchess County Government for the ThinkDifferently initiative.

**2018 Ambassador of the Year – WILLIAM (BILL) McBREARTY**

The Ambassador of the Year Award is presented annually to recognize an individual for their enthusiasm and accomplishments in continuing to reach their greatest potential. Bill McBrearty’s was selected, through an internal nomination process, for his long term commitment to his growth and independence and serving as a role model for his peers. McBrearty was recently acknowledged for his 25 years of volunteer service at Vassar Brothers Medical Center where he supports and delivers the hospital mail daily. Included in the recognition is the opportunity to represent Abilities First at events, author the holiday card, award presentations and other community activities where McBrearty will serve as the official Abilities First Ambassador of the Year.

The Community Partnership Breakfast will highlight those who have accomplished much through their perseverance in addition to those who have made such strides possible, as well as to celebrate the organization’s mission “Enriching the Lives of Children & Adults in our Communities”. Abilities First serves over 1,400 children and adults with developmental disabilities through educational, vocational, residential, and habilitation services, throughout the Hudson Valley.

The Event Host Sponsor is Vassar Brothers Medical Center with additional support from Central Hudson, Rose & Kiernan, Inc., Page Management Group, St. Luke’s Cornwall Hospital, and MVP Health Care. For sponsorship and event information, please contact Darrigan DeMattos at 845-485-9803 ext. 394.

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**PHOTOS**



William (Bill) McBrearty, recipient of the 2018 Abilities First Ambassador of the Year Award.

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#### **About Abilities First**

Founded in 1962, Abilities First is a not-for-profit organization serving the needs of the community, as well as those with developmental disabilities, from pre-school through adulthood. Abilities First has had a long-term commitment of providing a cohesive culture of compassion, empowerment and respect for people with a variety of disabilities through educational, vocational, residential and habilitation services. It presently serves over 1,400 children and adults throughout the Hudson Valley region of New York State. AF is accredited for the person-centered care by the Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL).

Abilities First's mission is to provide people with disabilities and their families support to attain independence, self-determination, integration and acceptance by others through education, exploration and experience.

For more information, visit [www.AbilitiesFirstNY.org](http://www.AbilitiesFirstNY.org) or on Facebook at [www.Facebook.com/AbilitiesFirstInc](https://www.Facebook.com/AbilitiesFirstInc).