



ABILITIES FIRST
ENRICHING THE LIVES OF CHILDREN
& ADULTS IN OUR COMMUNITIES

MEDIA ALERT

February 27, 2017

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Abilities First and Poughkeepsie Galleria Host a Showcase for Individuals with Special Needs and Disabilities and Their Families

Poughkeepsie, N.Y. (February 27, 2017) – More than 40 vendors providing support for individuals with disabilities and special needs will be in attendance at *ABILITIES FIRST: A Showcase of Resources for Enrichment & Inclusion*. The Showcase will be held on Saturday, March 4, 2017 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., at the Poughkeepsie Galleria in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. From 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m., there will be an opportunity for children with special needs and their families to attend the Showcase before the mall opens in a sensory sensitive environment. Admission to the showcase is free and open to the public. Abilities First is spearheading the event to bring together resources to enrich the lives of children and adults with any disability whether it be developmental, intellectual, physical, or other.

Dutchess County Executive Marcus J. Molinaro will serve as the Grand Marshall of the event. Molinaro will provide welcoming remarks at 11:45 a.m. at Center Court. Other activities at Center Court include a flash mob at 1:30 p.m. The community is invited to participate in the flash mob. To learn the dance moves, visit the Abilities First Showcase Facebook event page at <https://www.facebook.com/events/1752675808381124/>.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

9 a.m. - 10 a.m.: Early Opening in a Sensory-Sensitive Environment for Children and Families with Special Needs

10 a.m.: Sensory-Friendly Movie Screenings of Lego Batman (PG) & Logan (R)
Playing at Regal Galleria Mall Stadium 16 courtesy of Regal's My Way Matinee Program.
Tickets are \$6.50 each.

10 a.m. – 4 p.m.: Showcase Open to the Public

- More than 40+ vendors including
 - Rifton, a manufacturer of special needs furniture and equipment
 - Topfield Equestrian Center, a therapeutic riding center

- The Seeing Eye, trains seeing eye dogs to guide blind people
- SureHands Lift & Care Systems, provides lift and care systems for people with reduced mobility
- Byron's Hudson Valley Hearing Aid Centers, specializes in providing better hearing solutions
- Seminars
 - *Estate Planning for Individuals & Families* presented by McCabe & Mack LLP
 - *What is it like to have Down Syndrome?* by Down Syndrome Assn. Hudson Valley
 - *What is person centered care?* presented by Dr. Jeffery Fox, Abilities First Chief Executive Officer
 - *Guardianship for Adults with Disabilities* presented by Sholes & Miller, LLP
 - *Front Door Access to Services* presented by NY State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD)
 - *American Sign Language Basics* presented by Gail Hancock-Huttel, Abilities First School Teacher
- Special performances by Hudson River Performing Arts and Abilities First School Students

For a full schedule of events, visit <http://www.abilitiesfirstny.org/showcase/>.

The *ABILITIES FIRST* event is hosted by the Poughkeepsie Galleria. Support is provided by Dutchess County Government, THINK DIFFERENTLY, iHeart Media and Media Sponsor Poughkeepsie Journal.



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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 1,200 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 or on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/AbilitiesFirstInc.