



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

MEDIA ALERT

September 1, 2017

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School for Students with Disabilities Opens in Cornwall

Cornwall, N.Y. (September 1, 2017) – The Abilities First School will open its doors in Orange County on September 6, 2017 and will welcome twenty-two students, age 5-21. The school, which will provide programs and services for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities, will be the school’s first location in Orange County.

The school location at 340 Hudson Street, Cornwall-on-Hudson will be a temporary site, while a recently donated property, located at 59 Windsor Highway, New Windsor will be renovated into a state-of-the-art educational facility. The anticipated opening of the New Windsor site is Summer 2018. Abilities First acquired the property, the former Devitt’s Medical Arts Building through a major gift of \$3.2M from Ari Straus, and Dr. Marc Straus.

The donation, the largest gift in the organization’s history, was made by Ari Straus and his father, Dr. Marc Straus. Ari is the CEO and Managing Partner of Monticello Motor Club, an automotive country club and private race track in Monticello, N.Y. Dr. Straus is a renowned art collector and owner of a contemporary art gallery in Manhattan.

Abilities First Schools are presently located in LaGrange and Red Hook, supporting over 116 students from 22 school districts throughout the Hudson Valley. This new facility will enable Abilities First to better serve students currently living in and near Orange County.

For further information, contact Melissa McCoy at (845) 485-9803 ext. 223.

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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. Abilities First is accredited for person-centered care by the Council on Quality and Leadership (CQL).

The Abilities First School serves children with intellectual & developmental disabilities needing specialized educational and therapy services. Students are determined eligible by their home school district. In addition to its LaGrange location, Abilities First supports a Universal Pre-K program for ages 3 and 4 year-olds in collaboration with the Hyde Park Central School District, and it's Abilities First Preschool, serving 67 children, age 3-5 at its Wappingers Falls site.

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.