



MEDIA ALERT

February 27, 2018

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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, 2018) – 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 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m., at the Poughkeepsie Galleria in Poughkeepsie, N.Y. From 9:30 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. The 2017 Abilities First participant of the Year, Jessica Doering, will serve as the Grand Marshall of the event.

The community is invited to participate in a flash mob at Center Court. To learn the dance moves, visit <http://www.abilitiesfirstny.org/showcase/>.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

9:30 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 *A Wrinkle in Time* (PG) & *Black Panther* (PG-13)

Playing at Regal Galleria Mall Stadium 16 courtesy of Regal's My Way Matinee Program. Tickets are \$6.50 each.

10 a.m. – 3 p.m.: Showcase Open to the Public

- More than 40+ vendors including

- Bussani Mobility, services and rents wheelchair accessible vans
- ClearCaptions, a captioning phone system enables those with hearing loss to communicate
- Open Doors Educational Advocates, helps families navigate Special Education services
- Grow Music, provides music therapy

11:45 a.m.: Welcoming Remarks from Grand Marshall Jessica Doering (2017 Abilities First Participant of the Year), Poughkeepsie Galleria, and Stenger, Roberts, Davis & Diamond, LLP

11:55 a.m.: Wheelchair Basketball Demonstration by Ali Adaptive Sports and Fitness

12:30 p.m.: Meet the Dogs from Hudson Valley Paws for a Cause

12:45 p.m.: Meet Mocha, a Pony from Lucky Orphans Horse Rescue

1:00 p.m.: Performance by You Are Beautiful People (Beautiful People) Spirit Squad

1:30 p.m.: Community invited to join the flash mob followed by Dance Performance by Abilities First School Dance Dance Crew

2:30 p.m.: Meet the Animals from Two By Two Zoo

The *ABILITIES FIRST* event is hosted by the Poughkeepsie Galleria. Support is provided by Stenger, Roberts, Davis & Diamond LLP, Dutchess County Government, THINK DIFFERENTLY, and media sponsors iHeart Media, Poughkeepsie Journal and Hudson Valley Parent.

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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 or on Facebook at www.Facebook.com/AbilitiesFirstInc.