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Empowering People...Enriching Lives

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Tuesday, January 5, 2010

Families and Professionals Invited to HARC'S "TEACCH" Autism Workshop

Area families and professionals are invited to participate in "TEACCH - Treatment and Education of Autism and related Communication-handicapped CHildren," a one-day workshop hosted by HARC's Focus on Families Educational Series.

The training will be held Thursday, January 28, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Herkimer County Community College's Robert McLaughlin Center in Herkimer, NY. Thanks to funding from HARC and a grant from the New York State CNYDSO Family Support Advisory Council, the workshop is free and lunch is provided. To register, contact Rachael Bliss at (315) 574-7812 or rbliss@herkimerarc.org.

The workshop will present an overview of the strategies utilized in TEACCH and how to use those strategies at home, and in school and work environments. This intervention was developed by Dr. Eric Schopler at the University of North Carolina - Chapel Hill in 1974, and it is one of the first Autism intervention programs to incorporate parents as crucial members of the intervention team. The main goal of the educational workshop is parent-professional collaboration, along with three priorities: focus on the individual, understanding Autism, and adopting appropriate adaptations. It is a strategy that builds on existing interests and skills. This approach can be effective one-on-one or in groups.

The workshop will be led by Michael Lo Gallo and Elizabeth Smithmeyer, both partners of Consultants in Exceptional Education. Michael Lo Gallo is a special educator who has served as a clinical instructor at Upstate Medical University, SUNY Binghamton. Elizabeth Smithmeyer is a certified teacher in both elementary and secondary education as well as special education. Both instructors received post-graduated training in Autism at the University of North Carolina and are certified to work and present TEACCH design training. Additionally, combined they have eighty-one years of experience working with special needs students and adults, and they have designed and presented many professional trainings, family trainings, and inservice education programs.

HARC employs over 400 full and part-time staff to provide meaningful work and life goals, and to give care to over 600 participants in Day Programs, Health Services, Residential (24-hour and supported homes), Recreational and Respite Services, Valley Commons, Family Support, Family Care, Career Connections, Senior Center, Herkimer Industries, Goodwill-HARC Store and Donation Center, and Transportation. For more information regarding HARC, visit www.herkimerarc.org.

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