

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 20

CONTACT: Gwen Fariss Newman, gwen@milestonespr.com, 717-659-0158

NEW LEG UP FARM OFFERS RARE MULTITUDE OF SERVICES FOR FAMILIES WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Tranquil setting, green construction and environmental approach also noteworthy

YORK, PA -- Leg Up Farm, a new first-of-its-kind therapeutic center for children and young adults with special needs that offers consolidated services in one centralized site, has opened its doors in a tranquil setting of south central Pennsylvania that incorporates nature as well as cutting-edge therapeutics.

The facility – to include an indoor horse arena as well as walking trails, two dozen sensory gardens and an interactive town center – is designed not only to provide individualized therapy but also a fun, relaxing destination for the entire family, where critical services are provided more conveniently, more centrally and in a more stimulating environment.

Judy Kochansky, the mom of two, visits Leg Up Farm several times a week for her children's therapy needs. You know a place is special, she says, when the kids cry when it's time to leave and are excited about going back. That's the case with their occupational therapist, Margaret Myers, now at Leg Up Farm. "They offer a lot of opportunities for kids to be kids," says the Windsor Township resident who commutes 20 minutes to the brand new facility still under construction.

"It's always so hard to find the right services," acknowledges Kochansky, "and Leg Up Farm has a lot of services under one roof." She praises its family-oriented approach as well as rare services that are hard to find locally, including hippotherapy, which will be introduced in the fall and utilizes equine movement as a treatment strategy to help build muscle tone, improve fine motor skills and help patients with neuromusculoskeletal dysfunction.

Leg Up Farm is expected to serve more than 1,000 children and their families within the first three years of operation as well as create the need for 37 new jobs in its first 18 months of operation. Nationwide, an estimated 18 million children need this specialized care; Pennsylvania claims a rate higher than the national average. Local families currently have to drive out of the region for the care they need and/or utilize multiple centers.

Simply getting the specialized care needed for children with special needs can be a challenge that's often costly, time-consuming and frustrating. A regional survey conducted by the Polk-Lepson Research Group among 75 families and 28 service providers found that:

- Over one half of the parents surveyed felt their child was not receiving therapy with enough frequency
- Over one-half of the parents did not feel that their child realized full potential with the services being received
- Over one-half of the parents indicated they were not receiving support services

Additionally, the National Survey of Children with Special Health Care Needs found that:

- Approximately 21 percent of children with special needs have difficulty in getting a referral for services; this compares with 28 percent for the state of Pennsylvania
- Nationally, as well as within the state of Pennsylvania, 30 percent of children with special needs also have inadequate health insurance
- Further, about one-third of children with special needs are without family-centered care on both national and state levels.

Facilities that provide therapies for children with special needs often have waiting lists or parents must juggle appointments at multiple sites.

Leg Up Farm is a project envisioned by Louie Castriota, a local resident and businessman whose daughter suffers from mitochondrial disease. The family's personal experience and frustrations fueled their passion to see Leg Up Farm become a reality.

Leg Up Farm's current (left) and future services (right), launching in the next 12-18 months, include:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical therapy• Occupational therapy• Speech-language therapy• Therapeutic recreation• Recreational therapy• Paws for Reading Program• Advocacy services• Educational programs• Farming adventures• Social networking• Summer day camps• Developmental play groups | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Equine-assisted activities• Dance/music therapy• Caregiver support• Aquatic therapy• Massage therapy• Dietary consultation• Resource library• Creative arts therapy• Integrative daycare• Temporary respite care• Support groups• Horticultural therapies |
|---|--|

It's rare for such a range of needed services to be readily available, rarer still under one roof and in such a stimulating setting. Recognized experts in the fields of child development, pediatric medicine, and various therapeutic modalities will augment the staff and be called upon for their advice. This approach was endorsed by Dr. Stanley Greenspan, a Harvard- and Yale-educated child psychiatrist who authored more than 35 books and monographs and was a professor of psychiatry at George Washington University Medical School.

The Central Penn Business Journal recently spotlighted Leg Up Farm's energy efficiency approach. Castriota points out that many of the building materials either utilize recycled materials and/or are recyclable, lights automatically turn off after 10 minutes of non-use, and its cooling/insulation choices will help trim \$16,000 in expenses annually. Leg Up Farm anticipates certification as an official green building by the U.S. Green Building Council and worked in partnership with the York County Community Foundation to undertake energy-efficient green construction. "The environment is extremely important to Leg Up Farm's therapy model, so early on in our construction process, I thought it was important for us, based on our programming, to seek out and pursue green building."

A popular family sitting area allows spectators to share personal experiences, take in the expansive environmental view and, in the very near future, watch their children mount and ride the therapeutic horses that will also make the place their home. Therapeutic toys and equipment are easily portable so that each session can be individualized and meet the changing needs of the recipient.

Leg Up Farm is designed as a comprehensive, transdisciplinary center for children and young adults with special needs. This includes those who have, or are at increased risk for having a chronic physical, developmental, behavioral, or emotional condition and who also require health and related services of a type or amount beyond that required by children generally. Diagnoses might include cerebral palsy, autism, ADHD, Down Syndrome, mental retardation, learning disabilities, traumatic brain injuries, depression, abuse and pervasive development delay.

For more information, visit the Leg Up Farm website at <http://legupfarm.org/> or call Gwen Fariss Newman at 717-659-0158.