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The premier community resource for people with disabilities and their families

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 4, 2013

Saratoga Bridges Receives grant from The Saratoga Springs Rotary Club

Saratoga Bridges received a grant of \$500 from The Saratoga Springs Rotary Club's Community Support Program. These funds will purchase woodworking equipment for their Community Action Group (CAG) located at the Wilton Day Program.

The agency created a Positive Approaches Committee in 2009 to utilize person-centered values based on caring and respectful supports and to work with staff in various programs to develop environments that provide alternative, but meaningful activities. By making a commitment to employ this positive philosophy, Saratoga Bridges hopes to increase growth, self-esteem and confidence, diversify community activities, promote empowerment, learning and skill acquisition and increase productivity and quality of life.

In early 2011, the CAG was developed at their Wilton Day Program to provide a group of people who had challenging behaviors with opportunities to be involved in more productive, creative and functional activities. Since there are several staff members who were interested in woodworking, gardening and maintenance activities, the CAG became responsible for work orders at their site such as building and hanging shelves and constructing work benches and picnic tables. The woodworking program blossomed as the group exhibited true talent. Now they participate in product development and have learned to build wooden wind chimes, bird houses and have incorporated slate and stone into their pieces as well. The CAG have their wares at Saratoga Bridges' Creative Endeavors Art Center Gift Shop and take enormous pride in their sales.

Consequently, there has been a significant decrease in challenging behaviors and a momentous increase in quality of life. Individuals remain active, busy and no longer have non-productive days.

This is a tremendous outcome for them as it is the first time in their lives they are producing positive results! There are many other intellectual, social, emotional, psychological and physical benefits as well. Furthermore, the results have sparked an interest from other classrooms that support people with similar negative outbursts and overall disinterest.