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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 10, 2014

Saratoga Bridges held a Ribbon Cutting for *The Wright Family Foundation Pavilion*

Saratoga Bridges held a Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for *The Wright Family Foundation Pavilion* on Thursday, July 10th with more than 40 people in attendance. Located at their Wilton Day Program, 690 Route 9 in Gansevoort, Heather Ward -- The Wright Family Foundation Chairman & Executive Director, Senator Kathleen Marchione, Art Johnson -- Town of Wilton Supervisor, Jeanne Woutersz -- Town of Wilton Historian, Sue Baldwin -- Town of Wilton Clerk, Tom Lewis -- Deputy Chief of Staff for Senator Kathleen Marchione, family members, individuals and, staff and volunteers participated in the event. *The Wright Family Foundation Pavilion* is an exciting programmatic addition to this site and the impetus on their entire property enhancements.

Project Narrative.

In 2000, 10 highly motivated Wilton Day Program employees formed a Staff Incentive Team to ensure that they exceeded people's needs while enhancing the program environment. They completed many internal projects that assisted their individuals as well as their 80 co-workers. They wanted to improve the property behind the building, with an ultimate goal of maximizing the programmatic usage. The land was originally a leech field for their septic system as they are now connected to the Town of Wilton water and sewage system. But they saw the potential in developing the land into something positive their individuals and staff could truly use. They submitted a proposal to the Town to restore the Brill Cemetery with the intent to maintain the gravesites while giving the utmost respect and dignity for the people buried there.

Saratoga Bridges was then fortunate to have some volunteers from the Naval Nuclear Power Training Unit who willingly spent 3 days painstakingly removing a tremendous amount of scrub,

bushes and trees adjacent to the cemetery. It was a lot of hard work, but was an amazing invaluable, improvement. In 2011, the agency summited a grant to the Wright Family Foundation, Inc. to erect a pavilion they would name in honor of their generosity. Established in 1997 with funds from SI Group, Inc. (formerly Schenectady International, Inc.), it is a private family

foundation that supports the community, education, health, social needs, and the arts. Shortly thereafter they were most fortunate to receive a very generous grant of \$30,000. The dream is now realized! *The Wright Family Foundation Pavilion* is a sheltered area that will allow individuals a chance to experience and enjoy the natural surroundings of the property without concern for insects, precipitation or temperature. It provides an ideal setting in which to increase emotional, psychological and physical opportunities. This will directly make a very positive impact on their individuals' overall recreational and social skills. Staff members who work at this site will benefit as well.

Now they are moving into the next phase of development. This involves many horticultural activities as horticulture is perhaps one of the oldest healing arts. It will offer a safe outdoor educational environment to learn about different types of plants, weather and wild life while having senses maximized and fostered. They will use the greenhouse to grow flowers and plants and then transplant them into a garden and want to construct a Nature Trail which will be tranquil and an additional place for people to relax and decompress. Some individuals will gain physical activity maintaining the area. In addition, they want to create a recreation area where the participants will be able to play softball, basketball, volleyball, soccer, kickball, tetherball and badminton. This will provide an avenue to increase exercise levels and team-building skills.

Every individual, regardless of their ability level, can benefit from this space. They know the results incorporate better personal, daily living, recreational, communication and social abilities -- all of which will directly make a positive impact on their self-confidence, self-esteem, overall happiness and ultimately their level of independence and productivity.

In conclusion, their intent is to collaborate all of these programmatic enhancements with their neighbors Teddy Bear Day Care Center and the Home of the Good Shepherd assistive living facility. They hope to create inter-generational activities, raise awareness of people with developmental disabilities and develop new friendships.

Saratoga Bridges has been providing the highest level of programs to people with developmental disabilities and their families for more than 55 years by promoting their abilities and achievements in every aspect of community life. As one of the largest private non-profit organizations in Saratoga County, they have been committed to ensuring that the individuals they serve are able to realize their goals, hopes and dreams as they work, shop, play, and volunteer while leading full, productive and contributing lives. This voluntary service provider believes that the care they give increases immeasurably the quality of life for every citizen. Saratoga Bridges' philosophy is that every day is full of possibilities!

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