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A UNION THAT STRENGTHENS THE ABILITIES OF THE KEON CENTER AND ABBOTT HOUSE

PEEKSKILL, NY - According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, a staggering 15% of children aged 3 to 17 have at least one or more developmental disabilities. Additionally, on any given day, there are 428,000 children in foster care in the US. After a 3 year process, application to and review by the NYS Attorney General's Office, Abbott House and the Keon Center announced that their joint application to merge was approved and finalized on November 8th, 2019.

"This merger will allow us to increase the services that both organizations already provide," said James Kaufman, President and CEO of Abbott House "We are thankful to Howard Millman, former President of the Keon Center, whose stewardship brought Keon and Abbott House together. We look forward to creating new programs that will create more promising futures for children, families, and adults in the Hudson Valley Region and New York City."

Marianne Oros former Vice President of the Keon Board, Chair of the Keon Programs of Abbott House Advisory Committee, and a new member of the Abbott House Board stated, "Keon Center has served the developmentally disabled since its incorporation in 1954. The merger is the best of both worlds, combining the strength of the Keon Center's services with Abbott House's depth and expertise."

Abbott House established the Keon Advisory Committee ensuring the continued participation by former Keon Board members. The Committee will ensure the stability and growth of Keon program and oversee a Visioning Plan adopted by both organizations. “We recognize the prestige and storied history of the Keon Center and all Keon programs will continue to operate as **“Keon Programs of Abbott House”**” stated Walter Montgomery, Chairman of the Abbott House Board of Directors.

Abbott House supports nearly 2,800 children in foster care, unaccompanied immigrant children, struggling families and adults with developmental disabilities in the New York Metropolitan Area and the Hudson Valley. Originally a convalescent hospital, Abbott House was officially incorporated as a child welfare agency in 1963. One of its early advocates was Dr. Martin Luther King, who gave the invocation at Abbott House’s inaugural dinner on October 29, 1965.

Abbott House has residential programs located throughout seven counties in the Hudson Valley and New York City. Programs include; the H.E.A.R.T. Permanency Resource Center, (Helping Each Adaptive and guardianship family Remain Together), Foster Care and adoption, Juvenile Justice , PYA (Preparing Youth for Adulthood), Health Home and Community Based Services, Clinical Counseling and Medical Services, Community Schools Resource Center, and TRC (Transitional Resource Center) for unaccompanied immigrant children.

Responding to the need for specialized community-based residences; Abbott House developed and operates 18 residential programs for adults with developmental disabilities, two community-based day habilitation programs that help individuals become meaningful members of the community where they volunteer at local fire departments, animal shelters, and deliver Meals on Wheels and prevocational training programs.

The Keon Center, Inc. was established by a group of concerned parents and citizens to address the needs of children with disabilities who were not provided for by the State education system. They began by providing training classes for people with disabilities on a free tuition basis. It is believed that this was the first parent operated class in the State of New York.

The organization dedicated its own facility, the Edward J. Keon Sr. Memorial School on June 10, 1962. Keon has consistently expanded its services to the disabled adult, and operates multiple community based programs including WOW (Without Walls), volunteering, and pre-vocational training with Meals on Wheels, Boscobel, Stonewall Stables, Teatown Reservation, Peekskill Field Library, Spins of the Hudson and many more. Job placement services include: Supported

Employment, ETP (Employee Training Program) and Pathways to Employment. Pre-vocational training in community sites include: Walgreens Pharmacy, CVS, Jo-Ann Fabrics, Homestyle Bakery. An active program for respite services for families offers recreational activities and life skill training with dinner served every night prepared with the assistance of individuals.

Brett Baker, the Plant Manager at Wheelabrator Westchester said, “We are gratified to support Keon and the individuals that they serve. For over 10 years we have contributed to Keon’s Golf outing, partnered with the Peekskill BID to provide grants to hire the Keon individuals to clean up the streets of Peekskill and helped individuals learn life skills by providing them with experience in a work environment.”

Many local businesses and organizations in the Cortlandt-Peekskill area have partnered with the Keon Center, Inc., including the Cortlandt Colonial Restaurant, Table 9, White Plains Linen, the Peekskill Hat Factory, B.A.S.F., Wheelabrator Westchester, the Peekskill B.I.D., Entergy, and the Peekskill Rotary.

“People Helping People” is the mantra of Keon, which will grow and flourish as this new union with Abbott House continues to enhance the Keon Programs of Abbott House. Working together we make a difference in strengthening our community for everyone.

The community is invited to join us at our Grand Opening on Thursday, February 13, 2020 from 4:00pm to 6:00pm. RSVP to development@abbotthouse.net by Monday, February 10th.