



Philanthropy Witness

The Official Newsletter of the Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society - July 2019

Autism Assistance Fund Update

Cerebral Palsy of Westchester

Grand Opening and Dedication of Harmony Park:

Adaptive Playground and Sensory Garden

Opened on June 15, 2019 at the David G. Osterer Center in Rye Brook, NY

June 17, 2019, Rye Brook, NY— Saturday morning, June 15, local officials, CPW's Board of Directors and staff, funders, and supporters gathered for a ribbon-cutting ceremony celebrating the grand opening of Harmony Park Playground and Sensory Garden at CPW's David G. Osterer Center at 1186 King Street. Attendees included the Mayor of Rye Brook Paul Rosenberg, Westchester Deputy County Executive Kenneth Jenkins, NYS Assembly Member Steven Otis, Director of the Westchester County Office of People with Disabilities Evan Latainer, Debbie Reisner, Chief of Staff of the Town of Rye, Debbie Friedman on behalf of Westchester County Legislator Nancy Barr, CPW Executive Director Linda Kuck, and CPW's Board President Richard N. Osterer. The playground is a fabulous addition to the organization whose programs ensure that children and adults with disabilities receive needed services and enjoy activities regardless of the level of their abilities.



At left, Harmony Park ribbon cutting at CPW's David G. Osterer Center. L-R: Kenneth Jenkins, Westchester Deputy County Executive; CPW Board Member Venita Osterer; Debbie Reisner, Chief of Staff, Town of Rye; Debbie Friedman, Legislative Aide to Nancy Barr; CPW Board Member David Fisher, CPW Board President Richard N. Osterer, CPW Board Vice-President David Kelson, Mayor of Rye Brook Paul Rosenberg, CPW Board Member Laura Klein, NYS Assemblyman Steven Otis, CPW Exec. Dir. Linda Kuck. At right, Trying out the Merry-go-round - BRIDGE School Principal Barry Wasser with graduation seniors, family and friends. Photos by Warren Rosenberg.

Overview: Harmony Park is a new adaptive playground and sensory garden installed at CPW to benefit both children and adults with autism, cerebral palsy, and other disabilities. It is the first-of-its-kind in the region with innovative, wheelchair-accessible equipment and sensory activities so individuals with mobility issues can

swing, play, experience nature, and practice critical skills. The park enables CPW participants to play as typical children do, improving their health and functioning, reducing their stress, and granting them and their families a whole new sense of “normalcy” and well-being.

Linda Kuck, CPW's Executive Director, remarks, *“We are thrilled to dedicate the Harmony Park Playground and Sensory Garden – providing a source of exercise and recreation, intellectual stimulation, socialization, and emotional well-being for our participants for years to come.”*

The playground includes a wheelchair-accessible merry-go-round and glider, waterplay table, Pulse Tempo interactive music and sensory game installation, xylophone, giant bongos, umbrella pavilion area, outdoor musical and raised planter beds with colorful flowers, aromatic herbs and plants that sway/whistle; all focused to encourage physical activity, stimulate the senses, and promote imaginative, interactive play that helps children build problem-solving skills, social skills, and frustration tolerance.

The park will benefit hundreds of children, students and adults of CPW's wide-ranging programs at the David G. Osterer Center, including The BRIDGE School at Rye Brook, CPW's Adult Day Program, Saturday Explorers, Adaptive Recreation, Jimmy Vejar Summer Fun Program, and Teen and Young Adult Social Clubs.

The project took considerable collaborative planning. Funding was secured through major gifts from JRM Construction Management, LLC, New York Elks Association, Mid Westchester Elks Lodge 535, Elks Mamaroneck Lodge 1457, Executive Association of Westchester, New York State Building Conference-Westchester Chapter, TD Securities; **Greek Orthodox Ladies Philoptochos Society**, CPW's Operation Hope, CPW's Board of Directors, and individual donors.



The plaque listing the sponsors of the playground.
