



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AFFILIATION BETWEEN FAMILY EMPOWERMENT COUNCIL, INC., AND OCCUPATIONS, INC.

Middletown, NY, December 7, 2007 – Family Empowerment Council, Inc., board president, and Occupations, Inc., board chairperson announced an affiliation between the two not-for-profit organizations. This affiliation, ratified by both Boards of Directors, is effective immediately.

“This affiliation maintains Family Empowerment Council’s unique, independent, and specialized services to individuals and families and we will now have the support of the Occupations administrative service team. Together we will ensure diverse and critically important services are provided to people with disabilities in our community,” commented FEC board president Graham Skea.

Occupations board chairperson Linda Hicks added enthusiastically, “We are thrilled about the decision to affiliate. We believe this will strengthen the services of both Occupations and Family Empowerment Council and ask for the wholehearted support of the community.”

Family Empowerment Council established in 1993 by families of individuals with developmental disabilities will be celebrating 15 years of service. The agency was established by a group of concerned parents, including the late Sally McGlynn, seeking grassroots family involvement in the establishment, provision, and advocacy for services to their children with disabilities. Through the affiliation, Family Empowerment Council is now part of the Occupations corporate system with FEC remaining as an independent entity continuing its mission with its own corporate structure, charter, and bylaws.

Occupations will celebrate 45 years of services in September 2008. The Occupations system is presently a \$40 million service continuum with 550 staff. FEC will add an additional \$10 million of services and over 500 staff, including many part-time employees.

Skea added, "The Family Empowerment Council Board of Directors is very pleased that Amy Anderson-Winchell will serve as FEC Executive Director in addition to her role as Executive Vice President & Chief Operating Officer of Occupations. For the past seven months, Anderson-Winchell has been serving in an executive advisory capacity to FEC, assisting interim director Barbara Russell in leading the agency along with an Occupations' accounting manager. Barbara Russell has been named Director of Program Services at FEC."

James DeStefano, President & Chief Executive Officer of Occupations states, "We look forward to this mutually beneficial affiliation between our two organizations. Services will be enhanced for the individuals and families we serve."

Amy Anderson-Winchell added, "I am delighted to be able to carry on the work with the FEC Board of Directors and staff to continue our mission to provide these essential services to families and am very appreciative of the support of the Board and staff throughout this interim period."

The services, which FEC provides to people with disabilities, include service coordination and case management to diverse populations, mental health family support for families with children with emotional disturbance, early intervention, educational advocacy, consumer-directed personal care, support and assistance, residential habilitation, and respite services.

Occupations, Inc., programs include outpatient mental health services, case management, child welfare, emergency services, residential services, and employment opportunities to people with developmental disabilities and individuals recovering from mental illness. Occupations, Inc., also provides an extensive transportation system throughout Orange County. Occupations, Inc., was established in 1963 by parents of children with developmental disabilities who were seeking vocational services in the community.

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If you would like more information about this topic or to schedule an interview, please contact:

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