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**IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Special Needs Students Create a Recipe to Help Hungry Families**

*Soup bowls made by student artists will be filled and sold to benefit the needy*

**CHATHAM, NJ** – How easy is it for you to grab a bowl from your kitchen cabinet and fill it with soup, cereal or pasta to make a quick meal? For millions of struggling American families with empty cupboards, that simple act is a daily challenge.

At ECLC of New Jersey's school in Chatham, the special needs students have a recipe to help local hungry families, by combining a dash of creativity with cupfuls of compassion.

Over the next few weeks, the youngsters will take turns at the pottery wheel to create ceramic bowls that will be filled with soup and sold at Café Beethoven at 262 Main St., Chatham, from March 7-11.

All proceeds will go to the Community Soup Kitchen and Outreach Center, Inc., in Morristown, which serves a hot, nutritious, noon-time meal, every single day, to anyone who comes through its doors.

ECLC student artists will throw and glaze 120 bowls with help from their art teacher, Mary Ann Walter, who is leading the fund-raiser. "In this cold weather, we hope the entire community in and around Chatham comes out to buy some hot soup and help those who are facing difficulties," said Walter.

The fund-raiser is part of the Empty Bowls project, an international, grassroots movement to raise awareness about hunger and support those in need.

Empty Bowls was started in 1990 by a Detroit art teacher, who organized students to make and sell bowls in support of a local food bank. Since then, Empty Bowls has become the name for similar

events held around the world and raised millions of dollars for community-based organizations that combat hunger.

While the economy shows signs of improving, hunger is a gnawing reality for millions of American families. A recent study found that in New Jersey 14 percent of households – or one in seven -- did not have enough money to buy food at some point in the past 12 months, according to the Food Research and Action Center's (FRAC) based in Washington, D.C.

### **About ECLC**

Based in Chatham, ECLC of New Jersey is a nonprofit that provides education, enrichment and employment to some 600 developmentally disabled children and adults. ECLC operates schools in Chatham and Ho-Ho-Kus, enrolling more than 300 students, ages 5-21, with severe learning and/or language disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, Down syndrome or multiple disabilities. For adult clients, ECLC provides job placements and transition services through Community Personnel Services, Inc., and independent living skills habilitation in its P.R.I.D.E. day and evening programs. Learn more about ECLC at <http://www.eclcofnj.org>.