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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Greater Morristown Y Wins State Recognition for
Employing People with Disabilities through Community Personnel Services**

MORRISTOWN, NJ – On Friday, the Greater Morristown Area Y won a statewide award and was singled out as a “local hero” for offering job opportunities to people with disabilities.

The Y was named the state “Employer of the Year” by the New Jersey chapter of APSE (Association for Persons in Supported Employment), a national nonprofit, for hiring two young ladies with developmental disabilities to work at their child care centers. These jobs were coordinated through Community Personnel Services (CPS), a nonprofit, based in Chatham, which offers supported employment opportunities to adults with disabilities.

“We are here to celebrate local heroes,” said Dan Baker, who presented the awards during APSE’s annual conference, held at the Doubletree Hotel in Somerset. “Without employers like the Y, there would be no jobs for people with disabilities.” The Y “consistently shows their commitment to people with disabilities in their workplace.”

The awards were given to Ashley Kindberg of Rockaway, executive director of the Y’s Richard F. Blake Children’s Center, and Jane Manning, director of the Y’s Children’s Corner Child Care Center at Morristown Memorial Hospital. “The Y believes everyone should have a place in the world. For us, there is no hesitation about employing people with disabilities,” said Manning in accepting the honor.

The recognition culminates a partnership with CPS that started in 2004, when the Y hired a CPS client with significant cognitive disabilities and challenges. The Y looked past the client’s disabilities to focus on her gentle disposition, strong work ethic and instinctive abilities with children.

Later, the Y hired another client, who is autistic, also for a child care position. This young lady possesses one of the most important traits in working with children: patience! In addition, over the years,

groups of students working with CPS as they transition from school to work been allowed to tour or job "sample" at the Y's centers.

CPS Assistant Director Mary Griggs, who nominated the Y, said, "Their efforts are to be applauded and recognized because over the years they have been instrumental in creating environments where persons with diverse backgrounds can learn and succeed."

About CPS

In these challenging economic times, CPS is able to place 93 percent of its clients, who are adults with special needs, in meaningful jobs. They do everything from driving forklifts to corralling shopping carts in parking lots to stocking shelves. Employers include Acme Markets of Randolph, the Home Depot in Parsippany, ISP Chemical of Chatham, Marshalls of Paramus, Morris View Nursing Home in Morristown, Panera Bread in Florham Park, Sears of Rockaway and Shop-Rite of Parsippany.

CPS was established in 1995 by ECLC of New Jersey to help their graduating students with special needs and other adult clients find meaningful employment. Based on their skills, abilities and interests, transitioning students sample jobs prior to graduation with the goal of identifying the best match. For students who may not be ready for employment, the CPS staff arranges tours of programs and assistance in locating funding sources for those programs. CPS also helps clients navigate through the maze of state and federal agencies to access aid, services and transportation. Learn more about CPS at <http://www.cpsofnj.org>.

About ECLC

Founded in 1970, ECLC has grown from a small, early-intervention program into a comprehensive network of non-profit agencies serving more than 600 children and adults with special needs, including autism, Down syndrome, severe learning and/or language disabilities or multiple disabilities. In addition to CPS, ECLC runs schools, for students ages 5-21, in Ho-Ho-Kus and Chatham and has P.R.I.D.E. Centers in Chatham and Bergen County, offering day and evening programs for adults with special needs. Learn more about ECLC at www.eclofnj.org.