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New Year's Job for Students at ECLC of New Jersey

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Jan. 8, 2013

CHATHAM, N.J. – The new year brings people new opportunities and that was certainly the case at the ECLC of New Jersey school in Chatham for children with special needs. When they returned from the holiday break, a group of students in the SKIL program got to package 3,000 of the borough's 2013 community calendars for distribution to residents this month.

The SKIL (Seeking Knowledge for Independent Living) program is an important component of the curriculum at the school, which enrolls children with autism, Down syndrome, learning disabilities and other special needs. In SKIL, older students get ready for the workplace by taking on internal and external projects, including managing mailings, collating newsletter, creating custom welcome mats, invitations, T-shirts, mugs and menus and even running the school's lunch program.

These projects support outside clients and in-house needs, while allowing students to gain valuable work skills, habits and attitudes. Once students have mastered the basics, they move out into the community to "sample" jobs, from child care and retail to food service, maintenance and office administrative support. The goal is to prepare students for independent living and for the transition after graduation from school to work.

About ECLC

Founded in 1970, ECLC of New Jersey offers lifelong support and services – education, employment and enrichment – to people with special needs.

The Chatham-based nonprofit has grown from a small, early-intervention program into a comprehensive network of nonprofit agencies serving nearly 700 people with special needs, including autism, Down syndrome, severe learning and/or language disabilities or multiple disabilities.

ECLC runs schools, for students ages 5-21, in Chatham and Ho-Ho-Kus, and for adults with special needs, offers job placements through Community Personnel Services (CPS), also based in Chatham, and day/evening programs at its P.R.I.D.E. Centers in Chatham and Paramus. Learn more about ECLC at www.eclcofnj.org.