

**Contact:**

Beth Peterson  
Assistant Director of Development  
(607) 286-7171 ext. 283  
petersonb@springbrookny.org

**For Immediate Release**

July 29, 2010

## **School for Developmentally Disabled Breaks Ground on \$22.5 million Expansion**

**Expansion to fuel upstate economy, upgrade quality of life for students and families**

**Oneonta, NY** – July 29, 2010 – Students, parents and staff, along with New York State Senator James L. Seward (R/C/I-Oneonta) and Assemblyman Pete Lopez (R/C/I-Schoharie) held a groundbreaking ceremony today for Springbrook’s new Tom Golisano School at Springbrook expansion. Many community members and state and local leaders attended the historic event to celebrate the \$22.5 million expansion, which reflects Springbrook’s over 40 year commitment to meeting the ever-changing needs of individuals with developmental disabilities.

The Oneonta-based residential and day School at Springbrook currently serves 76 New York children with developmental disabilities. When completed, the expansion will create an Autism School within the School for 36 students, including 24 new children who are currently placed (or are in danger of being placed) in residential programs out of state. The project will include 3 duplex-style residential homes, a new gymnasium, kitchen/cafeteria and extensive interior and exterior infrastructure renovations.

The expansion also brings a name change to the school, which will now be known as the Tom Golisano School at Springbrook, in honor of philanthropist B. Thomas Golisano, whose \$2.5 million challenge grant was vital to the expansion. “This is a terrific organization doing excellent work on behalf of individuals with developmental disabilities,” said Golisano. “I’m happy I could play a part in bringing our children closer to home to receive the care they need.”

At the lunchtime ceremony, Springbrook CEO Patricia E. Kennedy recognized the strong partnership between Springbrook, the Golisano Foundation, numerous friends and donors, families, students and the State of New York – all of whom have supported the project.

“We always knew this was the right project, at the right time, for all the right reasons,” Kennedy stated. “When we began planning in 2006, we knew that it was right for our mission, but it was also right for our area and especially for the hundreds families who sent their children out of state because there was not enough space for them in New York. The project means so much to so many, but it would not have been possible without the help of people like Tom Golisano or Jim Seward or Pete Lopez, who saw in us the promise of a better tomorrow. We could not have done this alone.”

**Continued on next page**

**Contact:**

Beth Peterson  
Assistant Director of Development  
(607) 286-7171 ext. 283  
petersonb@springbrookny.org



Speaking on behalf of the State of New York, Seward acknowledged the many benefits this project will have especially for Otsego County and the surrounding area.

“The Springbrook expansion will change lives for the better on several levels and will pay future dividends, both economically and socially,” Seward asserted. “The project will provide quality jobs at a time when the area economy needs a boost. It will produce long term savings to the state, something every single taxpayer can appreciate. And, most important, the expansion will improve the lives of children with developmental disabilities and their families. I have been proud to partner with Patricia Kennedy and the dedicated staff at Springbrook in securing state support for the life-changing expansion project and look forward to the day when the doors open to the exciting new venture.”

Lopez also joined Seward in congratulating Springbrook, citing especially the economic advantages and cost savings to state taxpayers.

“While providing needed services to those struggling with autism is a compelling public priority in and of itself, this project carries additional benefits to the region and New York State as a whole,” Lopez said in a prepared statement. “To date, the state is forced to rely on out of state service providers to meet the variety of needs presented by the students. By offering these services within the state, New Yorkers will realize some \$27 million in tuition savings over the life of the project. Just as important, we anticipate the creation of some 112 new jobs in the region, from maintenance and direct care to nurses, therapists, aides, teachers and administration, all of whom will contribute to the area economy. I am thrilled to be a part of this vital project.”

Parent Wendy Martinez and student Jennifer E. spoke from the heart, describing how the expansion will impact their lives, and the lives of so many other families. “[The expansion] has brought us hope that more kids will be accepted than pushed away,” Jennifer began. “Courage is to step forward into life and fulfill their future and strength to help special kids in need look back and say that Springbrook really helped me. Every kid from on campus and off campus will be in heaven because these kids really deserve a bigger and more improved Springbrook. Once this project is finished, it will change kids’ lives. So let’s step forward and make this the best new and improved Springbrook that people will cherish for generations and generations.”

###

If you would like more information about this topic, please contact Beth Peterson at (607) 286-7171 ext. 283 or [petersonb@springbrookny.org](mailto:petersonb@springbrookny.org).