

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Grant Provides Funding to Northern NY Families for Evaluations for Children with Possible Autism Spectrum Disorder

Utica, NY (February 19, 2010) - The Kelberman Center was recently awarded a 12 month grant which will provide free diagnostic evaluations to Plattsburgh area children with known or suspected autism spectrum disorder. The grant was made possible by the New York State Legislature and efforts by New York State Senator Betty Little and New York State Assemblywoman Janet Duprey.

The grant will fund three diagnostic clinics in Plattsburgh between now and June 2010, serving up to 36 children. "The Kelberman Center is grateful to Senator Little and Assemblywoman Duprey for their efforts securing this grant that will significantly impact the lives of children suspected of having an autism spectrum disorder," said Helen Stepowany, executive director of the Kelberman Center.

"We are so excited to have services here locally for families with children with special needs," said Assemblywoman Duprey. "This is an invaluable asset for the area." "Early detection is extremely helpful to a child's development," added Senator Little. "Our families traveled long distances before to receive services and we are happy to have these programs right here in our community."

The evaluation clinics are being arranged with the support and collaboration of several area organizations with a history of services for children and adults with autism and related disabilities including North Country Kids and the Department of Psychology at SUNY Plattsburgh. The first clinic will be held on March 10 and 11 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. at the George W. Angell College Center at SUNY Plattsburgh.

In addition to the free comprehensive evaluations, the Kelberman Center will also present a series of free community education programs for parents and area health and educational professionals. The first community speaker series on autism will be held on Wednesday, March 10 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. in Hawkins Hall at SUNY Plattsburgh.

For more information regarding either the diagnostic clinic or the speaker series on autism, or to refer a child for an upcoming clinic, contact Danielle Pizzo at the Kelberman Center at (315) 797-6241 ext. 284 or Karen in the department of psychology at SUNY Plattsburgh at (518) 564-3076. All inquiries will be confidential.