

**DURHAM CENTER FOR EDUCATION IN WESTMINSTER, MASS RECEIVES
ACCREDITATION APPROVAL AS SPECIAL EDUCATION SCHOOL**
Plans Underway For Celebration Open House To Be Held February 8 At School

January 14, 2011 — The Durham Center of Education, formerly the Center for Education, is excited to announce its approval by the Massachusetts Department of Early and Secondary Education as a private, not-for-profit, 766 special education school. The Durham Center, located in Westminster, Mass., is operated by the Institute of Professional Practice, Inc. (IPPI) and provides a 12-month educational program for children ages 8 to 22 years old with developmental and intellectual disabilities, autism and behavioral disorders. A celebration and open house will be held on Tuesday, February 8 from 1 p.m. until 3 p.m. at the Durham Center and all are welcome to attend.

According to Mary Devlin, IPPI's Massachusetts State Director, this announcement reaffirms the Durham Center's commitment to its mission of furthering academic and social development, and emotional health, so students successfully graduate or return to their public school systems. "Our students receive a tailored program that offers a 1:2 teacher/student ratio that fits their unique needs," continued Devlin, "providing them the opportunity to participate in academics, life skills development, and community integration."

One of the most unique aspects of the Durham Center is its School-to-Work program, which prepares students between the ages of 18 to 22 to enter adulthood with strong vocational skills. "Many programs teach these vital skills, at the Durham Center, we take the training one step further by coordinating with local community businesses and organizations to offer these students real-life opportunities to work in a business setting and learn how to behave in and prepare for these situations," said Devlin.

Dr. Susan Sczerzenie, IPPI Director of Children's Services, explains the methodology of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is the cornerstone of the Durham Center's practices. "ABA affords a framework to make data-driven decisions to insure positive educational and behavioral outcomes and serves as a therapeutic methodology for teaching verbal behavior and social skills and reducing challenging behaviors," commented Sczerzenie. "Basically, the evidence-based methodology of ABA provides our program with state of the art behavioral interventions for families and children requiring individualized services. It is our goal to ultimately improve behavioral, social, and emotional functioning and to improve students' abilities to access academic curricula."

Coupling the practices of applied behavior analysis and school-to-work program have proven successful for the Durham Center which currently educates 15 students from across North Central Massachusetts. In addition to the core curriculum, the Durham Center also offers staff and parent training, group skills training, 1:1 behavior intervention and development, psychological assessment, service planning and coordination and much more.

“It is our hope that special educators and community members will join us on February 8 to tour the school and meet our students and families,” offered Devlin. “It’s a wonderful opportunity to see first-hand the impact the Durham Center is making on our students in preparing them for their future and making it as positive and successful as possible.”

For additional information about the Durham Center, please visit their web site at www.ippi.org (click Massachusetts, The Durham Center for Education) or call 978-874-1405.

About the Durham Center for Education

The Durham Center for Education is a private special education school that supports students with autism spectrum disorders, developmental disabilities and social skills deficits. The primary goal is to teach functional and pro-social skills that can be easily generalized to the student’s community and home. For more information, please visit the Center’s web site at www.ippi.org (click Massachusetts, The Durham Center for Education).

About the Institute of Professional Practices, Inc. (IPPI)

IPPI is making a positive difference in the lives of children and adults with developmental and other special learning needs. We specialize in diverse, individualized residential, employment, educational, and consultative services delivered to people in their local neighborhoods and communities. Making a meaningful difference begins with respect, compassion, and commitment.