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**HERITAGE CENTERS AWARDED GRANT FROM
THE PETER AND ELIZABETH C. TOWER FOUNDATION**

(BUFFALO, NY, January 22, 2010) – The Peter and Elizabeth C. Tower Foundation has awarded Heritage Centers a three-year grant totaling \$95,810.40. The award falls under their 2009 Developmental Disabilities grant award cycle.

In this pilot project, all Heritage Centers education staff will be trained in the DIR/Floortime methodology (year one) and will then will implement it by establishing “model classrooms” (years two and three) that will be fully equipped with sensory room equipment and technology.

The DIR (Developmental, Individual Differences, Relationship-Based)/Floortime Model is an integrated approach, developed by Stanley Greenspan, MD, and Serena Weider, Ph.D., that looks at each individual child’s emotional development, social relationships, methods of communication, natural strengths and sensory integration. The goal of the implemented model is to:

- Promote the child’s overall development
- Strengthen a child’s ability to process, reflect, and communicate effectively
- Enhance a child’s ability to relate and interact socially

DIR/Floortime is an effective and proven model that is gaining more and more attention, support and momentum, especially as we see dramatic increases in children having some kind of autism spectrum disorder associated with them.

“We are honored to have the support of such an outstanding leader in the community,” said Michael L. Gross, Heritage Centers Executive Director. “We are so excited that The Tower Foundation saw the potential in this pilot project—we are confident that this is going to change the lives of the children who attend our school program.”

Heritage Centers is a local non-profit that employs nearly 1,000 people and serves more than 3,000 individuals with disabilities (and their families) each year. Individualized services include, but are not limited to: early intervention, education, residential, vocational, service coordination, legal and advocacy programming.

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