



## NEWS RELEASE

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **The Starting Place Celebrates 25 Years**

**Mellenville, New York (May 20, 2008)** COARC announces the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of The Starting Place, its preschool and day care program for children ages 18 months to five years. A public celebration to recognize the success of this Hudson-based children's program and to honor those professionals and families who have helped reach this milestone will be held on Friday, May 30 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm at the Columbia-Greene Community College student cafeteria. Light refreshments will be served, including ice cream sundaes donated by the Stewart's Shop at Fairview Avenue and Greene Street in Hudson. The public is invited to attend the festivities by calling 518-828-3890 x130 for free admission at the door.

"Our business is caring," states Yule Pieters, COARC's Director of Children's Services and current Director of The Starting Place.

He will present special recognition awards to former Starting Place directors Carolynn Anklam and Abbie Schiff. Other former and current staff members to be honored include Mary Ellen Baker, Regina Bluj, Cindy Colarusso, Kathryn E. Craft, Joyce Davis, Sue Delaney, Tammy Gregory, Dr. Nancy Hoag, Jo-Ann Haas, Anna Kraft and Joy Mc Curry.

The Starting Place opened in 1983 to provide services for children with special needs and to support their families. Over the years it has occupied three different sites, moving in 1994 to its permanent location at 65 Prospect Avenue in Hudson, also known as Prospect Place. Currently, five classrooms make up the program which serves 66 children. The Starting Place is an integrated program that supports children who are experiencing disabilities and children who are not. Those children who are experiencing developmental delays and disabilities are met with a host of professionals on staff to address their needs, including Occupational, Speech, Physical, Vision, Social Workers, Psychologist and Behaviorist.

COARC is a Columbia County not-for-profit organization whose mission is expanding abilities, one person at a time, so individuals experiencing disabilities can achieve their personal goals. COARC provides an array of services and programs that benefit more than 600 individuals and it employs more than 400 area residents. Established in 1965, COARC is the Columbia County Chapter of NYSARC, Inc. It is primarily supported through state and federal funding, and also by individual and corporate members and other foundations. Information about employment, program services, membership and donation opportunities at COARC is available at [www.COARC.org](http://www.COARC.org) or 518-672-4451.

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