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The Douglas Center Announces the Introduction of Pet Therapy to Its “Expressive Therapies” Program

Skokie, IL — The Douglas Center is excited to announce the introduction of Pet Therapy to its “*Expressive Therapies*” Program utilizing certified animal therapy dogs. Pet Therapy, also known as Animal Assisted Therapy (ATT) utilizes trained animals and handlers to achieve specific physical, social, cognitive and emotional goals with individuals with disabilities. Canine therapy is the most common of pet therapies and has shown to be especially successful with emotional disabilities. A dog’s ability to empathize and to physically interact has shown to be especially successful for individuals who may be emotionally closed, by creating a safe relationship and environment for them to be able to let their guard down.

“We are very excited about our newest component to our Expressive Therapies Program,” stated Rifath Khan, Chief Executive Officer. “There are numerous benefits to pet therapy that our program participants will benefit from greatly.” Some of the benefits of pet therapy include: improvement of fine motor skills, social skills and balance; increased focus, attention, trust, self-esteem, empathy and teamwork; reduced anxiety, grief and isolation.

The Douglas Center provides day programs for individuals with intellectual, developmental and physical disabilities. The Douglas Center Work Center offers work programs that include light manufacturing, sewing, packaging, assembly, shrink-wrapping, labeling, heat sealing, fulfillment services, etc. by partnering with local manufacturers on work contracts/projects. The center offers pre-vocational training as well as developmental rehabilitation for adults of all ages. The Douglas Center opened its doors in 1999. Today, they provide a home away from home for 134 hard working and dedicated individuals. The center’s *clinical services, training programs, employment opportunities and Senior’s program* enhance the lives of their program participants and assists them in reaching their maximum potential.

For more information on the programs and services provided by The Douglas Center, please visit our website: www.thedouglascenter.com

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