

PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Carriage House Children's Center, Inc. Sets Gold Standard
in Green Building Design and Early Care and Education**

Pittsburgh, PA (January 22, 2009) –Carriage House Children's Center, Inc / Wightman School Community Building located in Squirrel Hill announced today that it has been awarded LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) **gold** certification for an Existing Building by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). LEED® is the USGBC's leading rating system for designing and constructing the world's greenest, most energy efficient, and high performing buildings.

Carriage House, who owns and occupies the 113 year old, 40,000 square foot Wightman School Community Building, is the larger of *only two buildings* in Western Pennsylvania that have become environmentally certified as an *existing building*. Many buildings in the Pittsburgh region have been certified by the U.S. Green Building Council as new construction projects, but virtually no older structures in this region have met the tough challenges associated with environmentally retrofitting an *existing* facility. Further, the LEED® rating system for Existing Buildings is unique because it requires ongoing attention and detail to the building's operations and maintenance, which is a practice that maintains the environmental quality of the facility over the long run.

The project began in early 2005 with a \$2.2 million renovation that involved project team members: Gary Moshier of Moshier Studios, Jendeco Construction Corporation, Elk Air, Bert Davis & Associates, Carlins Consulting and Electrical Engineers, Carriage House Building Manager, Bob Michel and other Carriage House staff. To achieve LEED® certification the heating and cooling system was replaced and particular attention was paid to lighting, water, waste management, green cleaning methods along with many other sustainable strategies.

"We are very pleased with our achievement in obtaining gold certification from the U.S. Green Building Council. Our main focus in this effort was to provide the healthiest and most environmentally friendly facility to benefit the health of the children and families that we serve in our program and throughout this community building", said Natalie A. Kaplan, Executive Director.

Supporters of this project include two anonymous sources, the Richard King Mellon Foundation, the Kresge Foundation for a green planning grant *and* a capital challenge grant, the Hillman Foundation, the Grable Foundation, the Negley Flinn Charitable Foundation, the Mary Hillman Jennings Foundation, the Laurel Foundation, PNC Charitable Trusts, the Berkman Foundation, the Gertrude Hellerman Charitable Trust Fund, the Donald and Sylvia Robinson Family Foundation, the Snyder Charitable Trusts, the Steinsapir Family Foundation, the Foster Charitable

Trust, the Lawrence and Ina Gumberg Foundation, the Elsie H. Hillman Foundation and over 400 individual supporters. As an ongoing effort to promote green building initiatives in this region, The Heinz Endowments' Environment Program awarded Carriage House a grant to author a case study on the childcare center's greening process.

"I am very proud of the work that our staff has done this year in upholding our center's commitment to quality in early care and education. In addition to becoming certified at the gold level by the USGBC, our early education and preschool programs have been nationally re-accredited and recognized by Pennsylvania as a Star 4 Program", said executive director, Natalie A. Kaplan.

Carriage House received national reaccreditation from the National Association for the Education of Young Children this year – the highest distinction given to early education centers in the country. Throughout the accreditation process, NAEYC conducted an exhaustive review of teaching and curriculum, health and safety, administrative leadership, teacher qualifications, professional development, and facility management to determine the organization's accreditation status. **Carriage House scored a 96% average.**

Carriage House was also designated as a Star 4 Program by the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Office of Child Development and Early Learning – the highest distinction available in the Commonwealth for an early education center. To become a Star 4 Program, Carriage House had to meet intensive requirements related to such things as professional development of its teachers and classroom practices

Carriage House is a nonprofit early education and pre-K program located in Squirrel Hill that annually serves over 200 children ranging in age from six weeks to six years. Over ten small businesses or non-profits are located in the Wightman School Community Building.

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About Carriage House Children's Center, Inc.

Founded in 1974 on the campus of Chatham College, The Carriage House Children's Center is a non-profit early education and preschool program that annually services over 200 children, ranging in age from six weeks to six years. Carriage House purchased the Wightman School Community Building on Solway Street from the Squirrel Hill Urban Coalition in 1986. Additionally, ten local non-profit organizations lease office space within the Wightman School Community Building and hundreds of community members and groups use the conference rooms, gymnasium and dance studios on a weekly basis. Carriage House assures that every activity, service or program that is run out of the Wightman School Community Building is dedicated to families, parents and children.

About The Wightman School Community Building

Since its construction in 1896 by Ulysses J.L. Peoples, the Wightman School Community Building, which functioned as a Pittsburgh Public School until 1980, has served tens of thousands of families, children and community members throughout the Pittsburgh region. The building symbolizes this community's commitment to maintaining a gathering place for the education of young children, for recreation and for the work of charitable organizations. It has been recognized by the National Register of Historic Places as an excellent example of a historic building adapted for contemporary use. The Wightman School Community Building's survival and evolution into one of this region's finest community centers is a tribute to the innovation and dedication of all who have entered its doors.

About the U.S. Green Building Council

The U.S. Green Building Council is a nonprofit membership organization whose vision is a sustainable built environment within a generation. Its membership includes corporations, builders, universities, government agencies, and other nonprofit organizations. Since USGBC's founding in 1993, the Council has grown to more than 17,000 member companies and organizations, a comprehensive family of LEED® green building rating systems, an expansive educational offering, the industry's popular Greenbuild International Conference and Expo, and a network of 78 local chapters, affiliates, and organizing groups.

About LEED®

The LEED® (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Green Building Rating System™ is a feature-oriented rating system that awards buildings points for satisfying specified green building criteria. The six major environmental categories of review include: Sustainable Sites, Water Efficiency, Energy and Atmosphere, Materials and Resources, Indoor Environmental Quality and Innovation and Design. Certified, Silver, Gold, and Platinum levels of LEED green building certification are awarded based on the total number of points earned within each LEED category. LEED can be applied to all building types including new construction, commercial interiors, core & shell developments, existing buildings, homes, neighborhood developments, schools and retail facilities. LEED for Healthcare is currently under development and is expected to be released in early 2008.