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The Provident Bank Foundation Awards \$3,000 Grant to Opportunity Project for Vocational Services Job Club Program

Millburn, NJ – Opportunity Project was selected by The Provident Bank Foundation to receive a \$3,000 community grant to fund services and training for brain injury survivors. The funds will support Opportunity Project’s Job Club, a program that helps people with brain injuries set realistic employment goals.

Opportunity Project is the only nonprofit organization in the state that provides vocational, educational, recreational and therapeutic activities exclusively for people with brain injuries. The Job Club is located within Opportunity Project’s vocational unit, based in Millburn, New Jersey.

“Opportunity Project is thrilled to accept The Provident Bank Foundation’s grant and participate with their community efforts,” said Carol Albanese, Executive Director of Opportunity Project. “It is imperative to continue to fund vocational services like the Job Club to assist Opportunity Project members about learning to accept their “new normal” and set realistic professional goals.”

The Job Club includes a weekly discussion group for members to talk about the challenges of working after surviving a brain injury. The primary goal is to assist and support members with developing their professional skills and setting realistic vocational goals so they can successfully prepare for and maintain employment.

Proceeds from the grant will fund further development of the Job Club to offer additional tools that counselors can use to teach topics such as “how to get along with co-workers” or “listening skills for workplace success.”

Over the past three years, Opportunity Project has developed partnerships with local organizations such as Arts Unbound, Whole Foods Millburn and Millburn Free Public Library to assist with teaching the appropriate social behavior in a work environment, following directions and completing and staying on task. These partnerships have directly resulted in employment opportunities for brain injury survivors.

“We are very fortunate to have foundations like The Provident Bank Foundation support employment opportunities for brain injury survivors through programs that we provide at OP. Their dedication to increasing awareness and enhancing services for people with brain injuries is imperative to organizations with similar goals as Opportunity Project,” said Amy Sigona, Development Director of Opportunity Project.

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Caption: (L-R) Michael Petrucci, vice president/ market manager, Provident Bank; Jane Kurek, executive director, The Provident Bank Foundation; Opportunity Project Member Lan; Marc Berson, Chairman, Opportunity Project

ABOUT OPPORTUNITY PROJECT:

The Opportunity Project Clubhouse is a unique program created by and for people with brain injuries who are seeking the next step in their journey to recovery. It is the first and only free-standing Clubhouse Program for people with brain injuries in the State of New Jersey. Beginning with five members, it has now served over 500 individuals. The program is a national model for Clubhouses and other community-based service programs for people with brain injury throughout the country. Providing an environment of support, challenge and choices, the ultimate goal is full reintegration back into the family, work and community after one sustains a brain injury. Opportunity Project’s motto- no one is turned away due to lack of funding- sets them apart from others in the brain injury field.

ABOUT THE PROVIDENT BANK FOUNDATION:

The Provident Bank Foundation was established in 2003 by The Provident Bank to enhance the quality of life in the region through support of not-for-profit groups, institutions, schools and other 501(c)(3) organizations that

provide services in communities served by the Bank. Since inception, the Foundation has granted more than \$21million to not-for-profit organizations and institutions working toward stronger communities. For more information about The Provident Bank Foundation, visit www.ProvidentNJFoundation.org or call (862) 260-3990.