



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: November 8, 2023

CONTACT: Heidi Hoffercker

hhoffercker@orangegrove.org, (423) 664-4805

ORANGE GROVE CENTER CELEBRATING 70 YEARS OF SERVICES

Chattanooga, TN – Orange Grove Center is celebrating 70 years of providing community-driven and person-centered services and programs for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) by hosting a party at the Chattanooga Theatre Centre on November 9, 2023, from 5:00pm until 8:00pm. The celebration will include two showings, at 5:30pm and 6:30pm, of a new short film looking back at the Center’s history. In 1953, a group of parents banded together to provide an alternative to institutionalization for their children born with disabilities. In October 1953, two classrooms opened for nearly 30 children in what had been Orange Grove Elementary School on Main Street. Two retirement group homes now stand in that place – a testament to the lengthening life span of people with IDD.

Over the course of its storied history, Orange Grove grew programs and services to address new demands, adding a sheltered workshop in 1955, summer camp at Double G Ranch in 1956, transportation in 1961, its first group home in 1964, Special Olympics in 1968, the opening of the new Derby Street campus in 1970, the dedication of the Gus McCravey Health Care Clinic in 1992, the dedication of the Morton J. Kent Habilitation Center in 1993, the dedication of the John F. Germ recycling center in 1997, a significant expansion of employment-related services and programs in the early 2000s, the opening of services in Georgia in 2012, and the addition of unique mental health programs for people with dual diagnoses in 2019 and 2021.

Today, in addition to its continuing school program and employment services, Orange Grove operates 60 group homes, including its first in Georgia, which opened in early 2023. Its transportation fleet manages 150+ vehicles traveling over 1,000,000 miles per year. Its healthcare services range from primary care, dental care, Orange Grove’s volunteer board has benefitted from the leadership of hundreds of philanthropic, business, and community leaders in the Chattanooga area over the last seven decades, and more recently has enjoyed the next generation of community leaders planning and hosting its most successful fundraiser, Bingo for the Grove.

Rosie Russell, current President of the Board of Directors, says, “Orange Grove has been part of my family for more than 20 years – my son started going to Orange Grove when he was six years old. I am so happy to be serving as President of the Board during this exciting time!”

For more information about our current programs, please visit Orange Grove’s official website at <https://orangegrovecenter.org/www>.

About Orange Grove Center

Founded in 1953, Orange Grove Center is a private, non-profit organization that serves 1,000+ adults and children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in the Chattanooga and North Georgia

areas. For more information about programs and services, visit <https://orangegrovecenter.org/www>. For weekly updates, follow @orangegrovetr on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and LinkedIn.

###