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Press Release

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Taunton, MA PRIDE, Inc. Celebrates 50th Anniversary

PRIDE, Inc. of Taunton is pleased to announce its *50th Anniversary*. The organization will celebrate over the course of the year with various special events including a gala at The Chateau in Norton on September 14, 2019.

PRIDE serves individuals in southeastern Massachusetts with intellectual, cognitive and developmental disabilities, as well as individuals with hearing impairments. Headquartered at 3 Maple Street in Taunton, PRIDE's eleven areas of programming serve more than 500 adults and children. Part of its programming includes an award-winning community-based production services plant d/b/a PRIDEWRX, employing able-bodied individuals as well as those with disabilities.

Over the years PRIDE has developed innovative services and programs with the goal of improving the quality of life for all. The organization's philosophy is that everyone who wants to work can work and be able to live in the most independent situation of their choice, regardless of barriers. Considered to be one of the premier providers of its type in the southeastern region of Massachusetts, PRIDE maintains a person-centered philosophy, treating each participant as an individual.

Executive Director Joanne Storrs believes that collaboration with area agencies has been an important factor in the organization's success. "We appreciate our relationships with local non-profits such as the Old Colony YMCA, Bristol Elder Services, Attleboro Art Association, Wheaton College, Contact with Horses, and Taunton High School. We also want to thank Norton High School, Bridgewater Raynham Regional High School, Ocean Spray Cranberry, DeVito's Pizza, Veteran's Marker Committee, The Pearl Restaurant and The Taunton Area Chamber of Commerce," she states. "Together we are building a stronger, more productive and cohesive community."

"PRIDE has also been very fortunate to have a Board of Directors who value individuality and share our person-centered philosophy," says Storrs. "We are thankful for these individuals who support our organization through fundraising initiatives and strategic planning for the future, and we look forward to serving our community, stakeholders, participants and their families over the next 50 years."

PRIDE, Inc. was established in 1969. The organization initially offered vocational training and employment opportunities for people with severe mental illness at a time when civil rights concerns for individuals with disabilities led to their deinstitutionalization. Innovative for its time, PRIDE offered practical vocational skills to help its constituents gain independence and ensure that they become valued members of the community. In 1973 the organization was incorporated as *Preparatory Rehabilitation for Individual Development and Employment* (PRIDE).

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