



**For Immediate Release**

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**EASTERSEALS CAPITAL REGION & EASTERN CONNECTICUT CELEBRATES DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY AND 75 YEARS OF COMMUNITY IMPACT**

**Windsor, CT (January 10, 2023)** – Easterseals Capital Region & Eastern Connecticut (Easterseals CREC), a leader in expanding access to healthcare, education, and employment opportunities for those with disabilities and our veteran population, is celebrating its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2023.

To commemorate 75 years of delivering extraordinary care and programs to some of the most vulnerable in the community, Easterseals CREC has developed an impactful communications and fundraising campaign: #ALLIN75, and a robust, year-long calendar of events.

“Everyone that comes to us has a unique story and we look forward to bringing that story to life in unique and creative ways over the course of the year. Watch for #ALLIN75, our 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary communications and fundraising campaign reflecting our drive for 100% equity, access and inclusion. Our success is only possible because of our partnerships with individuals, volunteers and corporations, and we want to celebrate all of those connections this year,” said Robin Sharp, CEO & President of Easterseals Capital Region & Eastern Connecticut.

Easterseals has always been a leader in disability and inclusion programs and was instrumental in getting the ADA passed. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) was a bill that was passed in 1990 that greatly expanded the civil rights of people with disabilities. The ADA was signed into law in part thanks to widespread protests led by people with disabilities and assisted by allies of all kinds. Easterseals was a leading supporter of the ADA and actively lobbied to ensure its passage.

“We are thrilled to celebrate this milestone anniversary and even more excited by the bright future ahead given our leadership in inclusion, employment for all and advocacy for public policy solutions as part of our larger national family of Easterseals affiliates across the country,” said Jocelyn Belisle, Board Chair of Easterseals Capital Region & Eastern Connecticut.

**75 Years of Impact:**

Incorporated in 1948, Easterseals Capital Region & Eastern Connecticut had humble beginnings in a small space on Franklin Avenue in Hartford with two paid staff, a handful of dedicated volunteers, and essential equipment contributed by various service clubs, foundations and corporations. The organization, initially called the Hartford Community Workshop, had a primary caseload focused on treating patients with tuberculosis which later evolved to rehabilitation services for individuals with



disabilities. From these simple beginnings, the organization has grown exponentially to become one of the primary providers of vocational and rehabilitation services, as well as veterans services in the state.

Some milestones reached along the way include:

- The incorporation of the Hartford Easter Seal Rehabilitation Center on Franklin Avenue in Hartford in 1948.
- In 1954, Easterseals expanded to a larger, more prominent Hartford location on Holcomb Street.
- In 1976, Easterseals invented the HeadLite, a firefighting headlamp designed and produced in an Easterseals sheltered workshop program and manufactured by the organization for over 20 years.
- In 1983 the organization was certified as a Comprehensive Outpatient Rehabilitation Facility, a designation the organization continues to hold today.
- In 1991, Easterseals moved to its current location on Deerfield Road in Windsor, Connecticut and its building maintenance service, currently known as EnviroClean, was developed to train and employ people with significant disabilities.
- In 1998, to better reflect the growth of the services and geography served, the organization changed its name to Easter Seals Greater Hartford Rehabilitation Center.
- In 2008, EnviroShred was founded as an Easter Seals Social Enterprise Business.
- In 2009, as a result of the reorganization of some Easterseals affiliates in Connecticut, the organization took on programs and services in Eastern Connecticut, and subsequently changed its name to Easter Seals Capital Region & Eastern Connecticut, which was changed again in 2017 to reflect the national branding of Easterseals from two words to one.
- In 2018, Easterseals Capital Region & Eastern Connecticut began providing transitional housing to veterans in need at its Rocky Hill location.
- On Veterans Day in 2021, Easterseals Veterans Rally Point, a national model and center of excellence opened to serve veterans, active duty military, guard, reserve and families

Today, the organization's mission continues to be centered around inclusion, recognizing that our differences are our strengths. Easterseals CREC provides a wide range of medical and career development services for individuals of all ages with disabilities. Life-changing services include job training, adult day support, social enterprises, medical rehabilitation, autism services and a dementia diagnostic center serving nearly 1,400 individuals and their families annually across 155 Connecticut towns. The recently opened Easterseals Veterans Rally Point is a much-needed holistic center of excellence serving veterans, active duty, guard, reserves and their families.

In its 75<sup>th</sup> year, Easterseals Capital Region & Eastern Connecticut is stronger than ever with a relevant mission, a robust infrastructure and the support of a caring community.

**Easterseals Capital Region & Eastern Connecticut is inviting everyone to join its 75<sup>th</sup> year celebration and attend one of its special events:**

- **May 13:** Easterseals Annual Signature event: Denim & Diamonds Crystal Ball celebrating 75 years of impact and a bright future



- **July 29:** Community-wide event on actual 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary: more to come
- **October 21:** Annual 5k Your Way “celebrating 75 years”

**Volunteer:** Easterseals is always looking for help at events on committees, or advocating for public policy solutions. For more information, visit: <https://www.easterseals.com/hartford/get-involved/volunteer/>.

**Consider a #ALLIN75 Gift:** A gift of \$75, \$7.50 a month, \$750 – any amount will help Easterseals CREC to reach its goal of raising \$175,000 this year in order to serve more people than ever before! To donate, please visit: <https://www.eastersealsgivingseason.com/allin75/>.

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#### **About Easterseals Capital Region & Eastern CT**

For nearly 75 years locally and 100 years nationally, Easterseals has been an indispensable resource for individuals with disabilities, veterans, seniors, and their families. Through high-quality programs, including medical rehabilitation, autism services, Veteran and Military services, workforce development, adult day care and more. Easterseals also operates social enterprise businesses such as EnviroShred and EnviroClean. In schools, workplaces, and communities, we are fostering environments where everyone is included and valued — making a real and positive impact on us all. Join us in ensuring that everyone — regardless of age or ability — is 100% included and 100% empowered.

Learn more at [www.easterseals.com/Hartford](http://www.easterseals.com/Hartford) and [www.veteransrallypoint.com](http://www.veteransrallypoint.com).