Center for Learning & Achievement Holds Grand Opening

SAN JOSE, CA -- The Center for Learning & Achievement (CLA) – a state-of-the-art clinic operated by Santa Clara Valley Medical Center’s Pediatrics Department for children with developmental delays, behavioral concerns and learning differences – will hold its grand opening on Wednesday, February 12 at 4 p.m.

The CLA brings together under one roof a highly trained team of pediatric specialists with expertise in speech and language deficits, autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and other problems that impede a child’s development.

The new facility is the only one of its kind in Santa Clara County offering these services to children who reside in the county, regardless of a family’s ability to pay.

Santa Clara County Supervisor Blanca Alvarado spearheaded the effort to establish the CLA, first proposing the idea in 1998 as one of the initiatives outlined in her State of the County address. The CLA is primarily funded with tobacco tax revenue raised under Proposition 10 (California Children and Families First Act) and administered by First 5 Santa Clara County.

“The grand opening of the Center for Learning & Achievement marks a major turning point in our ability to identify learning disabilities and differences that if left undiagnosed would cause deep suffering and failures for babies, young children and their parents,” Alvarado said. “This is good for our community, good for families and of course good for the many children who will benefit directly from the expertise of the CLA.”

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development estimates that 10 to 15 percent of school-age children have learning disabilities or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Research shows that such children are at a high risk for substance abuse, school failure,
criminal activity, early-age pregnancy and welfare dependency. What’s more, the state Department of Developmental Services has documented a 273-percent rise in reported cases of autism in California between 1987 and 1998, suggesting a much greater need for autism-related services.

CLA staff -- which include physicians that specialize in behavioral and developmental pediatrics, psychologists, speech and language pathologists, occupational therapists, and education specialists -- perform comprehensive examinations and provide parents, schools and primary care providers with detailed recommendations.

“We focus on the whole child, evaluating educational, developmental and complex medical issues,” said Dr. Damon Korb, the CLA’s director. “We look at the breakdowns in development, but we also assess each child’s strengths in order to come up with the best plan possible to promote successful outcomes.”

To promote early intervention, the CLA is working collaboratively with Via Rehabilitation and Parents Helping Parents. The CLA is also pursuing additional partnerships with schools, healthcare centers, childcare facilities and other agencies that provide services to children. Although the CLA examines children from age birth to 18, a strong emphasis will be placed on reaching children during their preschool years to identify and respond to problems before the children enter elementary school.

“Part of our mission will involve educating the community about children with special needs and providing training to other professionals who deal with child development,” Korb said.

“We need to make sure that every child has the opportunity to succeed,” Alvarado said.

WHAT: Center for Learning & Achievement Grand Opening

WHEN: Wednesday, February 12, 2003
4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

WHERE: 828 S. Bascom Avenue, San Jose
Suite 100
Across the street from Santa Clara Valley Medical Center

Clients can make appointments by contacting the CLA at 408-793-5959