

For Immediate Release

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Local Advocate Finds New Home in Lincolnshire ***Move to Corporate Park marks two-year anniversary***

Lincolnshire, Ill.—Oct. 21, 2005—A comprehensive advocacy firm for the special needs community celebrates two years in business this month in a new home in suburban Chicago.

“We are excited to be in Lincolnshire meeting the growing demand for services to people with disabilities,” said Mary Anne Ehlert, CFP®, founder and president of Protected Tomorrows—a comprehensive advocacy firm dedicated to enhancing the lives of people with special needs. The new corporate headquarters, Protected Tomorrows LifeCare Center, 103 Schelster Rd., is located in Lincolnshire Corporate Park. Protected Tomorrows had outgrown its space in Vernon Hills.

There are 77 million people age 5 and older in the United States who have a disability, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. Due to medical advances, people with disabilities are expected to outlive their parents or guardians for the first time in the nation’s history. Nearly 1 in 5 American families are affected. Ehlert is among them. Her sister Marcia was born with cerebral palsy and mental retardation. Ehlert watched as her parents struggled with little help to plan for her sibling’s future. Inspired by their need and after 15 years experience with her own financial firm, Ehlert Financial Group, Ehlert formed Protected Tomorrows in October 2003.

“We’ve accomplished so much in the past two years, but so much more needs to be done,” said Ehlert. The firm strives to identify solutions for educational, residential, employment, recreational and legal issues that the special needs community faces. Ehlert plans to develop a national think-tank to continue to find solutions for the concerns special needs families have.

In addition to the advocacy arm, Protected Tomorrows trains and licenses business professionals, known as “Advocates,” who address the future care needs of Americans with disabilities including those with Down syndrome, autism, Angelman syndrome, mental illness, and Alzheimer’s disease. The Advocates guide families through a unique eight-step planning process looking at legal considerations, potential government benefits, transition planning, residential options, employment opportunities, educational/recreational choices, investment solutions and family communication. The new facility will be the training center for Advocates from around the country. Currently, Advocates are helping families in California, Illinois, Kansas, Michigan, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, Virginia and Washington.

The corporate headquarters also provides its advocates with full back-office support. An extensive database and benefits specialists help advocates around the country find the necessary resources, answer questions and sort through the special needs quagmire to find solutions. In addition, a Web-based search tool currently under development will be managed at the LifeCare Center. The online feature connects families to different government agencies, doctors, caregivers and other services, and gives them access to a life-planning portal with suggested steps to achieve their goals. Advocates will be able to connect with families using this online system, as well.

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The LifeCare Center promises to deliver numerous services all under one roof to people with disabilities, as well as their family and friends. With Protected Tomorrows being the building's largest tenant, already a law firm, image consultants and financial advisors have committed to opening their doors at the site. The 16,500 divisible square feet of renovated loft space designed to "nurture the mind, body and soul" is in search of businesses offering residential and recreational opportunities, physical and occupational therapy, and holistic medical care to the special needs community.

"It's wonderful to be so closely connected to other businesses dedicated to improving the quality of life for people with special needs," Ehlert said. "We are constantly looking for ways to make life better for these individuals and their families. We hope one day the LifeCare Center will develop into a place where a person with disabilities and their family can come and get all of their needs met."

For more information on Protected Tomorrows, visit www.protectedtomorrows.com or call Mary Anne Ehlert at (847) 522-8086. For businesses interested in being part of the LifeCare Center, contact Sue Segal at (847) 522-8080.

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