



BARNUM
FINANCIAL
GROUP

An office of MetLife

PUBLIC RELATIONS

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**BARNUM FINANCIAL GROUP OPENS CENTER FOR SPECIAL NEEDS
PLANNING**

**~ Center offers network of MetDESK® Specialists to Help
Families Caring for Children with Special Needs~**

NEW YORK, January XX, 2008 – Barnum Financial Group, an office of MetLife, announced today the opening of its Center for Special Needs Planning in conjunction with MetDESK®, MetLife’s Division of Estate Planning for Special Kids. The Center will be led by MetDESK Specialists Anthony G. Recck and Kevin P. McAvoy.

The MetDESK program is one of the first of its kind in the financial industry and focuses on the concerns of families with children or dependents with special needs. Barnum Financial Group has been selected as one of three sites nationwide to serve as a Center for Special Needs Planning. These centers have been established to offer families access to financial professionals, who are knowledgeable and experienced in planning for the future of dependents with special needs. According to the July 2005 U.S. Census Bureau report, “Disability and American Families,” there are nearly 50 million individuals over the age of 5 with disabilities in the United States, 393,000 of those individuals live in Connecticut.

“The new center expands upon Barnum Financial Group’s commitment to supporting and serving local families caring for individuals with disabilities,” says Recck. “We are honored to be one of only three centers in the U.S. and look forward to becoming a resource that families in Connecticut can count on to help them navigate the legal and financial complexities associated with planning for the future of a loved one.”

Specialists are trained to help families protect their child’s future government benefit eligibility for Supplemental Security Income and Medicaid by working with a qualified attorney to ensure that the right financial strategies are in place. Specialists also work with local non-profit organizations and service providers to provide support and to secure the highest level of independence for families’ loved ones. MetDesk’s national non-profit partners include The ARC, United Cerebral Palsy, the Autism Society of America and the National Down Syndrome Society.

Recck has worked in the financial services industry for 17 years and joined MetDESK in 2001 after his daughter was diagnosed with apraxia at the age of five. He is actively associated with the special needs community through his involvement with The Connecticut Coalition for Inclusive Education, the Berlin Special Kids Network, and the ARC of Middletown. He is also a member of the Berlin Board of Education to give a voice to the special needs community.

McAvoy has worked at MetLife for 26 years and joined MetDESK in 1998. He is a CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ certificant (CFP®) and also holds Chartered Life Underwriter® (CLU®) and Life Underwriter’s Training Council Fellow (LUTCF) designations. McAvoy serves on the Planned Lifetime Assistance Network’s Investment Executive Board, as well as the Autism Spectrum Research Center’s Employment Council.

press release



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“In addition to meeting stringent training requirements, the majority of MetDESK’s representatives are either parents of children with special needs or have close relatives with special needs,” says McAvoy. “our Specialists can use this first-hand knowledge to create a customized financial solution that fits each family’s unique needs. Our Specialists are dedicated to acting as advocates for the families they serve and to coordinating a team of professional advisors that can help address each family’s particular situation.”

The Center offers families a bi-monthly newsletter on topics related to caring for a loved one with special needs; a website, www.specialneedsplanning.metlife.com that connects clients to additional information and resources; as well as a series of workshops that are scheduled throughout the tri-state area in 2009.

For more information about the center, individuals can call (860) 258-3863 or (203) 513-6046 or e-mail CSNP@metlife.com.

About MetDESK®

MetDESK, MetLife’s **D**ivision of **E**state Planning for **S**pecial **K**ids launched in 1998, is one of the first programs of its kind in the financial industry, and is a program that focuses on the concerns of families with children or dependents with special needs. For more information about MetDESK, visit the MetDESK Web site at www.metlife.com/desk.

MetDESK Specialists can help families address critical issues, including how to protect future government eligibility and ways in which a special needs trust can provide lifetime care. Any insurance or other financial products which may be needed to support the family’s plans can be obtained through the MetDESK Specialist.

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MetLife and its representatives may not give legal or tax advice. Clients should consult with and rely on their own independent legal and tax advisers regarding their particular set of facts and circumstances.

* Based on life insurance in-force s of year-end 2006, A.M. Best Company, Inc. Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 200 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10166. LD# L1208011611

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