



For additional information, contact:

Elizabeth Cardamone, Director of Communication and
Development Office: (716) 297-0798, ext. 173, Cell: (773) 430-
9499

E-mail: ecardamone@empower-wny.org

Lewiston-Porter Seventh Grader Raises \$1,700 for Empower

TOWN OF NIAGARA, June 20, 2016 – Empower, the not-for-profit organization formerly known as Niagara Cerebral Palsy, received \$1,700 raised by Charles Dieteman, a seventh grade student at Lewiston-Porter Middle School.

Charles and his mom, Tara McLellan, organized a series of fundraisers throughout the year, timed around global cerebral palsy awareness initiatives. Empower will use the money to purchase sensory equipment for the Children’s Academy, the preschool division of Empower, that provides education to children of all abilities.

Ms. McLellan credits several Lew-Port school clubs and individuals for the fundraiser’s success, including: the Builders Club and its advisor, Mrs. Tina Oddy, and Middle School Principal Dr. Dean Ramirez, who wants to make the Walk for Cerebral Palsy that took place in May at the middle school an annual tradition.

In addition to being an excellent student and being involved in several school clubs, Charles was born with mild mixed cerebral palsy. “I have always encouraged Charles to embrace his differences, and am so proud of him for using that which makes him special to educate his peers, and someday even his community,” said Charles’ mom.

“Charles is such a wonderful kid. He is gracious and responsible, assuming the mantle of role model with such ease, it is hard to believe he is only in seventh grade. We plan to recognize Charles’ humanitarian efforts at our awards luncheon in October so the whole community can see the great work he’s doing,” said Jeff Paterson, chief executive officer of Empower.

With 300 employees and a \$14 million budget, Empower is one of Western New York’s 50 largest nonprofit organizations. The administrative offices, preschool, community clinic and service coordination program are located on Lockport Road in the Town of Niagara. The job training and day programs division is based in Niagara Falls, while residential facilities are located throughout Niagara County. Licensed by the New York State Office for People with Developmental Disabilities and the New York State Education Department, Empower is an affiliate of the Cerebral Palsy Association of New York State.

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