



For additional information, contact:

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### **Free Theater Camp Offered by Empower to Kids with Autism**

TOWN OF NIAGARA, N.Y., April 10, 2017 – Empower, the not-for-profit organization formerly known as Niagara Cerebral Palsy, will offer a free theater camp to children with autism, beginning June 6, 2017. Up to 40 students who are between the ages of 7 and 15 and who have autism spectrum disorder, will be accepted. To register, please contact Krystle D’Aloise at (716) 297-0798, ext. 120 or [kdaloise@empower-wny.org](mailto:kdaloise@empower-wny.org).

Called Spectrum Theater Program, the camp will meet twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 5 to 7 p.m., at Empower Children’s Academy, located at 9812 Lockport Road in the Town of Niagara. Theater instructors will lead students through group and individual acting exercises that build confidence, problem solving skills and social abilities. Students will focus on gestures, eye contact, voice projection, listening to each other’s perspectives and improvisational skills. They will develop a play out of their own imaginations, memorize lines and perform in front of a live audience on Saturday, July 8, 2017.

According to Empower CEO, Jeff Paterson: “We held the camp twice in 2016, and both times, students showed marked improvement in their social skills as a result of participating. Thanks to our two granters, Arts Services Initiative of Western New York Inc. and The Children’s Guild Foundation, Empower is able to continue the Spectrum Theater Program in 2017, add a second theater instructor and expand enrollment from 20 to 40 students.”

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 Associations of New York State.

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