

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Charter Oak Forms Multi-Year Charitable Relationship
with FOCUS Alternative Learning Center of Canton, CT
*First-Year Funding to Cover Scholarships for Extended Day Program***

Farmington, CT—Charter Oak Insurance and Financial Services Co. is pleased to announce that it has formed a three-year charitable relationship with FOCUS, a unique Canton-based alternative learning center serving children with autism spectrum disorders, anxiety disorders, processing and social learning difficulties; and who are otherwise "creatively wired and socially challenged."

In the initial year of the relationship, Charter Oak will give \$10,000 to FOCUS's scholarship fund. The contribution will help cover tuition for students who cannot afford to attend FOCUS's extended day program, which is the cornerstone of the organization's services. Charter Oak will also participate in various fundraising activities throughout the year in support of FOCUS's programming.

Financial support from Charter Oak comes from the agency's charitable arm, The Charter Oak Fund, and is part of a larger community-outreach strategy benefiting children—particularly those with special needs—in the agency's three major markets of Western Massachusetts, Central/Eastern Connecticut and Southern Connecticut.

Pete Novak, one of Charter Oak's General Agents, said: ""With so many kids affected by some type of autism spectrum disorder or other disorders, we need organizations like FOCUS to help shape their lives in a positive and meaningful way. We are thrilled to contribute to this amazing organization."

Brendan Naughton, also a General Agent with Charter Oak, added: "We are truly excited to team up with FOCUS. It's a small, local organization where we can make a real difference. Knowing we'll make it possible for more than one child in need to attend the extended day program is so rewarding."

Donna Swanson, MSN, CS, APRN, FOCUS's Executive Director, said "It's inspiring to see a company want to be a 'big fish in a little pond.' FOCUS offers one-of-a-kind services to its students and it's the support of organizations like Charter Oak that help us to provide a safe, nurturing and life-changing educational environment for these children. The staff and kids at FOCUS feel honored to have new friends who believe in us."

In addition to FOCUS, Charter Oak has pledged a three-year commitment to Whole Children of Western Massachusetts and New Pond Farm, located in West Redding, Connecticut.

FOCUS Alternative Learning Center is a small, licensed, intensive, needs-based clinical program that employs a "milieu" therapy modality to teach creatively wired and socially challenged." children—including those with autism spectrum disorders, anxiety disorders and , processing and social learning difficulties—critical life skills and coping strategies, promote study skills, self-motivation and self-esteem. FOCUS's services include academic tutoring, mentoring and family and individual therapy. To learn more, please visit www.focus-alternative.org.

Charter Oak Insurance and Financial Services Co. is a general agency of Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company (MassMutual) and serves the risk management, business services and retirement and investment planning needs of more than 70,000 clients throughout the northeast. With offices in Boston, Farmington, Holyoke, New Haven, Southbury and Stamford, Charter Oak considers helping others the heart of its business and is proud to support many philanthropic organizations in all of the markets it serves. To learn more, visit www.charteroakinsurance.com.

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