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PRESS RELEASE

Rep. Pihos' \$20,000 Legislative Initiative helps pave the way for new driveways and renovations at Two Ray Graham group homes

Downers Grove, IL, November 18, 2008 -A \$20,000 legislative grant from the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity helped pave the way for new driveways and other renovations at two Lombard-area group homes operated by Ray Graham Association for People with Disabilities.

Illinois State Rep. Sandra M. Pihos (Dist. 42) led the initiative to obtain the grant.

“In the fiscal year 2008 budget there was an opportunity to include funding for some transparent line items in the budget for community projects.” Rep. Pihos said. “Immediately, I recommended park districts, local libraries and agencies that help vulnerable people such as Ray Graham to be considered for such grants in the communities that I serve.”

“This initiative is especially important because we don’t get funding for renovations or repairs for our residential facilities, yet we are faced with the same upkeep issues many homeowners have,” said Cathy Ficker Terrill, RGA President & CEO. “If we are not proactive about repaving crumbling driveways and making other repairs, individuals could fall and injure themselves.”

In addition to repaving driveways, the grant helped refurbish a central air conditioner at one of the two homes and repair basement walls in another.

Ray Graham’s Community Integrated Living Arrangements (CILA) provides individuals with a home in a residential neighborhood where they receive 24 hour supports and the opportunity to become a part of the community that surrounds them. The agency offers residential support at 20 locations around DuPage County.

“Sandy has shown extraordinary dedication to others and as the driving force in community-development projects,” Ms. Terill said. “She has profoundly impacted the education, health and safety of DuPage communities for more than 33 years.”

The Ray Graham Association provides a broad array of services and support, including early intervention, residential, day programs and supported employment services, to thousands of children and adults with developmental disabilities throughout the western suburbs. The Ray Graham Association is the first organization in the world that supports people with disabilities to be accredited by the Council on Quality Leadership using the *Quality Measures 2005*. The nonprofit organization was named in honor of the late Mr. Ray Graham, the first director of special education in Illinois. For more information on Ray Graham Association and its services, please call (630) 620-2222 or visit us on the web at www.raygraham.org.

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