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OUR HISTORY OF CARING

Providing life-changing care since 1829

Northern Rivers Family of Services is the parent organization to Northeast Parent & Child Society, Parsons Child & Family Center, and Unlimited Potential. Together, we are a family of human services agencies that work together to provide life-changing care to children, adults, and families. Our quality of care, depth of programs, combined size, and passion for the mission give us the strength to make positive change in our communities. Informed by our nearly 200-year heritage, our 1,400-strong workforce provides services for 18,000 children, adults, and families throughout 41 counties in upstate New York.

Our Past

Parsons Child & Family Center traces its founding to 1829 when Orissa Healy and Eliza Wilcox established the Society for the Relief of Orphan and Destitute Children to provide shelter, care, and education to orphaned, neglected, and abused children in Albany. Northeast Parent & Child Society traces its roots back to April 1888, when a group of ladies in Schenectady opened the Home for Destitute Children to serve destitute children from ages 2 to 18 in a home-like setting providing temporary care to help them move from homelessness to home.

Both organizations continued to grow and evolve, but neither ever lost the primary mission of serving children whom the world had seemingly forgotten. Throughout their long histories, Parsons and Northeast have responded to societal, governmental, and other environmental forces by expanding the depth and breadth of services provided.

Our Present & Our Future

Northern Rivers Family of Services was formed as a necessary response to times of declining resources and increasing demand for services. The benefits of combining into one organization means improved services, stronger financials, and better use of resources. Formed in April 2011 with a Memorandum of Understanding, New York state officially approved the incorporation of Northern Rivers on July 23, 2012.

In 2019, Northern Rivers' continuing drive to provide even better care to respond to needs saw them add Unlimited Potential in Saratoga to their family of services.

Founded in 1979 in Saratoga Springs, Unlimited Potential provides vocational rehabilitation and supportive services to individuals in recovery after experiencing a mental illness. Their production center provides bulk mailing, fulfillment, and assembly services for area businesses—while helping clients build skills and confidence.

The proud traditions of Parsons, Northeast, and now Unlimited Potential, continue under a shared set of core principles and a universal commitment to serving children and families, while Northern Rivers provides the guidance and leadership to help communities grow.

Today, the united workforce of Northern Rivers, Parsons, Northeast, and Unlimited Potential represents the dedication of those who came before, an unmatched level of talent and drive, and the vision needed to change the way services are delivered to help build a better world. We look forward to the new horizon of our future as we remain true to the bold and compassionate leadership of our founders who shaped and set our course nearly two centuries ago.

Founded where the Mohawk and Hudson meet, like the mighty rivers that shaped our region, Northern Rivers helps shape the future of the children, adults, and families we serve throughout the Capital Region and beyond.