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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JAMES BROOKS TO RECEIVE COMMUNITY PARTNER AWARD For His Gift of Independence to a Raleigh County Man

Mountain State Centers for Independent Living (MTSTCIL) will be awarding Mr. James Brooks of Brooks Remodeling in Raleigh County this year's "Community Partner Award". The award will be presented to Mr. Brooks by Anne Weeks, President/CEO of MTSTCIL, at the Walk for Independence 2007 on Saturday, July 21, 2007 at Barboursville Community Park for his generous donation to the Independent Living (IL) community.

Sammy, who is 41 years old and lives alone in a trailer in rural Raleigh County, has limited mobility due to orthopedic, respiratory and cardiac issues. At this time he is able to use a walker to get around inside his home but needs a wheelchair when he leaves his home for medical appointments, shopping, etc. Sammy has no transportation and relies on a friend for transportation outside of the home. He has an in-home service worker who provides limited supports.

Due to his physical limitations, Sammy is unable to bathe on his own and he applied for IL services in December 2004, specifically requesting bathroom modifications and a ramp. His name was put on the waiting list for the Community Living Services Program (CLSP) that provides these services. In May 2007, his name finally came up on the CLSP waiting list. Due to limited funding for the program, Sammy could only receive one significant IL service per year. Since he has only had sponge baths for several years, he chose the bathroom modifications so that he could bathe independently.

Kevin Maynus, through the CLSP program at MTSTCIL in Beckley, contacted local contractor, James Brooks of Brooks Remodeling, to complete the bathroom modifications. With CLSP funds, Brooks Remodeling completed the bathroom modifications. Mr. Brooks [Brooks Remodeling, PO Box 661, McArthur, WV 25873; 304-934-5065] realized that without a ramp to enter and exit his home, Sammy was still reliant on Assisted Living Services to enter and exit his home. Mr. Brooks also realized that for safety reasons, Sammy would be trapped in his home if there was an emergency, such as a fire. Mr. Brooks decided to donate the labor and materials to construct a 23 foot ramp for Sammy.

Mr. Brooks was heard to say: "God has been good to me. I wanted to do something to help him. I wanted Sammy to be safe and to be able to get in and out of his home."

Sammy tells us, "This has changed my life. I had to go 3 to 4 weeks without a bath, except for sponge baths. I felt dirty. This shower makes me feel like a whole new person".

MTSTCIL wants to thank Delegates Melvin Kessler, Ricky Moyer, and Linda Sumner of the 27th Delegate District for recognizing the need for CLSP services and their submission for state funding requests through the Community Partnership Program in support of the CLSP for MTSTCIL in Beckley.

MTSTCIL staff and consumers thank Mr. Brooks for his generosity and express our gratitude for his generous donation of support to the MTSTCIL Beckley services and the IL needs of Raleigh County residents. MTSTCIL is a community based organization providing supports, resources and advocacy services to West Virginians with disabilities. MTSTCIL receives federal and some state funding for the CLSP, but people wait years, and sometimes die, before services are available. MTSTCIL staff have visited the WV Legislature during the past three years to educate our elected officials on the substantial need for additional state funding to meet the Independent Living needs of the West Virginians on our CLSP waiting list. Visit our Web site at www.mtstcil.org.

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