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News Release

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Community Hospital to Break Ground on New Early Childhood Education Center

Mesa County, CO - Community Hospital will break ground on a new early childhood education center on **Friday, November 4 at 10:00 am**. The groundbreaking ceremony for the new 7,500 square foot building will take place on the south side of Community Hospital at the construction site, located at 2373 Adventure Lane. The name of the new early childhood education center will be Adventure Academy. The project is slated for completion summer 2023.

According to the Mesa County Child Care 8,000 Business Plan, Mesa County is in need of approximately 4,000 childcare slots to meet the demands of the workforce. The Child Care 8,000 is a community initiative to increase capacity to serve children in child care and support parents to work. A lack of licensed child care limits parents who want to be part of the workforce.

The goal is to work together as a community to maintain current facilities at capacity, add additional slots, and license new facilities until Mesa County reaches 8,000 slots for children ages 0-13. The COVID-19 pandemic magnified the importance of quality childcare for frontline health care workers, which continued to be an issue with childcare and school classroom required quarantines during the pandemic. Many child care facilities are already at full capacity and providers don't offer early morning, late afternoon or weekend care, leaving parents without options. Accessible and affordable quality child care alleviates stress on families, allowing our community to grow.

"As a locally owned, locally controlled hospital, we are steadfast in our commitment to our community," said Chris Thomas, President and CEO for Community Hospital. "High quality, affordable childcare is essential to the well-being of our community and Community Hospital is proud to champion this effort. We know that a lack of available childcare impacts health care and we are honored to be a part of the solution to help minimize the lack of available childcare in Mesa County. We think this is a great first step," added Thomas.

"This project is extremely important to our community as a whole as it will add 100 childcare slots for children ages six weeks to six years and create over twenty new childcare jobs in Mesa County," said Tawny Espinoza, Vice President of Business Development for Community Hospital.

In an effort to help support this important endeavor, the Community Hospital Foundation has launched a \$2.5mm capital campaign. Donors who contribute to this capital campaign will receive a 50% state tax credit under the Colorado Child Care Contribution Tax Credit program. With the generous support of individuals and businesses in our community, we know we can make the dream of having an on-site early childhood education center a reality.

For more information on the new early childhood education center at Community Hospital or to donate to the capital campaign, please visit www.YourCommunityHospital.com/Childcare.

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