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## Monarch Program to Feature New Day Center

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By Kirsten Ballard

Staff Writer

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A new center designed to aid those with developmental disabilities has opened in Southern Pines.

The Monarch center is taking flight at its new home on Richards Street in Southern Pines. Open since February, the center now supports 47 families in its Creative Arts and Community Center.

"It's the first of its kind in the area and one of few in the state," said Chief Operating Officer Jim Kelly.

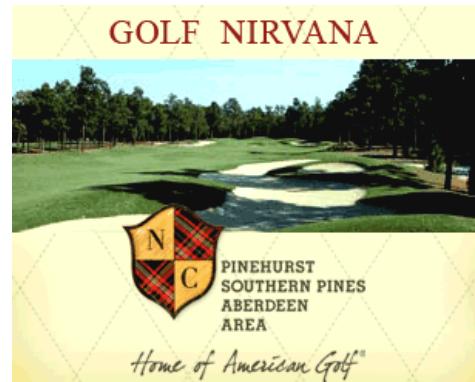
Monarch supports people with developmental or behavioral disabilities by providing residential, community and job services. The program began in Albemarle and is now in 50 counties.

Kelly estimates Monarch employs 200 people countywide through the different programs.

"We're starting to get out there. We truly want it to be a community center," said Kelly.

The new center provides a home for the day program run by Monarch. A ribbon cutting on June 27 will be an opportunity for the center to showcase the new facility. Workers at the center will host a free tour for the community starting at 4:30 p.m.

The center is looking for community support. It has already partnered with Sandhills



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Community College, FirstHealth and ARC of Moore County. The center is looking for new volunteers and groups to partner with.

"There has been fantastic community support. I think this center is also very unique," said Natasha Suber, marketing director of Monarch.

The new 12,000-square-foot center includes a pottery kiln and studio, art and dance studios, full kitchen, fitness space and gift shop. The gift shop will sell goods from the people supported by the center.

"We're hoping to contract or partner with local artists and groups. They can use the facilities, and the people we support gain access to a new art medium," said Kelly.

Future plans for the center include a new computer lab and choreographic dance institute, both opening later this year.

Contact Kirsten Ballard at [kirsten@thepilot.com](mailto:kirsten@thepilot.com).

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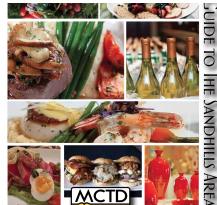
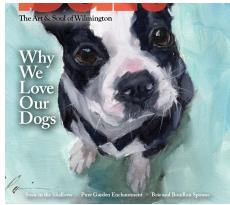
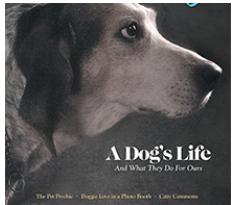
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