

Connecticut News 12 Hometown Hero

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FAIRFIELD

Co-founders of a Fairfield program use personal experience to help special-needs children.

A spare classroom at the Fairfield Woods School may not look like much, but it's home to a fledgling non-profit called The Pilot House. Doreen Caruso and John Jones founded the program, which helps special-needs children who suffer from conditions including autism, cerebral palsy and Down syndrome. The program offers classes such as karate, pottery even yoga to the children, but the main goal is to teach them the skills they need to socialize and interact with each other.

Despite the limited facilities, Caruso and Jones say The Pilot House is working, possibly because they both have autistic children of their own. "We live it day to day and I believe that's truly making us successful, because we live it. And we know what these parents are going through and it means so much to us and to me, to give back," says Caruso.

The Fairfield Woods School is donating space to The Pilot House, but the program is on the looking for a permanent home, and donations and volunteers.