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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Williston, Vermont - Gene Richards is a life-long Vermonter and a long-time resident of Burlington. He is an exceptionally successful entrepreneur, running several businesses, and is the CEO and Founder of Spruce Mortgage, a Burlington-based brokerage company which he started in 1995 after a 15-year career with Merchants Bank and BancBoston Mortgage/Bank of Vermont. Also a popular landlord, he enjoys his relationships with his 175 plus tenants. One of Gene's passions is the Stern Center for Language and Learning. Gene knows what it means to struggle with learning in school. He has seen the life-changing impact of the Stern Center's mission and as a former Board Chair, Development Chair, and current Honorary Board member, he dedicates his many gifts of time, talent, and treasure to ensuring that the Stern Center is able to improve lives.

He is also a **beautiful brain** in that Gene has achieved enormous success despite experiencing the challenges of dyslexia. He shares the people skills, high energy, determination, and strong vision of successful entrepreneurs as researched by Julie Logan (Cass Business School in London, 2007) who found that 35% of those U.S. business owners were dyslexic!

Gene Richards is a friend, neighbor, partner, leader, consultant, and cheerleader. He's a successful businessman because he's devoted to helping others. He's enormously popular because he's interested in your story. And he's a force in the community because he's passionate about giving back.

The Stern Center is hosting the **Gene Richards Roast** on **January 27, 2010**, 6-9:30 p.m. at the Sheraton Burlington. This fundraising event (\$125 per guest), with Master of Ceremonies Daniel Mark Fogel, President of the University of Vermont, promises to be an enjoyable, celebratory evening honoring Gene's community involvement and raising funds for the Stern Center.

The Stern Center for Language and Learning is dedicated to literacy for all. Many people who struggle with reading, writing, and mathematics do not learn the same way as those who easily achieve literacy. Stern Center professionals evaluate and teach all kinds of learners, including those with learning disabilities such as dyslexia or attention deficit disorders. The Stern Center is committed to helping individuals identify their learning strengths as well as their needs and to finding solutions that allow everyone to learn. More information available at www.sterncenter.org.

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