

Bio: Louis J. Castriota, Jr.

Photo by Cindy Kalinoski

Currently president and CEO of Leg Up Farm, Louis J. Castriota, Jr., began with a desire to help children with special needs. This vision grew when his daughter Brooke was diagnosed with a condition that causes cognitive and motor function delays. Discovering huge gaps in the availability and affordability of services that could help children like Brooke, “Louie” Castriota undertook a 13-year journey that would culminate in the ribbon-cutting ceremony, in 2010, of Leg Up Farm in Mt. Wolf, Pennsylvania. This involved raising more than \$10 million in funding through private contributions, public fundraisers, loans and grants.



Observing his success, David Skerpon, Vice President at Capital Blue Cross, told Castriota, “*You are evidence that, when one has a vision and is passionate about making it a reality, unbelievable things happen.*” Castriota, who is the founder of Leg Up Farm, encourages others to **have the courage to dream** and to “do the right things every day”. He is currently writing a book about his journey.

Background—Castriota is a popular speaker on vision casting; leadership; collaboration and implementation; inspiring and managing volunteerism; and diversity. Before starting Leg Up Farm, Castriota held media and sales management positions in Washington, DC, Baltimore, and Harrisburg. He previously served as Director of Sales at Comcast Spotlight, as General and National Sales Manager at WBFF FOX 45, and as Local Sales Manager at WLYH UPN 15. Castriota began his career at WPMT FOX 43 in 1989.

Community Involvement/Awards—Louie Castriota has been the recipient of many honors, including awards for National Comcast Spotlight Hero and Non-profit Innovation in Management Operations. He was named a York Federal Fellow in Nonprofit Community Leadership and led Leg Up Farm’s successful Silver LEED Certification. Castriota is a guest lecturer at York College. Over the past several decades, he has served on various boards and in coaching positions in his community. Since Leg Up Farm opened, Castriota has become involved in mentoring nonprofit leaders in the area.

About Leg Up Farm—Today, this rapidly growing nonprofit serves over 700 hundred children with special needs and their families. Leg Up Farm includes a 50,000-square-foot facility and stables located on 18 acres, and offers a wide range of therapies, all under one roof. The farm is focused on providing services for the entire family. Leg Up Farm’s growing staff provides over 1,000 therapy hours per month and is supported by more than 300 volunteers. Currently the farm is constructing a therapeutic, wheelchair-

accessible koi pond that contains 450,000 gallons of water and covers more than 13,000 square feet. It will be the largest of its kind in the country.