

SIDC closed for good

Gov. Mario Cuomo said yesterday that six developmental centers such as the Staten Island Developmental Center (SIDC) across the state will be closed by 1991 as the state continues to keep a promise made more than a 10 years ago.

Speaking at the official closing ceremony for the SIDC, Cuomo said, "governors don't often celebrate the closings of institutions. We spend most of our time cutting ribbons at opening ceremonies. What we actually celebrate today is the opening of a whole new era."

The approximately 1,100 former residents of the center who are still living in metropolitan area institutions will be placed in group homes, according to Lou Ganim, director of public affairs for the state Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities.

The move to close what used to be the Willowbrook State School started in 1971, after the Advance and a television reporter revealed the poor living conditions of the 6,000 mostly mentally retarded residents.