



AS APRIL'S AUTISM AWARENESS & ACCEPTANCE MONTH COMES TO A CLOSE, LOCAL NONPROFIT NFAR ANNOUNCES CONTINUED AND NEW EFFORTS TO SUPPORT THOSE ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM, WORKING TO BUILD INDEPENDENCE AND A MORE INCLUSIVE SAN DIEGO

With Support from New York Life, NFAR Continues to Create Educational and Employment Opportunities for Young Adults with Autism to Help Them Lead Independent Lives

San Diego, CA – The fact that 1 in every 54 children in America now has some form of Autism has been well reported this April. However, the need for support, assistance, and opportunities for those on the Autism Spectrum (ASD) does not end at the closing of this month. San Diego-based nonprofit National Foundation for Autism Research (NFAR) has spent nearly twenty years providing programs, services, and materials to the autism community, with special emphasis on employment opportunities for the millions of autistic individuals that are aging into adulthood.

With an alarming – *and pre-COVID 19 pandemic* - **national unemployment rate of 85%** for autistic adults, NFAR is dedicated to opening the doors to competitive, integrated employment for those with autism, with opportunities for greater self-reliance, and self-esteem through their comprehensive, autism-specific vocational training programs that help their graduates achieve greater success as they enter the job market.

Over this long pandemic year, NFAR has stepped up to help the autism community by continuing to offer many of its programs and services redesigned and structured for a virtual environment, as well as creating new and supplemental programming to meet the unique needs of those with autism, working to keep them engaged, interactive, learning, and in good mental health through this crisis. And they are excited to announce that New York Life has put their support behind these efforts, awarding them a \$25,000 Community Impact Grant and offering free financial and special needs trust planning seminars over this coming summer.

“While this pandemic has impacted everyone, New York Life recognizes that many nonprofits need additional financial assistance to keep their critical programs and services operating,” said New York Life Managing Partner, Tony Montalvo, of the San Diego General Office. “Now more than ever, autistic individuals need NFAR’s vocational training programs, which have a proven success at creating long-lasting, meaningful employment engagements.”

“NFAR is very appreciative of New York Life’s continued support and this partnership will not only help our organization, but will directly benefit the individuals we serve too, giving them the tools they need to make a lasting difference in their lives,” added Juan Leon, NFAR co-founder.

Beyond the grant funding, New York Life will partner with NFAR for a series of free financial and estate planning seminars this summer, beginning with the Special Needs Trust Workshop on Wednesday, June 16 (from 6:30 – 8pm), which addresses the many unique circumstances, government assistance options, and considerations required for planning for a loved one with special needs, now and in the future. This will be followed by a Financial Planning 101 webinar that teaches the basics of money management for young autistic adults and an Estate Planning Lunch & Learn seminar that outlines the fundamentals of estate planning, as well as how to navigate probate and taxation concerns. To RSVP or learn more, visit www.NFAR.org.

New York Life’s Community Impact Grant program awards up to \$25,000 in funding to local nonprofit organizations, which are championed by New York Life agents and employees. Since the program’s inception in 2008, more than 600 grants totaling nearly \$8 million have been awarded to nonprofits across the country.

About NFAR

The National Foundation for Autism Research (NFAR) was founded in 2003 with a mission to serve the critical needs of those with autism in meaningful ways to improve their overall quality of life. www.NFAR.org.

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