



POLAR PLUNGE

VALENTINE'S DAY

DSP OF THE  
MONTH

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# THE EEDA READER

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NEWS FROM EAST END DISABILITY ASSOCIATES, INC.

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**APRIL IS AUTISM  
AWARENESS MONTH**



# AUTISM AWARENESS



Autism, or autism spectrum disorder (ASD), refers to a broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and nonverbal communication. According to the Centers for Disease Control, autism affects an estimated 1 in 59 children in the United States today.

We know that there is not one autism but many subtypes, most influenced by a combination of genetic and environmental factors. Because autism is a spectrum disorder, each person with autism has a distinct set of strengths and challenges. The ways in which people with autism learn, think and problem-solve can range from highly skilled to severely challenged. Some people with ASD may require significant support in their daily lives, while others may need less support and, in some cases, live entirely independently.

Several factors may influence the development of autism, and it is often accompanied by sensory sensitivities and medical issues such as gastrointestinal (GI) disorders, seizures or sleep disorders, as well as mental health challenges such as anxiety, depression and attention issues. Indicators of autism usually appear by age 2 or 3. Some associated development delays can appear even earlier, and often, it can be diagnosed as early as 18 months. Research shows that early intervention leads to positive outcomes later in life for people with autism.

[AutismSpeaks.org](http://AutismSpeaks.org)

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*East End Disability Associates (EEDA) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides supports and services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.*

*EEDA's Mission Statement: "Your Challenge... Our Commitment. Dedicated to creating practical solutions and providing innovative supports to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities on the East End of Long Island."*

[www.eed-a.org](http://www.eed-a.org)

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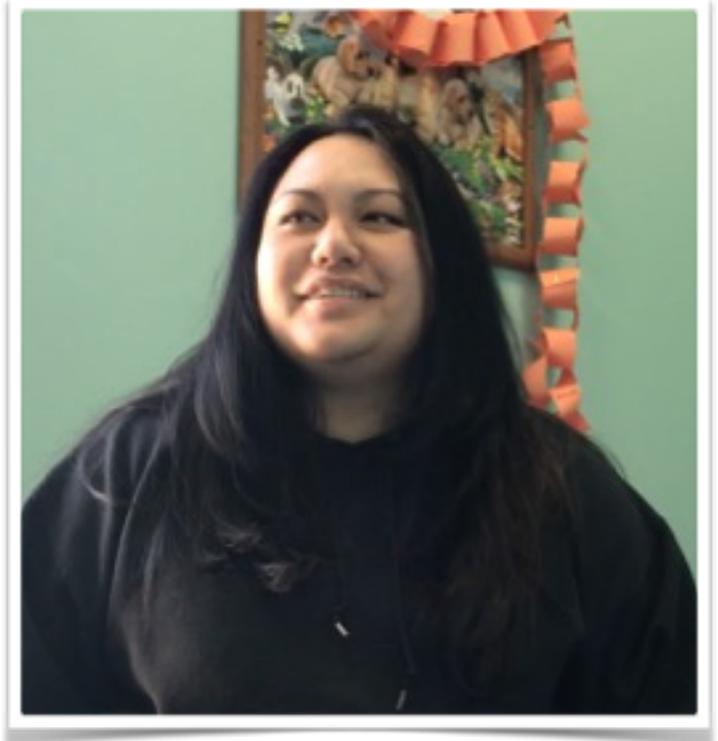
*Caitlin Gordon*

## MEET A DSP!

Calverton Day Hab's staff chose Nat'Lye Long to take the spotlight for them in the EEDA Reader. Nat'Lye has worked as a Direct Support Professional at EEDA for over ten years. Her compassion and dedication are well known by everyone who works with her. She's a real team player and has calm demeanor that's beneficial to everyone around her. Nat'Lye's excellent under pressure and can turn a difficult situation around with her positivity. She always finds new activities, outings, and projects to do with the guys and makes every effort to help them have a good day. Her arts and crafts skills are unmatched, and she brightens Calverton Day Hab with her creativity and kindness. Thank you so much Nat'Lye for always going above and beyond!

*Krystal Turpin was the runner up! Thank you to all the amazing staff at Calverton Day Hab!*

*Check out our video of Nat'Lye at [www.eed-a.org](http://www.eed-a.org)*



## MEET ONE OF THE GUYS!



Ricky is a gentleman that lives in EEDA's Russell Street IRA and attends the Riverhead Day Program. Charles, one of Ricky's favorite staff at the Russell Street house, says he's "affectionate to those he loves and much more clever than he lets on." Ricky loves Barney the purple dinosaur, basketball, relaxing in the sun, playing with rocks and dice. Ricky also loves loud noises and spending time at the Riverhead Raceway. Ricky's favorite staff at day program, Lisa, said, "You might not know that Ricky's brother taught him to play drums when they were little and he can keep an awesome drum beat, especially when feeling the vibrations of music from the speakers. When Ricky's in a good mood he loves to sing the Happy Birthday song." Be sure to say hello to Ricky if you see him around!

Let us know if you'd like to see someone we support highlighted in the newsletter! Send us an email to [info@eed-a.org](mailto:info@eed-a.org).

# POLAR PLUNGE



Braving the bitter wind and cold on Saturday, January 19th 2019, hundreds of people swarmed the beach to watch a team of very brave volunteers jump into the water to benefit East End Disability Associates. A group of eighth grade students from Westhampton Beach Middle School took on a project to raise money for EEDA. The students (Anthony Agudelo, Lauren Goss, and Reilly Mahon) with help from their teacher, Kelly Russell, planned this event during a project for professional skills development, utilizing these skills to positively benefit the community. Each student has at least one family member with a disability, so they decided to work with an organization that helped people who were differently abled. The students did all the work; arranging permits, fundraising, and community outreach. Members of the EEDA team (Camden Ackerman, Laurel Weresnick, Kelly Weresnick, Kate Danega, Jessica Ryan, Allan Concepcion, and Phil Falco) volunteered to plunge and collect sponsorships. The event was a huge success and raised over \$5,000 for EEDA!



# PARRISH ART MUSEUM



In January, EEDA's Creative Arts Program began an exciting partnership with the celebrated Parrish Art Museum in Watermill. Under the guidance of professional local artists, members of the Creative Arts Program are given private tours of the museum's current and permanent collection. Learning to interpret and discuss artwork is an important element in this experience. During the gallery tour they're encouraged to look at the artwork with a critical eye. The day culminates in an opportunity for participants to create their own works of art, informed and inspired by the exhibits they looked at earlier. This exciting partnership is scheduled to continue through to the summer. After a break for the East End's busy summer season, the workshop will continue with a focus on expanding the experience to include individuals who require higher levels of support.

## LUV MICHAEL

On February 7th, participants from various EEDA day programs began working with Luv Michael, an organization based in Long Island City that provides jobs for people with autism. Luv Michael was founded in 2015 by Dr. Lisa Liberatore and her son Michael, as a way to provide meaningful employment for Michael. They make organic granola that is gluten-free and nut-free. The program trains people with autism, providing classroom and kitchen time to help employees obtain their food handling license. Luv Michael extended their resources to the East End, inviting EEDA to participate in a program making spanakopita pies to be sold at the Greek Orthodox Church of the Hamptons. Each training session involves classroom time teaching everything from proper handwashing techniques to role-playing various kitchen scenarios and appropriate hygiene skills. After some time in the classroom, prospective employees move into the kitchen where they are taught all the steps involved in creating a spanakopita pie. They crumble the cheese, butter the phyllo dough, measure out the spinach mixture on digital scales, and fold it into triangles. Afterwards they put the pies into trays, seal them, and put baking instructions on the container. EEDA program participants will spend three training sessions learning about food safety and handling skills with Luv Michael. If the program is a good fit for them there's even the possibility the training program will lead to an employment position with Luv Michael!



# EEDA FORUMS



On January 23rd, EEDA held its semi-annual agency-wide Forums at the Stony Brook Small Business Incubator in Calverton. Here, the executive and administrative staff presented and spoke to agency staff about current events, change and upcoming projects within EEDA. Recognition awards for years of service were also presented:

**5 years of service:** Andre Alexandre, Jonathan Barnett, Michael Hutchings, Susan Mann, Victoria Morace, Matthew Quinones, Christopher Tuthill, Kayley Gubelman, and Donna Schild

**10 years of service:** Juanita Nash, Charles Scott, Yalonda Gilliam, Gina Morris, Felicia Foster, Nat'Lye Long, Christopher Zerella, and Jennifer Arth

**15 years of service:** Lisa Kazmerski

**20 years of service:** Luis Cruz, Diane Lagoumis, Joan Lucarelli, Laurel Weresnick, and Kate Danega

**25 years of service:** Lisa Meyer Fertal



# VALENTINE & ST. PATRICK DANCES

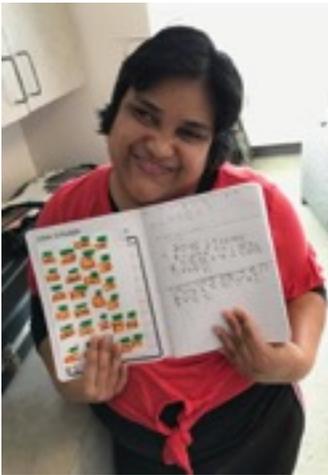


The Community Habilitation and Residential teams partnered to host a Valentine's Day dance and a St. Patrick's Day dance at the Greek Orthodox Church of the Hamptons. With over 100 people in attendance at each dance, they were a fantastic, fun, and love-filled evening for all!

During the Valentine's Day dance at the church, EEDA held its regular Family Advocacy meeting, with special guest Regina Brandow from Brandow Law. Ms. Brandow gave an informative presentation on guardianship and end of life planning for the families of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.



# DAY PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS



Clockwise from top:

- Jen and Krystal working on their writing skills at CAP.
- Jayda and Star enjoying a Friday afternoon lunch.
- Brian braving the cold at the beach.
- Andy keeping warm and cheery at day hab.
- Mike and Monica making masks together.
- Mark enjoying the brisk winter day.



# RESOURCES FOR PARENTS

## **Early Intervention - New York State website for information about early intervention:**

[http://www.health.ny.gov/community/infants\\_children/early\\_intervention](http://www.health.ny.gov/community/infants_children/early_intervention).

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## **Center for Autism Spectrum Disorders**

Stony Brook University, Department of Psychiatry, HSC T10-020, Stony Brook

Offers individual, group, and family therapy, including parent and social skills training and crisis/intensive behavioral interventions for children who identify as a person with a Developmental Disability through the NYS OPWDD, along with comprehensive evaluations.

631-632-8850

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## **Camp Pa-Qua-Tuck**

All people, regardless of ability level, have the right to opportunities found in the world around them. Individuals with both physical and developmental disabilities, as well as their families, should experience year-round recreational and respite care activities in a camp setting. Camp Pa-Qua-Tuck of New York provides this needed service to all. The camp provides opportunities for social and personal growth within a supportive environment. Campers learn to try a variety of creative and challenging activities and experience success. Campers develop enhanced self-esteem which carries over to work, home, and school environments.

Johneen 631-878-1070

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## **Parent to Parent of NYS Inc.**

A place where families of individuals with special needs and the professionals who serve them can meet and share information. This organization provides one-on-one parent support, assistance in accessing services, educational advocacy, workshops, e-groups, and a comprehensive website of resources. A parent matching program pairs adults, based on their request, with a trained support parent who has a child with a similar disability or health concern.

415A Oser Ave., Hauppauge

631-434-6196

Valerie Colavecchio: [vcolavecchio@ptopnys.org](mailto:vcolavecchio@ptopnys.org)

Alissa Morris: [amorris@ptopnys.org](mailto:amorris@ptopnys.org)

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## **Flying Point Foundation for Autism**

The Flying Point Foundation for Autism, a 501(c)3 non-profit, offers an eight-day summer camp for children with autism alongside their typical developing siblings and peers, as well as social and recreational events, scholarships and teacher grants.

Our future efforts will include creating a community lifelong learning center for those with autism and other developmental differences.

[www.fpf4autism.org](http://www.fpf4autism.org)

631-255-5664

[hello@fpf4autism.org](mailto:hello@fpf4autism.org)

**The next EEDA Family Advocacy Meeting will be on Thursday, April 18th at 6 PM**

**at the Greek Orthodox Church of the Hamptons**

**111 St. Andrews Rd., Southampton, NY 11968**

**Supervised Respite Service will be available at the church.**

**Light refreshments will be served.**

# LIHBC



EEDA would like to extend a special thank you to Long-Island Home-Builders Care and Plessers' Appliances for holding a fundraiser last week to benefit EEDA. This event raised over \$9,000. All funds raised will help furnish and provide the necessary items for an EEDA home that is being renovated for six young men in Wading River.



# AUTISM AWARENESS

The EEDA administrative team dressed in blue for Autism Awareness Month. EEDA is wearing blue every Friday in April to show support and raise Autism awareness.



# THANK YOU HYATT!

Thank you to the Hyatt Place Long Island East End in Riverhead for their generous donation of couches, desks, chairs, and nightstands! Your donation will be used to enhance the lives of people with developmental disabilities on the East End of Long Island, including the residents of EEDA's current and upcoming housing developments and program sites.



*Creating Opportunities for Happy Lives*

# REGISTER NOW!

*The annual EEDA Gala Celebration*

*is on the horizon*

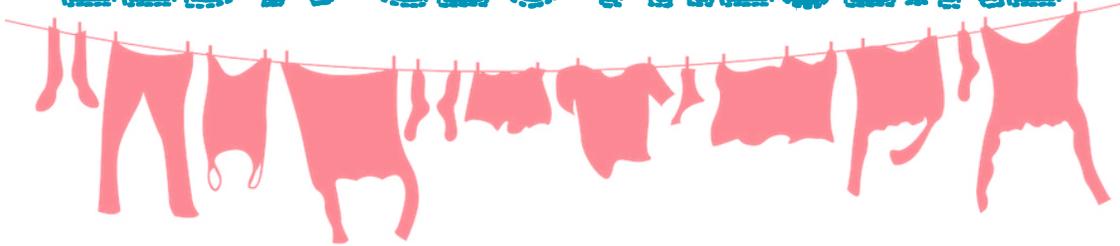
*Friday, May 10th 2019*

*In Partnership with*

*The Greek Orthodox Church of the Hamptons*

*Go to [www.eed-a.org](http://www.eed-a.org) to register*

# EEDA CLOTHESLINE



**CLEANING OUT YOUR CLOSET?**

**DON'T THROW YOUR OLD CLOTHES AWAY!**

**DONATE TO THE EEDA CLOTHESLINE!**

**WE ACCEPT CLOTHING, BELTS, SCARVES, GLOVES, HATS, COATS, BEDDING,  
TOWELS, SHOES AND PURSES, AND FABRIC IN FAIR CONDITION.**

**DROP OFF AT THE FOLLOWING EEDA LOCATIONS:**

**MAIN OFFICE:** 107 ROANOKE AVE. IN RIVERHEAD

**RIVERHEAD DAY HAB:** 784 HARRISON AVE. IN RIVERHEAD

**CALVERTON DAY HAB:** 446 EDWARDS AVE. IN CALVERTON

**HENRY PFEIFER CENTER:** 4062 GRUMMAN BLVD. IN CALVERTON

**MORE LOCATIONS COMING SOON!**

**Email us for more information: [info@eed-a.org](mailto:info@eed-a.org)**

