

**WHILE THE WORLD SHINES A SPOTLIGHT ON AUTISM AWARENESS TODAY,
NEW YORK LIFE MAKES AN IMPACT CLOSER TO HOME, AWARDING A
\$25,000 GRANT TO SAN DIEGO AUTISM NONPROFIT**

*The Company's \$25,000 Community Impact Grant Will Directly Support NFAR Tech,
a Groundbreaking Software Testing Training Program for Young Adults with Autism*

San Diego, CA – While World Autism Awareness Day serves to increase understanding of autism around the globe, nonprofit National Foundation for Autism Research (NFAR) is honored to highlight the recent support received from within its own San Diego community. Fittingly, today NFAR proudly announces the award of a \$25,000 Community Impact Grant from New York Life, which is earmarked for NFAR Tech, a comprehensive training program that prepares young adults with autism for meaningful employment in the high tech industry.

Despite the fact that those with high functioning autism have exceptional skills and can be a strong contributor in the workplace, unemployment for these individuals has been historically high. NFAR is working to change this. Created by NFAR in 2015, NFAR Tech uniquely integrates work expectations and social skill development into a technical skills curriculum and provides critical experience that can help students with autism be successful when they enter the job market.

“NFAR has always focused on helping those with autism grow into productive members of our society,” said Juan Leon, NFAR co-founder and president. “People on the spectrum have skills well suited for the technology field, they just need the training, the encouragement, and more importantly, the opportunity, to shine. High intelligence, attention to detail, and logical thinking can make them exceptional employees for tech companies.”

“Thanks to New York Life’s generous support,” Leon continued, “NFAR Tech will not only be able to provide skill training for our students, but also help them build self-esteem, find employment, and eventually gain a level of financial independence.”

“New York Life has long been committed to giving back to the areas where our agents and employees live and work,” noted Managing Partner Tony Montalvo of the company’s San Diego General Office. “This year, our team has chosen to fund NFAR’s efforts for a third time, because we have seen firsthand the difference our support is making in our community. We are pleased that this partnership will have a long-lasting impact in San Diego and will further NFAR Tech’s efforts to help build brighter futures for those with autism.”

Montalvo and his Director of Development, Mariana Farrell, presented the grant check to NFAR at the start line of their annual fundraiser event, the San Diego Race for Autism, recently held on March 25 in Balboa Park. (See attached photo.)

The Community Impact Grant program awards grants of up to \$25,000 to local nonprofit organizations which are championed by New York Life agents and employees to serve the needs of their local communities. Since the program’s inception in 2008, 452 grants totaling nearly \$6 million have been awarded to nonprofits across the country. Please visit New York Life’s web site at www.newyorklife.com to learn more.

More information is available at www.NFAR.org or by emailing info@nfar.org

Fast Facts

- Autism now affects 1 in every 68 children in the U.S.
- The number of teens and young adults with autism has increased tenfold over the past ten years and nearly half a million autistic children will reach adulthood in the next decade
- **Unemployment for those with autism is as high as 85%**, yet individuals on the autism spectrum have skills well suited for the technology field, such as high intelligence, attention to detail, and logical thinking that can make them exceptional employees for tech companies
- Research studies funded by the National Institutes for Mental Health (NIMH) and the Department of Education (DOE) indicate that **as many as 1 in 3 young adults** with autism have no job experience, college, or technical education within seven years of leaving high school; **a poorer outcome than those with any other disability**

About the NFAR TECH Program

NFAR TECH, designed for young adults (age 18+), is a comprehensive, 7-month vocational program that combines instructor-lead, hands-on training with real life applications and internship placement, helping to build expertise and experiences that can lead to careers in software testing, and other technical professions.

About the National Foundation for Autism Research (NFAR)

NFAR was established in 2003 to serve the critical needs of families and their children with autism. NFAR is committed to increasing local awareness, information, support, and services to improve the quality of life for persons living with autism or an autism spectrum disorder. Since 2005, NFAR has invested more than \$1.5 million throughout the San Diego community to positively impact the living and learning environment for thousands of people with autism. NFAR's main fundraising event, the San Diego Race for Autism, will be next held in March 2018 in Balboa Park in advance of April's National Autism Awareness Month. www.NFAR.org. www.raceforautism.org

###