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NEW YORK LIFE HELPS GIVE A FUTURE TO THOSE WITH AUTISM BY AWARDING COMMUNITY IMPACT GRANT TO SAN DIEGO'S NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR AUTISM RESEARCH

*New York Life's Top Grant Award of \$25,000 Will Support NFAR's New Technical Training Program
Designed to Give Teens & Young Adults the Skills and Real World Experience Needed for
Successful Technology Careers*

San Diego, CA – Companies around the globe are finding that young adults with autism often have the talent needed to thrive within the tech community. New York Life's \$25,000 Community Impact Grant to the San Diego-based nonprofit National Foundation for Autism Research (NFAR) is helping to make career options in the High Tech field a possibility with the launch of their groundbreaking Technical Training Program.

Autism now affects **1 in every 68** children in the U.S., with a new child being diagnosed every 11 minutes. 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.

"Unemployment for those with autism is as high as **85%**, which should be a real cause for concern for society, because nearly **half a million** autistic children will reach adulthood in the next decade," noted Juan Leon, NFAR co-founder and president. "Many people on the autism spectrum have skills well suited for the technology field, such as high intelligence, attention to detail, and logical thinking patterns that make them exceptional employees for tech companies."

This New York Life grant will provide NFAR with critical funding to help launch a comprehensive curriculum for teens and young adults with autism that will offer training modules ranging from basic computer programs to programming languages. The program allows participants to gain and/or reinforce software skills from entry level to advanced programming, while providing a unique learning environment and structure specifically tailored to meet the specialized needs of those with an autism diagnosis.

"New York Life strongly encourages our employees to give their time and talents to help make a difference in our community," noted Managing Partner Tony Montalvo of the company's San Diego General Office. "Because we have seen the positive impact our support has made in the community, our team, led by our Director of Development, Mariana Farrell, has chosen to support NFAR's efforts for a third time. We are so excited to be able to help NFAR get this program off the ground and create new – and life changing– opportunities for those with autism."

"Since 2005, NFAR has worked to help children with autism reach their potential by fostering new programs and options," added Leon. "New York Life's generous support will enable us to truly make a difference for our children. Finding meaningful employment not only offers people with autism a job, but also builds self-esteem, helps them develop a social network of co-workers, and allows them to gain a level of financial independence."

Montalvo and Farrell will present the grant check to NFAR at the official launch of the Technical Training Program in early 2015. Over the past four years, New York Life and the New York Life Foundation have provided NFAR with nearly \$75,000 through their Community Impact Grants, volunteerism, and local fundraising efforts.

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. Three hundred twelve grants totaling nearly \$4 million has been awarded to nonprofits across the country since the program's inception in 2008. Please visit New York Life's web site at www.newyorklife.com for more information.

More than 10,000 children in San Diego have been diagnosed with autism and the disorder now affects more children nationally than Cancer, Down Syndrome, Cystic Fibrosis, and Diabetes **combined**.

To further their efforts, NFAR's end of year **#GIVEAFUTURE** campaign is focused primarily on raising funding for the Technical Training Program and to build awareness of the many talents and dreams that children with autism have for their future. Learn more and get involved at <http://bit.ly/GiveAFuture>.

About the National Foundation for Autism Research (NFAR)

NFAR was founded in December 2003 to help improve the quality of life for those with autism. Since 2005, NFAR has invested more than one million dollars throughout the San Diego community to positively impact the living and learning environment for thousands of children with autism in San Diego. NFAR's main fundraising event, the San Diego Race for Autism, will be held on March 21, 2015 in Balboa Park in advance of April's National Autism Awareness Month. www.NFAR.org.

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