

Dimensions of living



(from left) Smithtown Supervisor Edward R. Wehrheim; Winters Center for Autism Executive Director Christine Ponzio; Winters Center for Autism Founder Michele Winters; Suffolk County Executive Steven Bellone; Winters Center for Autism Board President Patrick Winters; Rotary Club of Smithtown Sunrise President Nicholas Schroeder; and New York State Senator Mario Mattera.

Honoring legacy of Joe Winters, raising \$\$\$ for autism center

The Rotary Club of Smithtown Sunrise held its annual Snow Ball at Watermill Caterers in Smithtown, raising over \$64,000 for the Winters Center for Autism while honoring the legacy of Joe Winters, President of Winters Bros Waste Systems who passed away suddenly from COVID-19 last year and was the driving force behind the Winters Center for Autism.

Each year the Rotary Club of Smithtown Sunrise holds an Annual Snow Ball Gala to benefit worthwhile causes. This year, Nick Schroeder, president of the club, along with its board of directors, selected Winters Center for Autism as the honoree of the event.

Winters Center for Autism is a non-profit organization committed to enhancing the quality of life for adults

with autism through job creation, training and placement, while helping employer partners throughout Long Island develop employment opportunities for people with autism. Located in West Babylon, the Center is headquartered in a 14,000 square foot building near Winters Bros. Waste Systems and several other companies.

Accessibility to these businesses will provide vocational training and community-based work experience to our participants. The Center is adjacent to the Winters Bros. Gym, offering space for fitness classes and personal training opportunities. The Center is a dynamic partnership of dedicated people working together to address the excessive unemployment rate among people with autism. Although there are many programs that

provide excellent services for children and teens, there is a huge gap in the number of services and opportunities for adults with autism. Today, 1 in 54 children are diagnosed with autism.

"We at the Smithtown Sunrise Rotary were honored to support the mission of the Winters Center for Autism. It was with pride that we presented the Joe Winters Humanitarian Award to Joe's wife Michele and his son Patrick. The award was very special," said Mr. Schroeder.

Winters Center for Autism Board President Patrick Winters, expressed his gratitude to the members of the Rotary Club of Smithtown Sunrise, "On Behalf of the Winters Center for Autism and the entire Winters Family, I want to extend a very special thank you to Nick Schroeder, Vinny Puleo

and the entire team at the Rotary Club of Smithtown Sunrise, for not only organizing this event, but also choosing the Winters Center for Autism as the recipient. Their tireless efforts to bring the Smithtown community together for the benefit of adults with autism means more than I can put into words. Their efforts will have a significant impact on our mission to further enhance the quality of lives for adults with autism, through job training, creation and placement."

Among those attending the event were Rotary Club of Smithtown Sunrise members, Winters Bros. family, friends, and associates, Smithtown Town Officials, County Executive Steven Bellone, and New York State Senator Mario Mattera.



LOCAL CLUB HAS GLOBAL REACH: Members of the Rotary Club of Smithtown, including Club President Richard Smith (left with check) presents a donation to Ukrainian born Rev. Vladyslav Budash, of the Byzantine Catholic Church of the Resurrection in Smithtown, for an orphanage in Ukraine. Rev. Budash was born in Chernihiv, a city in northern Ukrain, where his parents still live.