

Dimensions of living

Tee off for 'hire purpose' in memory of Joe Winters

Golf Outing raises more than \$420,000 to help combat unemployment rate among those with autism

The life and legacy of Joe Winters, a leading Long Island businessman and philanthropist dedicated to the community and his family, was celebrated at the Second Annual Joe Winters Memorial Golf Outing held October 3 on the grounds of the Old Westbury Golf and Country Club. The golf outing in memory of Mr. Winters raised more than \$420,000, which will help to combat staggering unemployment rates amongst people with autism through The Winters Center for Autism.

Generous businesses, employer partners, family and friends represented more than 97 sponsors at the event. Held each October to show support for National Disability Employment Awareness Month, more than 200 golfers gathered on the green for a day of golf, fun, and reflection on Joe's dedication and devotion to the autism community, and three hundred guests then attended a dinner to celebrate and honor Joe Winters vision to improve employment opportunities and wellness for adults with autism.

The Winters Center for Autism, a non-profit organization founded by Joe and Michele Winters in 2020, is a dynamic partnership of dedicated people working together to enhance the lives of adults with autism through job creation, training and placement to address the excessive unemployment rate among people with autism.

The Winters Center for Autism addresses that need by identifying skills and talents of their participants and matching them with businesses and organizations open to creating jobs for capable and trained employees, creating a kinder and more inclusive Long Island community. The Center also provides fitness, recreation and social programs to assist participants in achieving their goals.

Winters Center for Autism opened its doors to its participants on July 27, 2022. 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 provide vocational training and community-based work

experiences for program participants. The Center is adjacent to the Winters Bros. Gym, offering space for fitness classes and personal training opportunities.

"The outpouring of support for the Second Annual Joe Winters Memorial Golf Outing demonstrates the profound influence Joe had in the business and autism communities. If you met Joe once, you knew his dream was to make a difference in the lives of people with autism. We are incredibly humbled by the events of the day and thank each golfer, volunteer, and sponsor who contributed to the success of the event," said Christine Ponzio, the executive director of Winters Center for Autism

The unemployment rate for individuals with autism exceeds 90% and the Winters Center for Autism is committed to changing that. Jobs can give people a sense of fulfillment and purpose. Identifying businesses in the Long Island community who want to be a part of making a difference is the key to changing the landscape of unemployment for adults with autism.

If you are a small business owner or in charge of hiring at your workplace,



(From left) Rae Rose Winters and Lily Torres offer a refreshing drink to golfers.



(From left) Patrick Winters, Winters Center for Autism President; Michele Winters, Winters Center for Autism Founder; and Sean Winters, Winters Bros. Waste Systems.



(From left) Raymond Berrios, program participant; Julie Falco, Winters Center for Autism Job Coach; and Christopher Cortale, Winters Center for Autism Receptionist.

contact them at 631-635-1169 to find out how you can change this statistic.

Winters Center for Autism can facilitate the hiring process by connecting you with qualified, reliable and hardworking job prospects who

have the skills and talents to fit the specific needs of your business.

Clinical staff offers assistance during onboarding and orientation, as well as onsite training and supervision to ensure success.



Rally to Give Foundation presents a donation to Winters Center for Autism (from left) James Winters, Eileen Winters, Sean Winters, John Winters, Christine Ponzio, Michele Winters, and Patrick Winters.



(From left) Chelsea Wallace, Colleen Lampe, and Shannon Lampe welcome golfers.