



**News Release**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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***JOURNEY TO AN ENVIABLE LIFE***  
***RAISES MORE THAN \$26,000 FOR ACLD***

***1<sup>st</sup> Annual 5K Walk/Run Draws More Than 200 People to Heckscher State Park***

EAST ISLIP, NY – Rainy weather couldn't dampen the spirits of the more than 200 walkers and runners who joined together at Heckscher State Park in East Islip for ACLD's 1<sup>st</sup> Annual 5K Walk/Run: Journey to an Envable Life.

The event brought people supported by ACLD together with families and staff, community members and business partners to raise more than \$26,000 to help ACLD pursue its mission of providing opportunities for children and adults with autism, learning and developmental disabilities to pursue enviable lives, increase independence and foster supportive relationships within the community.

Senator Phil Boyle (R-Bay Shore) and Assemblyman Phil Ramos (D-Brentwood) joined ACLD President Joseph J. Ortego and ACLD Executive Director Robert C. Goldsmith in saluting those who came to walk and run in support of children and adults with developmental disabilities. Among the participants who stood out at the May 22<sup>nd</sup> event were Stuart Gruen, an individual supported by ACLD who finished the 1K "Fun Walk/Run" course twice, and "Team Wildwood," comprised of staff and residents from ACLD's Wildwood residence in Dix Hills, who walked, ran and rolled as a group with their team signs. Their enthusiasm was infectious as the members of "Team Wildwood" crossed the finish line with their arms in the air and smiles across their faces.

"From our participants to our sponsors to those who worked to make this day possible, this event shows what the ACLD team is all about," Goldsmith said. "Together, everyone involved made this a Journey well worth taking."

In addition, Walk/Run participants combined to donate 428 pounds of used and unwanted clothing to RewearABLE, ACLD's new green program designed to help the environment while providing sustainable employment for adults with developmental disabilities. RewearABLE accepts clothing of all types and sizes, and all donations are tax-deductible.

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Major sponsors for the Journey to an Envable Life included the Pacesetter Sponsor, Heffernan Insurance Brokers; Parking Sponsor, Bethpage Federal Credit Union; Runner's High sponsors, Aveniras, Bio Reference Laboratories, Chem RX, Doctor Print, Enterprise Fleet Management, L&M Painting, and Ultimate Software; and Media Sponsor, WBAB-FM. HopeFITNESS provided a pre-walk warm-up, and nearly two dozen in-kind sponsors made sure all participants had plenty to drink and snack on throughout the event.

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### PHOTO CAPTIONS:

- 1: Participants gathered for the ribbon-cutting to start ACLD's 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Walk/Run: Journey to an Envable Life. The 5K event held in Heckscher State Park raised more than \$25,000 to benefit ACLD and the people with autism, learning and developmental disabilities it supports.
- 2: Joseph J. Ortego, President of the ACLD Board of Trustees; Senator Phil Boyle (R-Bay Shore); and Robert C. Goldsmith, Executive Director of ACLD, saluted participants in ACLD's 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Walk/Run: Journey to an Envable Life.
- 3: ACLD's Wildwood residence in Dix Hills was well-represented by "Team Wildwood" at ACLD's 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Walk/Run: Journey to an Envable Life.
- 4: Participants of all ages were part of ACLD's 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Walk/Run: Journey to an Envable Life.
- 5: Everyone who came to Heckscher Park for ACLD's 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Walk/Run: Journey to an Envable Life was a winner worth celebrating.

### ABOUT ACLD

Founded in 1957, ACLD is a 501(c)(3), not-for-profit agency whose mission is to provide opportunities for children and adults with autism, learning and developmental disabilities to pursue enviable lives, increase independence and foster supportive relationships within the community. ACLD employs more than 1,100 people and operates 77 different program sites including group homes and apartment programs across Nassau and Suffolk Counties. Services include early childhood services, day habilitation, residential alternatives, vocational training and job placement, recreation programs, respite, family support services, Medicaid service coordination, and medical and behavioral health services, and are provided to more than 3,000 people each year.

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