ELS FOR AUTISM FOUNDATION

OUR COMMUNITY.
OUR COMMITMENT.
OUR CELEBRATION OF EXCELLENCE.
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Dear Friends,

What an exciting and productive year 2016 has been! We made amazing progress on the construction of the upper school, pavilion and sensory arts garden, held our first summer camp session, completed another amazing Golf Challenge series – not to mention Rickie Fowler’s million dollar hole-in-one at our March Pro Am!

Our programs served over 3,647 individuals with ASD and their families from 13 countries, focusing on Education, Global Outreach, Therapy, Research, Recreation, and Adult Services. We continue to grant funds to autism organizations in 5 provinces in Canada, and are launching programs and research initiatives in Europe and South Africa.

We have been busy developing and implementing world-class programs that are truly excellent and a match to the incredible campus that our generous donors are helping to build. In short, The Center is on track to be everything we dreamed it would be: a hub for best practices with a core mission of connecting the global autism community.

Our team continues to not only raise the capital necessary to see The Els Center of Excellence campus completed, but to keep The Center defining excellence with every step that we take. Our programs and services are aimed at positively impacting those with autism and their families; both locally, nationally and internationally.

We would love for you to visit the Jupiter, Florida campus in person to see what our donors’ passion and commitment has built and to witness firsthand what best practices in education, services and support can do for children and adults from our local area of South Florida to Canada, Ireland, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, the Bahamas, Dubai, Qatar and South Africa.

Thank you for being part of this wonderful journey. With your support we will continue delivering and facilitating programs that are helping people with ASD to realize their aspirations and dreams!

ERNIE & LIEZL ELS
Founders, Els for Autism Foundation
2016 marked a year of significant milestones. Here are a few highlights:

OUR CAMPUS

- Opened in August 2015, The Learning Center, the public charter school at The Els Center of Excellence completed its first full school year in June. With capacity for 150 children ages 3-14, The Learning Center was designed to create a learning environment specifically suited to children on the spectrum. The Els for Autism Foundation also held its first summer camp in 2016!

- Ground broke in March and construction was underway to build the upper school building, a public charter school. When opened for the 2017-18 school year, it will serve students on the spectrum ages 14-21.

- In September 2016, design and development began for the Sensory Arts Garden and Pavilion. Our 2017 Annual Giving Program will serve to generate funds for the installation and maintenance of this special location on the campus.

- Through our GOALS and E-TEAM programs we worked with families and professionals from 12 different countries, catapulting our mission for global outreach.

OUR FOUNDATION

- In March 2016, the Foundation announced a partnership with PGA National Resort & Spa to support its Adult Hospitality Work Experience Program. The program, available for adults with developmental disabilities who have completed high school, allows participants to gain valuable work experience, master social skills in the workplace and learn resume writing and interview skills.

- In November 2016, we launched our first Ernie Els #GameON Autism ™ golf pilot in the UK.

OUR FUNDRAISING EVENTS

- Topping the 2016 milestones list is Rickie Fowler’s million dollar moment! At the Eighth Annual Wine Spectator and Cigar Aficionado Els for Autism Pro-Am played on March 7, at Old Palm Golf Club, Rickie Fowler holed a wedge shot in the traditional Hole-In-One Challenge to win a $1 million charitable donation for Els for Autism.

- In March 2016, the Foundation conducted its inaugural Awe in Autism Conference and Expo where the diverse talents of individuals with autism were celebrated via an art gallery, micro business bazaar, book signings, live performances, short film screenings, and more.

- The sixth season of the Foundation’s Golf Challenge culminated in November 2016. Over this season $3 million was raised making it a total of $15.5 million raised since the Golf Challenge was established.
With your involvement and support, 2017 is anticipated to be a year of new and exciting opportunities. Join us for:

OUR CAMPUS
• The highly anticipated ribbon cutting ceremony will mark the opening of the upper school for the 2017-18 school year. The target date is the summer of 2017 for the celebration.

• In development are the Sensory Arts Garden and Pavilion. Upon completion, both will be open to the community and will provide employment opportunities to individuals on the spectrum. The Sensory Arts Garden will be both therapeutic and educational for children and adults, especially for those with sensory processing challenges, by providing a meaningful experience through the exploration of nature.

OUR FOUNDATION
• Our 2017 focus will be to raise funds for new recreational facilities, including an aquatic center, gymnasium, cafeteria and athletic fields.

• In the first half of 2017, we will launch the Ernie Els #GameOn Autism™ Fitness program and pilots.

• The Foundation hopes to gain grant funding for the Collaborative Autism and Diagnostic Innovations program to reduce wait time for critical early detection and diagnosis of ASD.

• Our Adult Services Group will be expanding the Hospitality Work Experience program to include a micro-business in the new pavilion and a Work Experience partnership with Jupiter Medical Center.

• On April 28th and 29th, the Foundation will host the Autism Innovation and Global Impact Conference: The State of the Science. At this inaugural two-day scientific conference, renowned leaders in autism research, government, and service provision will gather to discuss the state of the science in autism spectrum disorder. For more information: www.elsforautismglobalconf.org

OUR FUNDRAISING EVENTS
• The Ninth Annual Wine Spectator and Cigar Aficionado Els for Autism Pro-Am will commence on March 13th at Old Palm Golf Club.

• Liezl Els will host her Tea Party on March 9th, and this year the theme will be Greece.

• Aligning with the World Autism Awareness month of April, the Foundation is planning to host a number of fund raising events including the second annual Awe in Autism Conference and Expo, the Light It up Blue lighting up of the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse and The Craft Beer & Food Pairing Experience.

• The seventh season of the Els for Autism Foundation Golf Challenge will kick off in May. To get involved visit: www.e4aGolf.com
Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) is a neurobiological disorder characterized by deficits in social communication and social interaction as well as restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities.

- One in 68 children and one in 42 boys in the U.S. are affected by autism
- Boys are 5 times more likely to have ASD than girls
- Autism is the fastest-growing serious developmental disability in the U.S.
- An estimated 2 million individuals in the U.S. are affected
- ASD occurs in children of all racial, ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds
- More children will be diagnosed with autism this year than with AIDS, diabetes and cancer combined
- The symptoms vary widely from child to child and range from mild to severe
- Recent studies show that most children are diagnosed after age 4, despite the fact that ASD can be diagnosed much earlier

*Facts and information are based on statistics from varied sources including the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the prevalence statistics from the Child & Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative and Autism Speaks.*
**EDUCATION**

- Conferences: 2,028 Attendees
- ETEAM: 14 Interns
- Donuts & Dialog: 35 Parents
- Lower School: 128 Students

**GLOBAL OUTREACH**

- GOALS: 38 Families
- Global Therapists Trained: 16
- Countries: 13

**THERAPY**

- Summer Camp: 14 Campers
- Eye Spy Social Skills: 11 Participants
- Spring Into Action Pilot: 4 Families
- Speech Therapy: 9 Clients
- Behavior Therapy: 8 Clients

**RESEARCH**

- Research Initiatives: 8
- University Partners:
  - Florida Atlantic University,
  - Emory University of Miami,
  - University of Cape Town,
  - Institute of Technology Tralee

**RECREATION**

- Golf Pilots USA: 14
- Golf Clinics USA: 21
- Golf Pilots International: 2
- Golf Clinics International: 14
- After School Activities -
  - Music, Art, Dance, Yoga,
  - Walk the Pup: 125 Participants

**ADULT SERVICES**

- Vocational Rehab Clients: 5
- Work Experience at
  - PGA National Resort & Spa:
    - 14 Participants
- SALSA cooking class:
  - 10 Participants
Els for Autism was established in 2009 by Liezl and Ernie Els. The Els’ son, Ben, is impacted by the disorder which affects 1 in 68 children in the U.S. The world class pro golfer and his wife have devoted their efforts to a catalytic, philanthropic project - The Els Center of Excellence.

Designed as a global hub to connect the international autism communities, the facility creates shared best practices and latest research for improved collaboration. The 26-acre facility provides on-site education for 300 students, ages 3 through 21 years old. The Foundation is in the middle of a capital campaign to finance the construction of the remainder of the campus.

Els for Autism operates Foundations in the U.S., Canada, South Africa and the UK.

The Foundation provides programs in six focus areas: Education, Global Outreach, Therapy, Research, Recreation and Adult Services.
El's for Autism is a game-changing resource, delivering and facilitating programs that are leading examples of what can be available to people with autism spectrum disorder (ASD).

**Vision**

We are committed to better understanding the aspirations of people with autism spectrum disorder and helping them to fulfill their potential to lead positive, productive and rewarding lives, through:

- Understanding the nature of ASD and facilitating the development and delivery of treatment therapies, educational programs, training programs, and recreational programs as well as residential and independent living programs.
- Ensuring the development of global outreach that will facilitate the sharing of best practices and programs.
- Raising awareness and promoting the value, acceptance and inclusion of people with ASD.

**Goals**

- Provide high quality information, intervention, education and support to local, state, national, and international families of diverse cultures.
- Provide programs based on best practices and develop innovative interventions through investigative study and analysis.
- Engage in research to further knowledge in the field of ASD.
- Establish funding required to sustain the mission and program goals through grants, donations, and events.
The Els Center of Excellence, is a world-class facility hosting leading-edge programs and services. Based in Jupiter, Florida, The Center opened the first two buildings of its 26-acre campus in August 2015 and is on track to be a game-changing resource in the field of autism and a leading example of what can be available to individuals on the spectrum.

Having all the essential components on one campus, with the integrated programming and continuity of service this allows, is not only a game-changer for the local autism community, but makes the facility the perfect hub for a variety of global outreach activities. This ensures The Els Center of Excellence’s positive influence is felt far beyond the boundaries of its walls. Once the campus is completed, the impact will be magnified!

A Lower School
An Upper School
An Auditorium Building
Two Playgrounds
Cafeteria
Swimming Pool and Pavilion
Sensory Garden and Pavilion

Medical & Research Services Facility
Adult Services Building
Golf Practice Facility
Gymnasium
Play Courts
Athletic Field
The Learning Center at The Els Center of Excellence is a nonprofit Palm Beach County charter school, serving children with autism ages 3-14. The Learning Center is now in its eighteenth year as a charter school, sharing this distinction with only one other existing charter school in Palm Beach County. Currently serving over 100 students, the school’s curriculum is based on the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA), and provides quality special education programs that are tailored to meet the unique needs of each student. The goal for every student is to maximize their potential using evidence based practices.

The Learning Center is committed to providing a quality education to all students as well as providing much needed support to parents. The student/teacher ratio is 2.5:1. All teachers are certified in Exceptional Student Education (ESE) and/or working towards their Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) endorsement. The Learning Center has full-time speech and language pathologists, SLP assistants, full-time occupational therapists, behavioral analysts (BCBA’s), and behavioral assistants on staff.
Teaching Educational Autism Methods

E-Team provides learning opportunities for college students seeking placement for internships, externships, practicum work, and student teaching. Online presentations and webinars on a variety of topics are accessible, through our digital resource library, to parents and professionals around the world.

Research

Our research is designed to support the continued understanding of effective interventions for individuals with ASD. Research topics include early identification and intervention, sports and fitness, and the application of evidence-based interventions for adults.

Global Outreach

Outreach Conferencing Services

Our state-of-the-art auditorium serves as a hub for professionals in the field of ASD to disseminate and gather research findings, best practices, and connect the global autism community via lectures and video-conferencing.

Global Outreach Autism Learning Services

GOALS provides families around the world the opportunity to access a highly qualified transdisciplinary team of professionals that work together to develop a unique, individualized program for children with ASD, along with direct coaching and training of parents and therapists.

Recreational Services

Ernie Els #GameON Autism™ Golf

An innovative program, developed by Els for Autism in collaboration with PGA REACH and The First Tee®. The program gives children and young adults on the spectrum access to the game of golf. #GameOn Autism Golf is aimed at developing life skills, encouraging social interaction and promoting healthy living through golf.

Reach & Teach Through the Arts

A unique therapeutic arts program tailored to the needs of individuals on the autism spectrum. The program provides personal growth in speech, language, mental agility, social skills, self-expression, and motor skills through music, art, dance and yoga.
**WHAT WE DO**

**PROGRAMS & SERVICES**

**THERAPY SERVICES**

**Spring Into Action**
Early Intervention Service provides evidence-based, early intervention services to children ages 18-36 months who are at risk for or have been diagnosed with ASD.

**Parent Training for Disruptive Behaviors**
The RUBI Autism Network parent education program teaches parents to use techniques in applied behavior analysis to manage their child’s challenging behaviors. The program was created for families of children with ASD between 3-10 years of age who display challenging behaviors.

**Collaborative Autism Diagnosis and Intervention**
CADI Services increase availability of diagnostic services for families of children with red flags for ASD and necessary services from early intervention through adulthood once a diagnosis is confirmed.

**Picky Eating Services**
A systematic, step-by-step procedure is used to introduce new foods into the diets of children who are picky eaters. This program is designed for children who eat a limited number of foods but there is no medical reason associated with this behavior.

**Specialized Intervention Services**
Speech and Language Therapy, Applied Behavior Analysis, Occupational Therapy and Mental Health Counseling are offered. All of our specialized intervention services adhere to the evidence-based practices set for individuals on the autism spectrum and are offered across disciplines, to individuals of all ages.

**ADULT SERVICES**

Our services provide life span instruction to help adults successfully transition to all aspects of life by providing programs in; Employment Services, Hospitality Work Experience, Independent Living, and Recreation & Leisure. We are proud to partner with organizations like PGA National Resort & Spa and the Autism Project of Palm Beach County to provide employment training and job opportunities.
#GAMEONAUTISM
**Golf Program**

**Ernie Els #GameON Autism™ Golf Program**: The innovative golf program started in 2013, in collaboration with The First Tee® and PGA REACH. The program is especially tailored for individuals on the spectrum. Infused with evidence-based practices for teaching golf to people with ASD, #GameON Autism Golf is designed to build self-esteem and confidence in a fun, welcoming and supportive environment; encouraging participants to learn golf skills while practicing specific autism learning concepts including: communication, emotional regulation, motor and social skills.

The golf facility at The Els Center of Excellence opened in March 2016 and is the hub for this exciting program. One-hour introductory clinics are offered under the guidance of Els for Autism staff members throughout the U.S., Canada and South Africa. In 2016, an extended curriculum for Ernie Els #GameON Autism Golf was piloted across 14 cities in the U.S., Ireland and the U.K. So far the feedback has been overwhelmingly positive from parents, educators, and golf instructors. The program will be rolled out to the public in the Spring of 2017.
The Lower School facility houses The Learning Center, a tuition free, public charter school serving students ages 3 through 14.

Opening the summer of 2017, the Upper School facility will house the Renaissance Learning Academy, a tuition free, public charter school serving students ages 14 through 21.

The state-of-the-art auditorium provides a hub for professionals and researchers in the field of autism to gather and disseminate research findings and best practices and connect the global autism community via lectures and video-conferencing.

Ernie Els #GameON Autism ™ Golf is aimed at developing life skills, encouraging social interaction and promoting healthy living through golf. The Center features practice facilities including 3 greens and 9 holes.

Recreational services are integral to campus-life; students and the community will enjoy an air-conditioned gymnasium, athletics field, play courts and swimming pool.

Every classroom in both the Lower and Upper School is equipped with state-of-the-art technology including cameras for observation. This technology allows resident experts, visiting scholars and researchers to examine issues and develop best practice approaches to the wide range of challenges that individuals with autism and their families face every day.

Three video-conferencing suites allow for a range of global outreach activities including remote therapy sessions.

The Sensory Arts Garden features elements specially designed to be experienced via touch, sight, hearing, smell, and movement. The Pavilion, equipped with a catering kitchen, is a multi-purpose space available for classroom/studio use, hosting receptions and events, vocational training and employment for adults on the autism spectrum.

The Medical and Research Services Facility will provide specialized medical services and leading edge research provided in a caring and supportive family environment.

The Adult Services Facility will deliver on-site, transitional housing, employment training and recreational programs.
The annual *Els for Autism “Spectrum Award”* honors an individual of any age on the autism spectrum who has shined a positive light on autism via their character, positive attitude and contribution. This winning individual is a catalyst for a program or event that has created a more beautiful future for people with autism. This award highlights the positive elements of autism in action... or ways in which we can celebrate autism.
For Josh, diagnosed with autism at age three, the game of golf has played a pivotal part in overcoming the various challenges that life has thrown in his path.

Joshua Deer and his father Andy, whom he credits with being the inspiration behind his passion for golf, teamed up to play in their first Els for Autism Golf Challenge event in 2014 at TPC Craig Ranch in McKinney, Texas. That year thanks to some great fundraising, Team Deersey qualified for Las Vegas making Joshua the first individual on the spectrum to compete in the Golf Challenge’s Grand Finale event.

Joshua’s approach to life is infectiously positive. It was this demeanor, coupled with his passion for golf that prompted the Els for Autism team to invite Joshua to help coach at a couple of this year’s #GameOn Autism ™ Golf clinics.

As a toddler Gloria struggled with communication skills, but excelled in musical abilities. She sang all of the time and demonstrated a very keen interest in all types of music. Her grandmother was a concert pianist so her mother enrolled her in piano and voice lessons at the age of 7. To the surprise of the piano teacher, he discovered that she could easily sight read music with no previous training. He also discovered that she had perfect pitch.

Gloria was selected to be part of an Early Talent Program (as a full time employee) within SAP’s Premium Engagements Team. Together with 9 other early talents, she embarked on the journey of being certified on the newest technologies. She has motivated the rest of the team to raise the bar and drive a highly collaborative environment where everyone understands and feels the importance of diversity and inclusiveness.
FUNDRAISING

THE ELS FOR AUTISM GOLF CHALLENGE

The Els for Autism Golf Challenge is the largest charity-driven, amateur golf tournament in history. 2016 marked the 6th year of this fundraising series for the Els for Autism Foundation.

The story so far:

- $15.5 million raised including $3 million in 2016
- 11,477 Golf Challenge rounds have been played
- 37,000 donations have been pledged

THE WINE SPECTATOR & CIGAR AFICIONADO ELS FOR AUTISM ANNUAL PRO-AM

The Wine Spectator & Cigar Aficionado Els for Autism Annual Pro-Am is one of the most successful annual Pro-Am’s in the U.S. raising more than $700,000 each year. Twenty-two world class PGA Tour pros join Ernie Els and groups of three man amateur teams for a Sunday pairings party and Monday golf tournament.

LIEZL’S TEA PARTY

Liezl’s Tea Party has become a fundraising tradition every March for the local Palm Beach County ladies. Each year Mrs. Els hosts the tea at her home with a unique theme. More than 250 ladies have enjoyed themes from around the world and celebrated the cultures of England, South Africa, China, Paris, India, America, Sweden & Spain. Greece is the theme for 2017!
EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

LIGHT IT UP BLUE

Light it Up Blue in Jupiter, FL to kick off April, World Autism Awareness Month. The Foundation raises autism awareness and knowledge within the Jupiter and Palm Beach communities each year by lighting the Jupiter Inlet Lighthouse blue and hosting a fundraiser at a local restaurant with proceeds to benefit The Els Center of Excellence.

AWE IN AUTISM

This year Awe in Autism will be an expo held at The Els Center of Excellence on March 31st. It’s an opportunity to celebrate the awesome talents of people with autism!

THE CRAFT BEER & FOOD PAIRING EXPERIENCE

The Craft Beer and Food Pairing Experience is the perfect opportunity to taste some of the best dishes in town and sample some of our favorite wines and specialty craft beers. In partnership with Tequesta Brewing Company, the Foundation hosted the Pairing Experience in the courtyard at The Els Center of Excellence in April of 2016.
OUR LEADERSHIP

Board of Directors

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Chairman, Shanken Communications

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Secretary
Founder, Els for Autism

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Stonehage Limited

Mr. Ernie Els
Founder, Els for Autism

Mr. Patrick McMahon
Founder, Chief Executive Officer
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Leadership Team

Belquis Colon
Director of Finance

Pam Minelli
Director of Development

Dr. Marlene Sotelo
Director of Programs and Operations
NAMING OPPORTUNITIES

Many spaces at The Els Center of Excellence can be dedicated in honor of your family. The naming opportunities across the campus range from class rooms, the new gymnasium, pavilion and swimming pool to name just a few.

For information on availability contact Pam Minelli, Director of Development at:

Pam.Minelli@elsforautism.org

COMMEMORATIVE BRICK PROGRAM

Help us “Pave the Way” by having your name, message and/or child’s drawing set in stone in the Center’s courtyard, a permanent focal point within the new Center. Make this a gift, in memory or in honor of someone special, or simply to express your support. These brick pavers are a wonderful way to express a personalized and unique message.

For more information and to purchase your brick visit:

www.elsforautism.org/bricks

AUDITORIUM SEATS

Become part of our future by naming an auditorium seat in The Els Center of Excellence.

VIP Gold Section: $5,000/seat
Blue Section: $1,000/seat

For more details and to select your seat, visit:

www.elsforautism.org/seats
The Els for Autism Annual Giving Program raises funds to pay for programs, services, maintenance and staff not funded by other sources.

The 2017 Goal is to raise $600,000 which will go directly to support the Sensory Arts Garden installation and maintenance at The Els Center of Excellence.

You can support the Annual Giving Program by going online to:

www.e4aannualgiving.org

Or mail a tax-deductible check made payable to ‘Els for Autism Foundation’ to:

Els for Autism Foundation
18370 Limestone Creek Road
Jupiter, Florida 33458
561-598-6200

Questions, please email us at AnnualGiving@ElsForAutism.org