FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Els for Autism Foundation® Receives Million Dollar Grant to Launch U Can Employ Initiative

JUPITER, Fla. – Els for Autism Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to transforming the lives of individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), has been awarded a multi-year million-dollar grant from Make Waves Foundation to develop and launch U Can Employ.

The Make Waves Foundation empowers and supports youth and adults with neurological, intellectual, and physical challenges that defy expectations. “In the next ten years, a half million individuals with autism will transition into adulthood. We are proud to support the U Can Employ initiative that will set companies up for success to employ individuals with autism,” says Donna Roth, founder and director of the Make Waves Family Foundation. “Our goal is to support people with autism and other developmental disabilities so they can live meaningful, happy lives and be productive, valued community members.”

“We are incredibly grateful for the support of Make Waves Foundation and their leadership in paving the way to further establishing an inclusive workplace for people with ASD," said Dr. Marlene Sotelo, Executive Director of Els for Autism. "Through U Can Employ, we aim to increase employment opportunities for individuals with ASD by providing the necessary training, consultation, and support to companies looking to create a more diverse and inclusive workforce."

U Can Employ is a significant step in creating a more inclusive workplace, as investors and shareholders increasingly recognize the importance of diversity and inclusion in environmental, social, and governance investing. In addition, research has found that companies already employing individuals with disabilities report an 89% higher retention rate, a 72% increase in employee productivity, and a 28% increase in profitability.

This groundbreaking program will provide direct training, support, and consultation to large and small companies interested in recruiting, hiring, onboarding, and retaining employees with ASD. Furthermore, this program will be accessible to companies of all sizes through varying tiered membership services, including free access to downloadable tools and webinars.

The first pilot site for U Can Employ launched with Next Level Distribution, a distributor of Consumer Electronics and 12V products this month. A second pilot with SBA Communications Corporation, a leading independent owner and operator of wireless communications infrastructure, including towers, buildings, rooftops, distributed antenna systems (DAS), and small cells, is set to launch this fall. The specialized team of consultants, powered by Els for Autism, will work closely with both companies to provide consultation to their HR team to recruit, hire, onboard, and retain employees with autism and related disabilities.

For more information about U Can Employ, please contact Els for Autism at [info@elsforautism.org](mailto:info@elsforautism.org).

About Els for Autism:

Els for Autism is a non-profit organization dedicated to transforming the lives of people with autism and those who care for them through lifetime services and collaborative partnerships. Founded by professional golfer Ernie Els and his wife Liezl, whose son is affected by autism, the organization provides innovative programs and services across the lifespan, including education and early intervention, recreation, and adult services. [www.ElsforAutism.org](http://www.ElsforAutism.org)

About Making Waves Family Foundation:

Make Waves Family Foundation is a culmination of work done by the Roth Family to motivate and inspire others to get involved in supporting the Autism community. Through community engagement, advocacy empowerment, and fundraising campaigns, the Foundation strives to break down the barriers faced by youth and adults with neurological disabilities. They support organizations focused on equal employment opportunities, replicable housing models, and social engagement programs to allow autistic individuals to achieve a happy, quality lifestyle. They believe that everyone has the ability to create a ripple effect, and together we can Make Waves.