



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Stanley Black & Decker Executive Chair Donald Allan Jr. Appointed Board Chair of Els for Autism®**

**Jupiter, Fla.** - Els for Autism announced the appointment of Donald (Don) Allan Jr., Executive Chair of Stanley Black & Decker, as its new board chair. Allan has been a long-standing partner and champion of the nonprofit, supporting its mission both personally and through Stanley Black & Decker's philanthropic leadership.

Allan was introduced to Els for Autism through its annual Golf Challenge regional event series and later learned more about the organization's work at The Els Center of Excellence® in Jupiter, Florida. "I was aware of Ernie Els and his golf career and watched him flourish and achieve everything he did on the golf course," said Allan. "However, I was not aware of what was happening in Florida to support the autism community."

Upon learning about the life-changing programs and services offered to individuals with autism across the lifespan, Allan worked to secure Stanley Black & Decker as a national sponsor of the Els for Autism annual Golf Challenge regional event series in 2023.

The company then donated \$100,000 to name a vocational lab in the Stoops Family Adult Services Building and contributed tools and equipment to outfit the space. In the Stanley Black & Decker Lab, autistic adults gain hands-on carpentry and woodworking skills.

Stanley Black & Decker later pledged \$5 million to name the gymnasium within the Specialized Autism Friendly Recreation Complex at The Els Center of Excellence, slated to open in spring 2027.

"One of the things I have always said about Stanley Black & Decker is that there are three things that make this company great: our people, our brands, and the innovation we bring to our end users," Allan shared. "But it starts with the people - not just talented

people who do good jobs, but people who are truly invested in our company, our community, and each other.”

“When I think about community and being invested in one another, autism has a huge place in that discussion,” Allan added. “It’s about asking how we ensure we’re not leaving anyone behind and how we help everyone succeed in some way, shape, or form.”

“On behalf of Marvin Shanken and my wife, Liezl, we are deeply grateful for the years of support Don has already given,” said Ernie Els, World Golf Hall of Famer, four-time Major Champion, and co-founder of Els for Autism. “As board chair, we are confident his leadership will help us continue serving more families around the world impacted by autism.”

With Allan assuming the role of board chair, Els for Autism looks ahead to continued growth, expanded global impact, and advancing its mission to create a world of limitless possibilities for individuals with autism spectrum disorder and their families.

For media inquiries, including scheduling an interview with Don Allan, contact Dede McKelvy at [dede.mckelvy@elsforautism.org](mailto:dede.mckelvy@elsforautism.org).

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#### **About Els for Autism Foundation®**

Els for Autism is devoted to helping children and adults with autism and their families have a better life. The organization innovative, research-based programs for individuals and families across the entire lifespan through Early Intervention & Educational, Recreation, and Adult Services. Based at The Els Center of Excellence in Jupiter, Florida, Els for Autism supports families locally and around the world through both in-person and virtual programs.

Founded in 2009 by World Golf Hall of Famer and four-time Major Champion Ernie Els, his wife Liezl, and M. Shanken Communications Founder Marvin R. Shanken, Els for Autism was inspired by the Els family’s personal journey after their son Ben’s autism diagnosis. Their commitment led to the creation of a world-class campus designed to help individuals with autism reach their fullest potential and live meaningful, fulfilling lives while supporting the families who walk alongside them.