

Northeast Arc fights autism

DANVERS — Northeast Arc is pleased to announce it has received a \$10,000 grant from the Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism. These funds will provide critical direct financial support to families with autism.

This grant will benefit Northeast Arc's Autism Support Center (ASC). Since 1991, the Center has been empowering families who have a member with autism or a related disorder by providing current, accurate, and unbiased information about autism, services, referrals, resources, and research trends. Throughout its 30 years, the ASC has kept families across Northeastern Massachusetts supported and informed. Through this critical funding, the Center will provide financial support to families caring for a loved one with autism.

"This funding is important because it will provide the Autism Support Center with much needed flexibility to help families in need," says Gloria Ricardi Castillo, Director, Family Support Centers at Northeast Arc. "We will have the opportunity to help people immediately when they need it."

Among those helped by this grant, and other Autism Support Center programs, is Sandra Salvati of Peabody. Sandra has a 12-year-old son with autism, and financial support from Northeast Arc enabled her to receive assistance while she battled cancer.

"I got very sick and was in and out of the hospital. The Flutie Foundation and ASC grant allowed my advocate to assist with my

son's care because I was not able to," said Salvati. Flutie Foundation funding also helped provide support for her son's education. "I never would have been able to receive the proper services if wasn't for The Flutie Foundation. I'm so grateful for all the help and support I've received from the Northeast Arc and Flutie Foundation. No one really understands a child with disabilities unless you have one and you can see what they deal with each and every day."

The Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism, based in Framingham, awards grants annually through a competitive application and review process. The signature grants that the Flutie Foundation distributed this year support traditionally under-served, under-funded, culturally diverse communities reflected in the Foundation's areas of interest; providing a path for educational and vocational skills, supporting recreational and active lifestyles, and ensuring people with autism are safe, supported and informed.

"The Flutie Foundation Signature Grants help our partner agencies address a variety of significant needs in the autism community, especially in light of coronavirus repercussions," says Nick Savarese, Executive Director of The Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism. "Programs like the Northeast Arc are helping people on the autism spectrum live life to the fullest and we are proud to support their efforts."

The Autism Support Center will be reviewing funding ap-

plications throughout February. If you would like to apply to receive funding email asc@ne-arc.org or call 978-777-9135.

Northeast Arc (NeArc) changes lives for people with disabilities — and children at risk of developing them — and their families. The agency, which opened the Center for Linking Lives at Liberty Tree Mall in Danvers in 2020, serves more than 15,000 people in 190 Massachusetts cities and towns each year. NeArc is the largest Arc in the state of Massachusetts and the 2nd largest (of 700) in the country. Services include: Adult Family Care, the ArcWorks Community Art Center, Autism Services, Black Box Theater, Breaking Grounds Café, Continuous Care Nursing Services, Day Habilitation, Deaf Services, Early Intervention, Employment Services, Family Support, First Steps Childcare & Preschool, Fiscal Intermediary, Personal Care Assistance, Recreation, Residential, Shared Living and Transition, and Skilled Intermittent Home Health Care. Learn more at www.ne-arc.org.

The Doug Flutie Jr. Foundation for Autism (DFJFA) is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) public benefit corporation helping families affected by autism live life to the fullest. Through programs and partnerships, DFJF helps people with autism get access to care; lead more active lifestyles; and grow toward adult independence.

NFL Quarterback Doug Flutie and his wife Laurie, whose personal experience raising a son on the autism spectrum inspired their



passion to help other families, established the Foundation in 1998. DFJFA primarily serves families throughout New England, New York, New Jersey, and Central Florida. For more information on The Doug Flutie, Jr. Foundation for Autism, visit www.flutiefoundation.org.