

Contact Information:

The Rich Center for Autism
Jake Ellis
330.941.1996
jellis05@ysu.edu

Release Date:

10/16/2023



The Rich Center for Autism to Receive \$27,593 Donation from Doug Krinsky

Check will be presented to the YSU Foundation at The Rich Center on October 21st

Youngstown, OH— A check presentation will take place at **1:00pm at The Rich Center for Autism on the campus of Youngstown State University on Saturday, October 21, 2023.** Doug Krinsky, Founder of Ante4autism, along with Georgia Backus, former Executive Director of The Rich Center, will present a check for \$27,593. Representatives from the Youngstown State University Foundation and The Rich Center will receive the check during the presentation.

Proceeds of the endowment, held at the Youngstown State University Foundation, will be used to support cultural and educational activities for parents and families of currently-enrolled or formerly-enrolled Rich Center students as well as the installation of a parent resource room at The Center.

"Doug and Georgia continue to be advocates for children on the autism spectrum. This donation enables us to sustain our mission and provide much needed support to students and families," said Interim Executive Director Mike Latessa.

Media are welcome to attend the presentation. Parking will be limited and lots will be closed for the YSU football game happening at 2pm. It is suggested that any attending media arrive in a marked vehicle and look for parking along Elm Street directly adjacent to The Rich Center.

About Doug Krinsky

Doug Krinsky, a native of Columbus, Ohio is the founder of Ante4autism, an annual event held in Las Vegas with celebrities, furniture industry executives and poker players to benefit autism. The 2018 event provided the funds for the creation of the Doug Krinsky and Georgia Backus Operating Endowment for The Rich Center for Autism. Inspired by his son, Michael, who is on the autism spectrum, Doug wants to serve as a voice for families of autism. His advocacy began as a result in the gaps in service and the need for alternative education for children like his son. He has volunteered at the Ohio Statehouse speaking with legislators about laws and resources to help families affected by autism. His service, dedication, and advocacy for autism has garnered numerous awards. These include the 2012 Jefferson Award exemplifying the spirit of giving, the Ohio Public Images Award of Merit, and the Parent Advocate of the Year for Autism Speaks in 2016. Doug is a tireless advocate for people with autism and their families. This donation is driven by his passion to help others like his son and knowing that there is still a lot to accomplish. Doug has said his goal in life "is to have these kids and adults reach their full potential. if they can't speak for themselves, I want to be their voice."

About Georgia Backus

Georgia Backus served as the Director of the Rich Center for Autism from 1995 through 2013. She is a proud graduate of Youngstown State University, earning both her BS and MS in Education from YSU. Georgia helped establish the Rich Center for Autism as an Ohio Department of Education Center of Excellence. She was appointed by then Governor of Ohio, Robert Taft, in 2003 to the Ohio Task Force for Autism. Georgia was honored to serve both her community and Youngstown State University stating that "My hope is that the Rich Center will always remind us how the treatment and care for those who suffer with autism is at the core of how we treat one another."

About The Rich Center For Autism

The Rich Center for Autism was established in 1995 through the collaborative efforts of the Kosar, Rich (Ricchiuti), and Rubino families who have a shared interest in autism. The Rich Center for Autism, a component of the Youngstown State University Beeghly College of Liberal Arts, Social Sciences, & Education, fulfills the mission to prepare educators, medical specialists and other professionals in best practices for teaching and caring for those on the autism spectrum; to increase knowledge base through the promotion of scholarly research; and to provide public service and advocacy on behalf of those affected by autism. The Rich Center for Autism has no geographic boundary and accepts children of all socio-economic backgrounds and cultures. Children are enrolled in the programs regardless of their caregivers' ability to pay. Referral, treatment, and support are provided at no cost to families.