

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Hoaloha Foundation makes autistic sixteen year old's wish come true

Dr. Cynthia Norall's nonprofit charity funds local high school student's excursion to New Orleans, Louisiana

Carlsbad, California, US February 2, 2015

Find a need, fill a need. That's exactly how Hoaloha ("good friend" in Hawaiian) came to be. The inspiration for Dr. Cynthia Norall to create what she saw as a gap and a real need in San Diego County is what lead to her founding this nonprofit charity. Hoaloha was created to give back to the population of children that have transitioned from toddlers to teens over the fifteen years that she's worked with San Diego families.

Hoaloha's mission statement explains its purposes best:

"Hoaloha Foundation aims to provide social and educational services that will help teens and adults with Asperger's Syndrome and High Functioning Autism through major life experiences such as college, job hunting and finding employment.

"Our purpose is to work closely with major employers, to create training processes that will keep these individuals successful and employed. In addition, Hoaloha Foundation will be assisting individuals with AS and HFA in learning certain life skills that do not come naturally to them, through workshops and individualized services.

"We are the "friend" foundation."

The Winston School provides a unique environment for their students, a third of their student population affected by ASDs, but has its fair share of traditional high school experiences- one being their school's annual trip. This year's destination, New Orleans.

Nathan attends The Winston School, a School for Bright, Creative Children, as a Sophomore. Nathan wished to attend the annual Life Skills and Education Trip at The Winston School of Del Mar. As one of seven special needs siblings in a blended family, making ends meet for mom and dad is a priority; this trip seemed a luxury having been denied services by medical insurance for the necessary therapies proven to benefit individuals affected by Autism Spectrum Disorders.

Yet sixteen year old Nathan did not complain, pout or give up. Instead he has chosen to spend months attending the trip meetings hosted by Winston's Amy Spittler seeking her counseling advice, crunching numbers with her and searching for a part-time job after school; a difficult enough task for any individual, much less a teen on the autism spectrum. His only wish was to participate in the school's annual trip but after hours of research found himself losing hope and feeling defeated.

Webster defines "friend" as a person who helps or supports someone or something. Hoaloha is here to support, specifically, San Diego's teens and young adults, to provide them with experiences and provide the counseling, training and support to achieve their goals. Maria Lyon Dudzik, CEO of Hoaloha Foundation, was elated to provide the news to Nathan's mom that a full scholarship was granted for him to attend the trip with his peers in May. Aloha, Nathan!

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If you would like more information or to schedule an interview with Cynthia Norall, PhD, BCBA-D or with Maria Lyon Dudzik, President of Hoaloha Foundation, please contact Julie Miller at 760.207.3802 or email julie@drcynthianorall.com

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