



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jack M. Martins

## Senator Martins Secures State Funding to Enhance Services at Port Washington's Nicholas Center for Autism

JACK M. MARTINS June 25, 2015

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### *\$50,000 in State Funding Will Help Expand Opportunities For Individuals With Autism*

Senator Jack M. Martins (R-7th Senate District) has secured \$50,000 in state funding to help expand opportunities for individuals with autism. The state funding will help enhance services provided by the Nicholas Center for Autism.

Located in Port Washington, the Nicholas Center for Autism is a nonprofit organization dedicated to developing innovative programs that assist individuals with autism to lead fuller, productive, and meaningful lives. The Center offers services that foster skills and opportunities that allow for maximum involvement within the community. The Center utilizes an authentic work site, Spectrum Designs, to provide individuals with autism pre-vocation and vocational training opportunities in an apparel printing business.

"The Nicholas Center provides individuals with autism with the skills, training, and support to open new doors and live fuller lives. By helping their students achieve greater independence, develop skill sets, and realize new opportunities, they are literally changing lives for the better. The Nicholas Center will now be able to further expand their invaluable services and make a difference for many more individuals with autism," said Senator

Martins.

The state funding will allow the Center to expand its curriculum, in parallel with its vocational training, to include programs which focus on delivering a “work-life” balance that combines work related productivity and overall wellness initiatives. Students will have the opportunity to engage in work, fitness, healthy eating, and the vocations of food processing and urban agriculture. The Center will offer these courses in various forms to help provide individuals with improved life/social skills and the training to gain employment.

“Senator Martins attended our grand opening four years ago, and since then he has been one of our greatest advocates. We are very grateful to Senator Martins for securing funding for his constituents with autism and their families. Because of this funding, both the Nicholas Center for Autism and its social enterprise Spectrum Designs can offer more opportunities to families of young adults with autism. Thank you Senator Martins and the State of New York!” said Stella Spanakos, Co-Founder of the Nicholas Center for Autism.