

COMMUNITY NEWS

Night in White gala celebrates milestones

Bringing together community leaders, lawmakers, business partners, and families, The Nicholas Center hosted a packed house for its annual Night in White gala to celebrate expanding vocational opportunities and community inclusion for Autistic adults.

For honoree Michelle Rea, recognized alongside her husband Desmond and son Steph, the evening's impact hit close to home.

"As parents, we all hope our children will find their place in the world. Thanks to The Nicholas Center, our son has found his," said Rea.

Executive Director and Co-Founder Nicole Ferrara reinforced that sentiment during the program. "At The Nicholas Center, we have the privilege of witnessing something extraordinary every day—what happens when someone who has been

underestimated is finally given a real opportunity. We watch them build confidence, independence, and real lives."

The gala highlighted a banner year of growth driven by that mission, including: 23,000+ hours of hands-on job coaching provided in the past year, 53 job placements for Autistic young adults, 50,000th product milestone for the TNC Chocolate Lab, expansion of TNC Provides Pantry Program delivering aid to 10 food pantries and 80th episode milestone for the TNC Podcast, Agents of Humanity.

Co-Founder Stella Spanakos welcomed attendees and recognized TNC staff, board members, the Rea family and, with a special acknowledgment, TNC's director of administration and human resources, Laura Wootton, for her 10 years of steadfast leadership and resilience.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY THE NICHOLAS CENTER



Night in White honorees Michelle and Des Rea with son Steph and The Nicholas Center co-Founders Stella Spanakos and Nicole Ferrara at the annual Night in White gala.

Special thanks were given to gala sponsors, including honoree benefactors – Michelle and Desmond Rea and Pella Windows, event sponsors – Loren and Wayne King Family and Ellen and Joseph Leonides and dinner sponsors – The Braunstein Family and Liane Kupferberg Carter and Marc Carter.

The event brought together key community leaders and

public officials who stand alongside The Nicholas Center in driving systemic change, including Nassau County Legislator Delia DeRiggi-Whitton, Nassau County Comptroller Elaine Phillips, Town of North Hempstead Supervisor Jennifer DeSena, Receiver of Taxes Mary Jo Collins, Mayors Robert Weitzner and John Popeleski and Port Washington

Police Commissioner Sean McCarthy.

Proceeds directly support The Nicholas Center's vocational training, supported employment, community integration and peer support initiatives.

For more information about The Nicholas Center or to make a contribution, visit www.tncnewyork.org.