



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The Illinois Center for Autism Could Win \$250,000 from Pepsi Refresh

Fairview Heights, Illinois, Sep. 1, 2010 – The Illinois Center for Autism (ICA) has launched a campaign to win \$250,000! The Pepsi Refresh Project, which began in March, enables people, businesses and non-profits with ideas that have a positive impact to compete each month for up to \$250,000!

Monetary donations are typically expected during hard financial times by non profits. ICA is asking for something different – votes! We need the communities help to substantiate the volatile economy. To vote for ICA in the Pepsi Refresh Project, you can create a Pepsi Refresh Project account at <http://www.refresheverything.com/autismopportunities> or go to the ICA web homepage and click the Pepsi Refresh link.

Pepsi is accepting 1,000 ideas each month. Our project will be beneficial to our adult services. If we win, we plan to enhance the work environment for our adults. Our adult services provide vocational training to adults and adolescents with autism spectrum disorder (ASD). Pasta Fare restaurant has served as a vehicle in fulfilling this need and our mission.

ICA serves seven counties in the Metro East Area and is in its 33rd year. Presently, we serve between 350 - 400 children and adults with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and their families. Rarely a day goes by without a call from a concerned parent, relative, or provider asking for assistance.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) it is estimated that an average of 1 in 110 children in the United States has an ASD. Fifteen years ago the statistic was 1 in 2,500.

Historically, individuals with autism were thought to need lifelong care and monitoring. However, with specialized training, many people with ASD can achieve varying levels of independence and personal fulfillment.

The Illinois Center for Autism, located at 548 S. Ruby Lane in Fairview Heights, is a non-profit, community-based mental health treatment and education agency. For more information about these services or autism, visit the Illinois Center for Autism website at www.illinoiscenterforautism.org.

