



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

John J. Flanagan

## Senator Flanagan Joins With Local Residents To Designate September As Hydrocephalus Awareness Month In New York State

JOHN J. FLANAGAN September 15, 2014

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To raise awareness of Hydrocephalus and support the 9<sup>th</sup> Annual Hydrocephalus WALK, Senator John Flanagan (2<sup>nd</sup> Senate District) successfully sponsored legislation to designate the month of September as Hydrocephalus Awareness Month in New York State. Senator Flanagan presented copies of the resolution to Mia Padron and Jackie Davidson of the Hydrocephalus Association during a visit to his office in Smithtown.

Ms. Padron and Ms. Davidson are once again volunteering their time to coordinate this year's walk, which will take place at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, September 21<sup>st</sup> at Belmont Lake State Park in North Babylon. All of the proceeds from the upcoming walk will benefit the

programs of the Hydrocephalus Association, a national non-profit organization that provides support, education and advocacy to individuals, families and medical professionals dealing with the complex issues of hydrocephalus, as well as research to find a cure.

According to the two coordinators, last year's event brought together over 1000 people and raised more than \$80,000. Their hope for this year's walk is to continue that success by increasing awareness and raising funding to help those afflicted with this incurable condition which is estimated to impact one in every 500 children.

According to the Hydrocephalus Association web site, hydrocephalus is an abnormal accumulation of fluid inside the brain that affects over one million Americans of all age groups. The cause of the lifelong condition is unknown and the condition can occur at any age. The symptoms of hydrocephalus vary with age, progression and individual differences in tolerance to the condition. In an infant, the most obvious indication of hydrocephalus is often a rapid increase in head circumference or an unusually large head size.

Other symptoms may include vomiting, sleepiness, irritability, downward deviation of the eyes and seizures; and older children and adults may experience headache followed by vomiting, nausea, papilledema, blurred or double vision, sunseting of the eyes, problems with balance, poor coordination, gait disturbance, urinary incontinence, slowing or loss of developmental progress, lethargy, drowsiness, irritability, or other changes in personality or cognition including memory loss.

Most often, hydrocephalus is treated by surgically inserting a shunt system which diverts the flow of cerebrospinal fluid to another area of the body where it can be absorbed as part of the normal circulatory process. About 40,000 shunt operations are performed each year in this country as standard treatment for this condition but due to the lack of advancement in treatment methods, many people with hydrocephalus are unable to lead full and productive lives.

"Unfortunately, the effects of Hydrocephalus are unknown to many New Yorkers and I applaud Ms. Padron and Ms. Davidson for their leadership on this important issue. Their efforts to raise awareness to help others is very important and my hope is that our community will join them on September 21<sup>st</sup> to help their efforts reach new heights," stated Senator Flanagan.

Residents can register or donate on the organization's website at <http://hawalk.kintera.org/faf/home/default.asp?ievent=1098272>. Registration will also be available beginning at 8:30 a.m. on the morning of the walk and family fun activities beginning at 10:30 a.m. For more information about the walk, please e-mail questions to [teamhydrocephaluslincy@yahoo.com](mailto:teamhydrocephaluslincy@yahoo.com) or call Mia Padron at 631-588-8846 or call Jackie

Davidson at 631-462-2092.

Residents who would like more information about hydrocephalus should visit the Hydrocephalus Association's web site at [www.hydroassoc.org](http://www.hydroassoc.org).