



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jack M. Martins

## Senator Martins Secures State Funding For Port Washington's Nicholas Center To Expand Job Training & Educational Services for Individuals With Autism

JACK M. MARTINS May 3, 2016

| ISSUE: **DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES**

Senator Jack M. Martins (R-7th Senate District) has secured \$45,000 in state funding for the Nicholas Center to provide additional job training, employment and continuing education opportunities for individuals with Autism.

“Just because someone has Autism doesn't mean they shouldn't have the opportunity to develop a skill set, get a job, and lead a fulfilling and productive life. The Nicholas Center has done a wonderful job providing those opportunities to individuals who for far too long never got that chance. This will help them continue their great work,” said Senator Martins.

Located in Port Washington, the Nicholas Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to developing innovative programs that enable individuals with Autism to lead more independent, meaningful, and productive lives. The Nicholas Center offers services that foster skills and opportunities that allow for maximum access and involvement within the community.

The Nicholas Center utilizes an authentic work site, Spectrum Designs, to provide individuals with Autism pre-vocation and vocational training opportunities in an apparel

decorating and printing business. It is also piloting three new social enterprises in partnership with Spectrum Designs, which include Spectrum Bakes, a granola and edible favor business, Spectrum Grows, a hydroponic microgreens, herbs and produce business, and Spectrum Suds, a laundry service, that will provide additional vocational and employment opportunities for individuals on the Autism Spectrum.

Nicholas Center Co-founder and Director of Development Stella Spanakos said, "Our ability to launch three new social enterprises and offer more vocational training opportunities to individuals on the Autism Spectrum is directly related to the grant Senator Jack Martins has secured. The Senator has been an active advocate of the Nicholas Center and Spectrum Designs Foundations since their inception in 2011 and we refer to him as our guardian angel."