

October 2, 2015
 Circulation: 21,000
 Ad equivalency: \$2,760

BENEFIT

Center for Autism Hosts Inaugural Gala at Pelican Hill

By NB INDY STAFF

The Center for Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders hosted its first annual Hope & Help Gala on Sept. 19 at The Resort at Pelican Hill in Newport Coast to raise awareness for those challenged by autism spectrum and other neurodevelopmental disorders.

The inaugural gala raised more than \$512,000 to benefit The Center's services including diagnosis and evaluation, clinical support and treatment, education, wellness and research.

"Our first gala was a wonderful success thanks to the generosity of the families and friends of The Center," said Newport Coast resident Catherine Brock, M.A., executive director of The Center for Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders. "More than 300 people attended the sold out event which gave us a great opportunity to further awareness for the number of children and families impacted by autism in Orange County and expand our programs and our reach."

Co-hosted by Danielle Allison and Anne Warmington, the program for the evening included dinner, a high-energy live auction host by Matt Rogers, and inspirational stories about how The Center is making a difference in the lives of so many families throughout Orange County, with speeches



from William S. Thompson, founder of The Center, and the Kreidler family.

The Center recognized Mr. Damon Shelly of the Shelly Automotive Group, who has provided employment skills training for young adults living with autism spectrum disorder and other developmental challenges.

"Our goal is to give help and hope to children and families challenged by autism and other developmental disorders. If your family is touched by one of these disorders, we want you to know that we

understand, we care, and we're here to help," said Brock.

Established by the William & Nancy Thompson Family Foundation (based in Newport Beach) and the Children and Families Commission of Orange County, The Center for Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders is home to a team of experts in the field of autism and neurodevelopmental disorders.

Since its establishment in 2001 (as For OC Kids), The Center has transitioned from a clinic, which offered evaluation



Left to right: Don Thompson, Damon Shelly and Bill Thompson; Don Thompson, Cathy Brock, Danielle Allison, Anne Warmington; Mischa & Jaya Kreidler with their children. They shared their family's story at the Gala.

and diagnosis, to a full-service center that provides clinical care, innovative research, quality education, and community engagement to children, adolescents and young adults from birth to 22.

In late 2012, an investment by the Thompson Family Foundation and the Children and Families Commission of Orange County provided \$14.8 million to expand The Center for Autism & Neurodevelopmental Disorders.

For more information, visit thecenter-autism.org.