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FUNDRAISING GALA WILL BENEFIT 2,000 FAMILIES WITH AUTISM Ferdinand Jay Smith Hosts The Hope Lights The Night Gala for AutismUp

ROCHESTER, N.Y. April 27, 2017 — Honorary Event Chair Ferdinand Jay Smith will host AutismUp's eleventh annual spring gala fundraiser to celebrate the conclusion of National Autism Awareness Month. The ***AutismUp Hope Lights The Night Gala***, presented by Calvary Robotics, will be held on Saturday, April 29, 2017 from 6:30 to 11 PM at the Joseph A. Floreano Rochester Riverside Convention Center, 123 East Main Street, Rochester, N.Y.

The *Hope Lights The Night Gala* coincides with the one year anniversary of the opening of the *AutismUp Multi-Sensory Learning Environment* for individuals and families with autism. The event begins with a nod to the roaring twenties and features revival era cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, a chef-prepared full course dinner, dessert bar, music and entertainment by Nik Lite, a silent auction with over 125 items, live auction with international auctioneer CK Swett, *Cornell's Jewelers Raffle* and opportunities for attendees to learn about and support AutismUp.

The exciting live auction is filled with truly unique experiences including a NASCAR weekend, trip to Jamaica, a "sports fan" dream package and meet-and-greet with Doug Flutie, a music recording studio experience where James Taylor records, a ski chalet getaway, an exceptional collection of libations and much more!

Today, 1 in 68 children are diagnosed with autism. It is estimated that nearly 10,000 individuals are impacted locally. AutismUp is the leading 501(c)3 autism support organization in The Greater Rochester and surrounding areas, supporting more than 2,000 families. Since 2004, the efforts of AutismUp have resulted in raising awareness, providing support and promoting abilities and success for those living with ASD. In the past year alone, more than 1,000 individuals with autism participated in programs on-site at our brand new sensory space, in addition to our community based programs, allowing children and teens with autism to HAVE FUN, BE FIT, and MAKE FRIENDS in a safe, supported, judgment free place all their own.

Thanks to lead sponsors Calvary Robotics, Jay Marketing & Communications, Dorschel Automotive Group, Wegmans, and many other sponsors and donors, the annual fundraising gala allows AutismUp to expand and enhance our many programs, support services, and scholarship program. The continued support of the generous community allows AutismUp provide help for today and hope for a brighter tomorrow. AutismUp hopes to raise \$300,000 at the 2017 *Hope Lights The Night Gala*.

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Tickets are \$225 per person online at www.autismup.org or by calling (585) 248-9011 thru April 28th. Tickets will also be available at the door. Proceeds support the expansion and enhancement of AutismUp's customized education and scholarship programs for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD).