



Press Release

For Immediate Release

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Wayne & Karen Lipton Named RVC Blue Speaks “Light it Up Blue” Gala Honorees

Dedicated Community Leaders & Autism Advocates Receive Honoree at 6th Annual Gala

Karen & Wayne Lipton, dedicated community leaders, philanthropists, and autism advocates, will together be honored at this year’s RVC Blue Speaks Gala and recognized for their efforts to give a voice to those most deserving.

RVC Blue Speaks is the largest Long Island-based grassroots autism charity. Since its inception in 2017, the leading nonprofit has raised nearly \$500,000 for autism support and awareness. Their sixth annual gala will be held on Saturday, April 13, 2024, at the Coral House in Baldwin, NY. Mr. Butch Yamali, President and CEO of the Dover Group, and the 2019 RVC Blue Speaks gala honoree, has once again donated the cost of the event.

Karen and Wayne will be recognized for their decades of dedicated volunteer service to our community. They have always supported causes important to them, including their temple, education, Mount Sinai South Nassau hospital, Molloy University, The South Shore Symphony and the Rockville Centre Guild for the Arts.

This year’s honor is an important opportunity for Karen and Wayne to honor the memory of their late son, Adam, who passed away in April 2020. As a child, Adam was diagnosed with autistic tendencies and benefited greatly from the early intervention programs then available through the Rockville Centre schools and Camp Anchor. He was seriously injured in an accident at the age of ten and survived until the age of 37.

“On behalf of the RVC Blue Speaks Board of Directors, we are very grateful to our dear friends Karen & Wayne Lipton and are pleased to recognize them for their years of volunteer service to our community and advocacy in support of a wonderful cause, one we all hold dear to our hearts,” said Anthony Cancellieri, Co-Chair of the Board of Directors. “Each year, the support we receive from our donors and sponsors, and especially our community of Rockville Centre and the surrounding communities, is more than we ever could have imagined. Thank you to everyone for supporting our mission and for your steadfast commitment to young people and families impacted by autism.”

Wayne is an entrepreneur, businessman and musician. He serves as CEO and Managing Partner of Concierge Choice Physicians LLC, a company that he founded in 2005. The company is headquartered in Rockville Centre and services physicians nationally (twenty-four states) in marketing and administering concierge programs. For many years he was the owner of Richmind Way Stores, a chain of Drug Stores with its largest store in Rockville Centre.

Wayne served as a Trustee and Deputy Mayor of the Village of Rockville Centre from 1999-2007. From 1989 to 1999 he was a member of the Village Planning Board and served as its chairman for eight years. He is an Advisory Board member of Mount Sinai South Nassau and recently joined the Board of Trustees at Molloy University. Wayne served on both the Boards of Central Synagogue and Temple B’nai Sholom. He was a founding Trustee of the Rockville Centre Education Foundation and a Gala Honoree. Wayne is an accomplished cellist who is President of the Rockville Centre Guild for the Arts and President of the South Shore Symphony. Additionally, Wayne has been honored by RVC Lions Club, Rockville Centre Community Fund and UJA Federation. A native of Baldwin, he graduated from Baldwin Senior High School and Harvard College in 1973 with a BA in Biochemistry.

Karen spent decades as a prosecutor in the Nassau County District Attorney’s Office, working for former District Attorneys Dillon, Rice and Singas. Karen was active in the Rockville Centre School District Parent-Teacher Association Council and Special Education Parent-Teacher Association. She was honored with the Jenkins Memorial Award along with a lifetime membership in the PTA. Karen was also a board member and President of the Rockville Centre Education Foundation, which is dedicated to enhancing the quality of public education by securing and providing financial resources for school enrichment. She co-chaired the Foundation’s fundraising efforts for a decade. Now happily retired, Karen spends much of her time with their grandchildren, and at the theatre in New York City. A native of Queens, Karen earned her BA from Hofstra and her JD from Hofstra Law.

Karen and Wayne have been married for 46 years. They have two children, Sarah and Alex and four grandchildren.

“RVC Blue Speaks has consistently proven their dedication to children and young adults on Long Island with ASD. As parents of a child on the Autism Spectrum, our late son Adam, we understand and appreciate the need for strong community advocacy and support,” said Karen and Wayne. “We are committed to the mission of RVC Blue Speaks and deeply touched by this honor.”

Anthony and Mary Lou Cancellieri of Rockville Centre founded RVC Blue Speaks in 2016 when their grandson Louis was diagnosed on the autism spectrum at age 2. The group's mission is to promote awareness and acceptance of those affected by autism spectrum disorder so that their quality of life is enhanced and their potential is fulfilled and to raise funding for genetic research, support programs, and community initiatives that directly serve families in need on Long Island and; to change the conversation about autism into action and progress. To date, the group has donated thousands to support those with autism through grants and scholarship programs. They have generously given to the Adelphi University's Bridges Program, Seaver Autism Center for Research and Treatment at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and the Hagedorn Little Village School in Seaford. They partnered with Mount Sinai South Nassau to fund two "Louie," Vecta machines that provide a calming atmosphere for people with autism spectrum disorder in the stressful and often unknown environment of an emergency room or hospital. They are also funding a sensory space in the hospital's Feil Family Pavilion Emergency Department.

RVC Blue Speaks has awarded thousands in scholarships to high school seniors from numerous local school districts. Locally, the group has begun implementing plans to partner with the Village of Rockville Centre on a village-wide "light it up blue" awareness campaign for the month of April.

For more information about RVC Blue Speaks or to reserve your ticket for the upcoming gala, please visit www.rvcbluespeaks.org or on Facebook @RVCBlueSpeaks.