



Hire Autism Launches in Northern Virginia

Studies show that of the 54 million Americans with autism and developmental disabilities, only 20% are employed or seeking employment. OAR's newest initiative, Hire Autism, seeks to change that.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 30, 2017

Contact: Diane Lingenfelter, Manager, Hire Autism Marketing and Outreach
(703) 243-9710 X224, mail@hireautism.org

Arlington, VA – The Organization for Autism Research (OAR) today announced the launch of its new employment initiative, Hire Autism, for its test run in Northern Virginia. Hire Autism is an online jobs portal that helps individuals with autism of all capacities connect with businesses and employers willing to consider them as candidates for competitive employment. Many teens and young adults with autism are not employed or have jobs that do not make the best use of their strengths and skills. Hire Autism seeks to change the prospects for these job-seekers. OAR invites interested job candidates to sign up and start searching for jobs today!

OAR began laying the groundwork for its Adult Employment Initiative two years ago. In the interim, it came up with the concept for Hire Autism, built and tested the site, and now has recruited its first business partners offering jobs. Four No. Virginia businesses, Glory Days Grill, Wegmans, Linden Resources, and Quality Innovations Inc., are leading the way, and others have expressed interest. OAR's goal is to provide an array of employment opportunities in food service, retail, entertainment, hospitality, information technology, distribution, and customer service.

“It is exciting to see employers respond so positively. We’ve already got 14 jobs posted,” says Diane Lingenfelter, Manager, Hire Autism Marketing and Outreach, “We’ll be adding more shortly.

With employers signing on and jobs worth considering posted and available, OAR is now opening the site to applicants just in time for National Autism Awareness Month in April. OAR's objective is to register at least 50 new applicants and 5 new employers by the end of April.

Hire Autism offers job-seekers a simple three-step registration process and an autism-friendly online space to meet prospective employers. Once applicants have created a personal profile, they can browse job postings and apply for jobs. They may also upload a resume and cover letter. In addition, Hire Autism has a resource center that offers information and advice on writing resumes, preparing for interviews, navigating the workplace, and more.

Persons with autism are capable of performing a wide range of tasks in a variety of work settings. OAR seeks to recruit a wide array of businesses to match the varied abilities and skills represented by Hire Autism applicants. If a company already is committed to workplace diversity or is open to learning more about the benefits of hiring people with autism, it fits the Hire Autism profile OAR is looking to match.

Like the applicants' process, the registration process for businesses is straightforward. Once registered, an employer can post open positions and proactively search applicants' profiles for qualified candidates. Hire Autism has resources for employers too. Among them is "Autism 101 for the Workplace" a resource that will help both employers and employees smoothly adjust to the workplace environment.

Hire Autism is a first step in attempting to level the employment playing field for adults with autism. It simplifies the initial application process, puts applicants in touch with employers willing to consider them, and addresses disclosure head on. It does not guarantee a job, but it does promise to widen the window of opportunity and offer more choices. This is of particular interest to parents.

"The most important thing for me is whether my children are happy and healthy," says Janet Reece, parent of two children with autism who lives in Alexandria, Va., "They need to be given access to the same things as everyone else, and that includes jobs. Hire Autism can help people with autism achieve their goal of employment."

Hire Autism is open for business! OAR encourages all interested job seekers to visit HireAutism.org to register and begin your job search.

About OAR: OAR is a national charity dedicated to raising money for practical research into the challenges of autism. OAR is established in accordance with section 501(c)(3) of the IRS Code and is incorporated in the Commonwealth of Virginia (EIN#54-2062167). As provided for under Virginia law, a copy of OAR's financial statement is available upon request from the State Division of Consumer Affairs in the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services in Richmond, VA. Donations to OAR are tax deductible.

###