



Hire Autism, an Initiative by the Organization for Autism Research, Wins \$50,000 Prize

Initiative that connects people with autism with career opportunities received The People's Choice Prize in The Encore Prize: Generation to Generation Challenge last week in Boston

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ARLINGTON, VA - [Hire Autism](#), an initiative led by the [Organization for Autism Research \(OAR\)](#) that connects people across the autism spectrum with jobs, received the People's Choice Prize in the finals of [The Encore Prize: Generation to Generation Challenge](#) last week in Boston. The prize included a \$50,000 award to support the program. The national competition awarded two \$50,000 prizes to two nonprofits whose projects showed innovative ideas to connect diverse generations together.

50,000 kids with autism graduate from high school each year and almost 80 percent of these kids remain unemployed or under-employed two years after they graduate. The Hire Autism Encore initiative seeks adults over 50 to become job advocates for these job seekers.

“These advocates have life experience in the workplace,” said Michael Maloney, Executive Director of OAR. “They will mentor and guide our young people with autism to meaningful employment. By creating opportunities together, Hire Autism will enhance the lives of both young adults with autism and their mentors.”

Hire Autism was one of 180 projects that applied to The Encore Prize: Generation to Generation Challenge in July. The 180 applications were pared down to 15 semifinalists by internal Encore review. After three weeks of public voting and additional Encore review, Encore announced five finalists, who then presented in front of a live audience in Boston on October 16, 2017. Hire Autism won the People’s Choice Prize based off of the live presentation and peer group voting. Naina Chernoff, a longtime OAR supporter and mother of a child on the autism spectrum, delivered the prize-winning pitch for OAR and Hire Autism.

About the Organization of Autism Research

[The Organization for Autism Research \(OAR\)](https://researchautism.org/) is a national nonprofit organization formed and lead by relatives of children and adults with autism. Since 2001, OAR is dedicated to promoting research that can be applied to help families, educators, caregivers, and individuals with autism find much-needed answers to their immediate and urgent questions. Learn more at their website: <https://researchautism.org/>.

About Encore.org

[Encore.org](https://encore.org/) is a national nonprofit building a movement to tap the skills and talents of experienced adults to improve communities and the world. Generation to Generation is Encore.org’s five-year campaign to mobilize adults 50+ to help young people thrive. The Encore Prize is designed to recognize and support innovative individuals and organizations of any age with new ideas to use the experience of people over 50 to help solve pressing social problems. The 2017 challenge focuses specifically on helping kids at risk.