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## **Villa Esperanza Services *Lights It Up BLUE* for Autism Awareness April is Autism Awareness Month**

**Pasadena, Calif.** – On April 2, Villa Esperanza Services will celebrate Light It Up Blue in commemoration of World Autism Awareness Day. The annual event kicks-off Autism Awareness Month to help raise global awareness about the disorder which currently affects 1 in 68 children here in the United States. In honor of this day, many landmarks and buildings throughout the world as well as hundreds of thousands of homes and communities are lighted in blue to help “shine a light on autism.”

Villa Esperanza Services, a non-profit serving children, adults and seniors with developmental disabilities, will once again participate with a variety of on-campus events. “The majority of the children Villa serves have moderate to severe autism,” explains Casey Gregg, Vice President of Villa’s school. “On April 2 we will be holding a Blue Fair in celebration of our students and in support of our families. Employees and clients throughout our organization will be wearing blue that day. Our participation in Light It Up Blue helps to bring attention to autism and those affected by it. It is a wonderful opportunity to educate the public and help them have a better understanding of the disorder. We certainly hope that people will join us and wear blue that day. We also encourage them to put a blue light bulb in their porch light or window at home. It’s a very visible way to show their support for the autism community.”

Villa will celebrate all month including an event at the Ice House on Thursday, April 17, from 7:00 - 8:30 pm. Fritz Coleman, NBC4 Southern California's weathercaster, will be performing his stand-up routine live at the world famous ICE HOUSE in Pasadena. 100% of Fritz’s proceeds from the evening will go to Villa’s programs! Tickets are only \$12.50 and can be purchased online at <http://icehousecomedy.com/index.cfm>.

Villa Esperanza Services is a leader in providing programs for children, adults and seniors with developmental disabilities including autism. Autism is a complex condition that affects a person’s ability to communicate and develop social relationships, and is often accompanied by behavioral challenges.

*For more information about Villa Esperanza Services, please visit [www.VillaEsperanzaServices.org](http://www.VillaEsperanzaServices.org).*