



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NEWS RELEASE

Theater Executives Florian and Hahn Honored for Engaging the Autism Community

CLEVELAND, OHIO – Theater executives Kelly Florian and Daniel Hahn received the Community Innovator Award at the 14th Annual Milestones Autism Spectrum Disorder Conference. Florian is the director of educational services for Great Lakes Theater Company and Hahn is the vice president of community engagement and education for Playhouse Square. Presented by Milestones Autism Resources, the conference took place June 16-17 at Landerhaven. This must-attend autism event featured 1,000 family members, professionals, and individuals with autism in attendance, as well as 75 workshops, more than 100 speakers, and more than 50 exhibitors.

“Serving others is its own reward,” said Hahn. “To see the joy on the faces of our patrons is a welcome reminder of why we do this type of work to begin with.”

Florian and Hahn created the Great Lakes Theater Autism Initiative with professionals from Great Lakes Theater Company, Milestones Autism Resources, Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities, and other organizations to develop sensory-friendly theater performances in the Cleveland area. Playhouse Square was the 2015 Recipient of the National Rehabilitation Association’s Excellence in Media Award for recognition of sensory-friendly programming. The performances have integrated evidence-based practices while staying true to the actors’ needs.

“We take it for granted that we can attend the theater as a family, take our brother to a baseball game or cousin to a movie, but for many families, those simple outings are not possible,” added Florian. “Great Lakes Theater’s Sensory-Friendly performances provide an affordable, quality performance for an underserved population.”

Other 2016 honorees and their respective awards include:

- Keith Bambic – Parent Tribute Award (Outstanding Dad)
- Shari Goldberg – Parent Tribute Award (Outstanding Mom)
- Mary Beth Koss – Professional Excellence Award
- Alexandra Wiskes – Teen Trailblazer Award
- Evan Burg, Adam Freireich, Sari Gonick, Brittany Lieberman from JFSA Transitions – Personal Achievement Award

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About Milestones Autism Resources



Founded in 2003, Milestones Autism Resources improves the lives of individuals on the autism spectrum throughout Northeast Ohio by educating, coaching, and connecting the autism community with evidence-based information. Milestones is the first call for help at each life transition, focusing on education to help families succeed. Milestones envisions a community in which individuals on the autism spectrum reach their full potential as contributing members of society, recognized for their strengths and supported in their challenges. Each year, Milestones serves more than 2,400 parents, professionals, and individuals of all ages and abilities through a free autism helpdesk, annual conference, consultations, and trainings. The website, milestones.org, connects 58,000 unique visitors to more than 1,000 autism resources, a comprehensive event calendar, and helpful tool kits.