

For Immediate Release



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## **MASONIC MEDICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE (MMRI) JOINS AUTISM RESEARCH ALLIANCE PARTNERSHIP**

*5 Organizations from the Mohawk Valley Partner Together for Collaborative Autism Research*

(UTICA, NY) In an effort to team up against Autism, Masonic Medical Research Institute (MMRI), the Kelberman Center, Resource Center for Independent Living (RCIL), ADHD & Autism Psychological Services and Advocacy PLLC (AAPSA), and Upstate Cerebral Palsy (UCP) signed off an Autism research alliance partnership. The partnership between these 5 organizations will help MMRI make breakthroughs on understanding the root cause of Autism. “With the support of these 4 organizations, the Autism research being done at MMRI will be able to expand and reach potential breakthroughs that were otherwise out of our grasp. We thank these organizations for their generosity and eagerness to help in the fight against Autism” said Maria Kontaridis, the Gordon K. Moe Professor and Chair of Biomedical Research and Translational Medicine and MMRI Director of Research.

On Thursday, Oct. 17 2019 these 5 organizations from the Mohawk Valley signed agreements to support Autism Research at MMRI. The organizations met in the Bond-Trosin Auditorium at MMRI to host a panel and officially sign off on the partnership. “It is an honor for us to work in support of this research that will help our patients and numerous others throughout the world” said Michael Kelberman MD, FACC, Founder, and President Board of Directors, at the Kelberman Center.

The partnership will grant access to DNA samples from patients with Autism, enabling MMRI faculty to work from actual tissue as opposed to scientific models. With these samples, MMRI will better be able to understand the genetics of Autism and how the mutation is spread through family lines. “We hope that through our support MMRI faculty will effectively make breakthroughs in the field of Autism research” said Andy Lopez-Williams, PhD, ABPP, Clinical & Forensic Neuropsychologist, President and Clinical Director. ADHD & Autism Psychological Services and Advocacy.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Autism affects nearly 1 in 59 children within the United States alone. While the disease is incurable, MMRI is trying to identify the possible causes of Autism and with the support of these organizations this research can propel forward. “We believe this research reflects our mission of providing the necessary opportunities to individuals every day to fulfill life choices. We are proud to stand in support of MMRI and Autism research and awareness” said Louis B. Tehan, President & CEO, Upstate Caring Partners, Inc.

The partnership between these 5 prominent organizations will not only benefit Autism research, but the entire community. By collaborating together the organizations showcase the innovative leadership within the Mohawk Valley. “We are excited to reveal to the community our efforts of helping to advance Autism research, and stand with these 4 organizations in making our community and the world a better place” said Zvia McCormick, CEO Resource Center for Independent Living

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MMRI is dedicated to scientific research that improves the health and quality of life for all. They strive to conduct high quality research aimed at developing a deep understanding of diseases and generating innovative cures and treatments. For more information about MMRI, please visit [mmri.edu](http://mmri.edu).