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*****PRESS RELEASE*****

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**FAMILY RESIDENCES AND ESSENTIAL ENTERPRISES AND GIRL
SCOUTS OF SUFFOLK COUNTY ANNOUNCE COMMUNITY
PARTNERSHIP**



Old Bethpage, NY – Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE) and Girl Scouts of Suffolk County (GSSC) proudly announced their new community partnership at a recent press conference. The partnership includes community service opportunities for both Girl Scouts and the men and women supported

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by FREE. The all-new GSSC and FREE Inclusive Patch was also unveiled at the event.

FREE and GSSC have a long history of making their respective communities a better, more inclusive place. Suffolk Girl Scouts participate in FREE's afterschool program where they help participants in the program with activities like arts and crafts, and sing-alongs. They have also designed gardens at FREE's residences in Hauppauge and Kings Park, and as part of their Silver Award Project Girl Scout Troop 1853 will design a "Serenity Garden" complete with bird houses at two of FREE's residences in Ridge. FREE's "Program Without Walls" has allowed program participants to assist GSSC in delivering Girl Scout Cookies to local legislators and dignitaries. Program participants have also assisted with packaging cookies for distribution to school superintendents, as well as helping to assemble cookie order forms and packages, thus giving our program participants some very valuable work experience. FREE program participants also assisted GSSC during its "Camporee" event by helping to prepare hundreds of bracelets made from t-shirts.

In addition, FREE program participants will be present at a Girl Scouts Getaway Weekend where the theme will be "Diversity and Inclusion." Members of FREE's Speaker's Bureau, established to empower the individuals at FREE by teaching them advocacy skills and to encourage the individuals to write and share their inspirational stories to educate others and to increase awareness of disabilities, will speak to the Girl Scouts, and the FREE Players Drum Corps and Community Choir will perform for the Girl Scouts. Girl Scouts attending the weekend will be among the first to receive the all-new Girl Scouts Are Inclusive Patch.

The Inclusive Patch was designed by FREE program participant, Joseph Stoyer. Joseph has been responsible for much of the art seen in FREE's theatrical productions, as well as their t-shirt and playbill designs. His work has also been presented in gallery at The LENZ Winery and BJ Spoke Gallery.



"We are thrilled to continue to expand our partnership with Girl Scouts of Suffolk County on programs that give our individuals the opportunity to break down boundaries," says Robert S. Budd, CEO, FREE. "We are excited about future initiatives that support our agencies missions and the community. Together our agencies are creating magic."

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“Girl Scouts of Suffolk County looks forward to maintaining a strong and mutually beneficial partnership with FREE,” says Yvonne Grant, President & CEO for Girl Scouts of Suffolk County. “We are delighted to support the experiences afforded to our girls through FREE, and are excited to see the wonderful opportunities that will present themselves through the *Girl Scouts Are Inclusive* patch program.”

Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE)

Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE), founded in 1977, benefits and proudly supports more than 4,000 individuals with intellectual/developmental disabilities, mental illness and traumatic brain injury. It is the mission of FREE to assist individuals of all abilities realize their full potential. FREE provides a diverse array of supports and services including: housing; recovery services; transition to work; employment; day, community and family services; respite; crisis services; education and after school support; specialty health services; and advocacy.

FREE also collaborates with a variety of diverse 501(c)(3) nonprofit partners on educational, vocational, rehabilitative and a myriad of other creative initiatives to enhance the local communities and the lives of more than 25,000 people that reside within them. Each of the valued partners of the FREE Network has a unique mission, vision and strategic goals that are aligned in purpose, and embody the spirit of the meaningful work we do every day. For more information, please call 516-870-7000 or visit www.familyres.org.

Girl Scouts of Suffolk County

Girl Scouts of Suffolk County is the largest youth-serving agency on Long Island. It serves more than 40,000 girls between the ages of 5 and 17, with the dedicated support of more than 7,000 volunteers. For more information about Girl Scouts, please call (631) 543-6622 or visit www.gssc.us

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