



Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE)
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*****MEDIA ADVISORY*****

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SPECIAL NEEDS DRUM CORPS CHOSEN TO MARCH IN NYC COLUMBUS DAY PARADE

Old Bethpage, NY – On Friday, October 7th, Family Residences and Essential Enterprise, Inc. (FREE) will be holding a rally, and open practice, at their Old Bethpage headquarters where the **FREE Players Drum Corps** are preparing to march in the **72nd Annual New York City Columbus Day Parade** on Monday, October 10th. The FREE Players Drum Corps made history as the 1st special needs Corps to ever march in the **New York City Columbus Day Parade**. The Parade marches up Fifth Avenue from 44th to 72nd Street with red carpet performances on Fifth Avenue between 67th and 69th Streets.

When:
10:00 a.m.
Friday, October 7, 2016

Where:
Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE)
Multi-Purpose Room
191 Bethpage Sweet Hollow Rd
Old Bethpage, NY 11804

*****Great visuals as members of Drum Corps will be present and practicing*****

Recently, the FREE Players Drum Corps was selected as the first special needs group to perform at the DCI World Championships in 2018. The DCI World Championships is the largest event in the world for the

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Marching Arts Activity and has been called the "Super Bowl" of Drum Corps. The best of the best from the entire world gather to compete every year to decide who will become the World Champion. 30,000 spectators are expected to be in attendance for World Class Finals alone!

FREE has launched a Go Fund Me campaign www.gofundme.com/freedrumcorps to fundraise for travel expenses. All money raised will be used to send the entire 65-member Corps plus Staff support to Indianapolis, Indiana to make history as the 1st Special Needs Group to ever perform at the DCI World Championships.

About Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE)

Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE) founded in 1977 and headquartered in Old Bethpage, benefits and proudly supports more than 4,000 individuals with intellectual disabilities, mental illness and traumatic brain injury. It is the mission of FREE to help 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, primary and specialty health care and advocacy. For more information, please call 516-870-7000 or visit www.familyres.org.

The FREE Players Drum Corps was founded in 2010 and is one of the very first Special Needs Drum Corps to exist in the world. The Corps is part of Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE) Theatre Arts Day Program in Old Bethpage, NY.

Drum Corps is essentially a professional marching band that requires the musicianship of a symphony, combined with the athleticism of a professional sport, mixed with the pageantry of a Broadway show.

Today our Corps has over 65 members, ages 20 to 50 plus. The Corps is comprised of a Drumline, Color Guard, Front Ensemble (Pit) and a Drum Major. All the members of the Corps have intellectual and physical disabilities. The purpose of the Corps is to focus on the member's talents and abilities, not their disabilities. Most of our members never had the opportunity to participate in any mainstream music programs growing up. They were frequently excluded and not given a chance to prove themselves. Our members strive to alleviate prejudice and breakdown barriers. We want to show the world that anything is possible with heart, hard work and the desire to push oneself beyond any previously conceived limitations. We hope to unite the world through the one universal language of music.

Facebook: @FREEPlayersDrumCorps
@FREEPlayersDrumCorps

Instagram and Twitter: @FREEDrumCorps

YouTube:

About the Columbus Day Parade

The Columbus Day Parade has been organized by the Columbus Citizens Foundation in New York since 1929. Over 35,000 people participate in the Columbus Day Parade in New York City each year, including over 100 groups, with bands, floats and contingents. The parade attracts nearly one million spectators and is the largest celebration of Italian-American culture in the world. The Columbus Day Parade takes place on the second Monday in October.

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