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**Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE)**  
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**\*\*\*PRESS RELEASE\*\*\***

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**SPECIAL NEEDS CATERER PROVIDES REFRESHMENTS AND  
VALUABLE WORK EXPERIENCE AT OPENING DAY OF BALL  
FIELD FOR SPECIAL NEEDS PLAYERS**



**East Meadow, NY** – On Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup>. Nassau County Executive Edward P. Mangano joined with Kristine Fitzpatrick, Executive Director of League of YES (LOY), and players from both the

Nassau and Suffolk LOY divisions to celebrate Opening Day of the 2016 Baseball Season and the completion of the new handicapped-accessible sports field at Eisenhower Park.

Opening Day officially kicked off with our very own, nationally ranked marching band the FREE Players Drum Corp and the Kellenberg Memorial High School Choir singing the National Anthem, before County Executive Mangano threw out the first pitch to one of the league's original players and best hitters, Zachary Stein.



Refreshments for the event were provided by FREE's **Terry's Café**. Terry's Café is a full service catering outfit that operates out of FREE's Old Bethpage facility. They employ special needs individuals who are interested in a career in the food service industry. They are trained on how a commercial kitchen operates. Participants have the opportunity to learn all aspects of the business



“We were thrilled to be a part of such a special day for the special needs community,” said Robert Budd, CEO of FREE. Mr. Budd continued, “events like this provide a great opportunity for our men and

women to get out into the community, give back to the community, interact with the community and get some real world experience; all while supporting an event for special needs children.”

### **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](http://www.familyres.org).

### **About Terry's Café**

**Terry's Café** is one of FREE's Affirmative Businesses providing full service catering. Individuals served within the FREE Network are provided with the unique opportunity to work and train in actual business settings.

### **About the FREE Players Drum Corps**

The **FREE Players Drum Corps** was developed at FREE's Day Program in Old Bethpage. The FREE Players Drum Corps are one of the first Special Needs Drum Corps to exist in the world. It is part of a unique theatre arts curriculum for adult men and women with talent and similar interests who have autism and other developmental disabilities. The FREE Players Drum Corps has been therapeutic for many of the adults that attend the program, as rhythm is a powerful tool that permeates throughout the brain. Drumming has been proven to reduce both mental and physical challenges that one may have and has enabled these men and women to work on their social skills as well as build a sense of unity and self-worth.

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