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**Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE)**  
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## **SEND-OFF FOR SPECIAL NEEDS DRUM CORPS CHOSEN TO MARCH IN NYC COLUMBUS DAY PARADE FOR THE FIRST TIME**

**ELECTED OFFICIALS WILL BE PRESENT TO WISH DRUM CORPS WELL ON THEIR  
PERFORMANCE**

**Old Bethpage, NY** – (September 30, 2014) – On Thursday, October 9<sup>th</sup>, Family Residences and Essential Enterprise (FREE) will be holding a send-off at their Old Bethpage headquarters for the **FREE Players Drum Corps** who will be marching in the **New York City Columbus Day Parade** on Monday, October 13<sup>th</sup>. This is the first time the **FREE Players Drum Corps** will be we are marching in the NYC 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. Several elected officials will be present to offer words of encouragement and wish them well on their performance.

**When:**

**11:00 a.m.**

**Thursday, October 9, 2014**

**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 drumline will be practicing\*\*\***

**More...**

### **About FREE**

Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (FREE) founded in 1977 and headquartered in Old Bethpage, benefits and proudly supports more than 3,500 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 the FREE Players Drum Corps**

The Free Players Drum Corps was developed at FREE's Day Program in Old Bethpage. 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. 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. The Corps is comprised of 3 sections a Drumline, Color Guard and a Front Ensemble. They never take a season off and perform in parades, competitions and festivals, year round. Each year they develop programs for Indoor Season (Winter Percussion and Winter Guard), Drum Corps Season and Marching Band Season. By performing in the community, the Drum Corps is helping to dissolve boundaries and educate the community on the abilities of individuals with disabilities rather than focusing on their differences. The program fosters and promotes independence, productivity and individual development in a fun, creative environment.

### **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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