

For Immediate Release
Tuesday – May 26th, 2015

William Floyd Elementary Student Orchestrates First Annual Spelling Bee for Alzheimer's “Forget Me Not - Because Minds Matter”

Bay Shore/Shirley, NY – William Floyd student, Krista Cusimano, learned about Young Onset Alzheimer's disease at a very early age. Her grandfather, “Pa,” was diagnosed with Alzheimer's at the age of 59 and passed away at the age of 66. Krista remembers how sad it was “watching her “Pa” slowly slip away forgetting things such as how to use a fork, how to tie his shoes, walk, talk and eventually forget who she was.”

During this school year Krista ran an election for Class Treasurer and won. She wanted to use her new position as a way to create awareness of this dreadful disease and to help raise funds that will help local families who are coping with a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease.

On May 28th Krista's vision will become a reality as her fellow classmates compete in William Floyd's 1st Annual Spelling Bee for Alzheimer's. May 28th is a significant date for Krista and her family as it marks the two year anniversary of the passing of Krista's “Pa,” the late Raul Vosgerichian. This date was chosen to “turn a somber day into something positive,” says Krista's mom, Dawn Cusimano.

On May 15th each student took a spelling test that consisted of 50 words. The top speller from each class is advancing to the Spelling Bee to be held on Thursday, May 28th starting at 4:00 p.m. Each of these students will be wearing a purple t-shirt during the competition, as purple signifies the color for Alzheimer's disease. Students are being sponsored at ten cents for each word that is spelled correctly on the test with the maximum donation of \$5.00 per sponsor. Proceeds raised from the event will help support the work being done at the Alzheimer's Disease Resource Center.

Local retailers have joined in to help. Lee Anne's Mastic Flower Shoppe is donating flowers for this event; Main Street Screen Printing & Embroidery, located in Center Moriches, will be donating the t-shirts that the students will be wearing on the day of the Spelling Bee; Strathmore Bagels, located in Shirley, will be donating 100 mini bagels, and Island Dollar is donating purple balloons for this event.

Staff members at the William Floyd Elementary School are in full support of the students' efforts. Principal, Mr. Keith Fasciana, and third grade teacher, Mrs. Lisa Scott, have been assisting Krista for the past three months to ensure that Krista attains her goal.

The Alzheimer's Disease Resource Center, located in Bay Shore & Southampton, supports local research and provides care, guidance, support, resources and referrals for local families coping with a diagnosis of Alzheimer's disease.

For more information about this event or to learn about the programs and services offered at the Alzheimer's Disease Resource Center, please contact Mary Ann Malack-Ragona, ADRC's Executive Director/CEO at (631) 820-8068.

Alzheimer's Disease Resource Center, Inc.

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