

Long Island Volunteer Hall of Fame

Archive Project

Inception to Induction

The Andy Foundation “By Kids – For Kids”

Year of Founding: 2004

Issue(s) Addressed: Children

Induction Category & Year: Philanthropy, 2009

Founder: Jill Palmeri

Personal Quote from Founder: “It’s a very broad mission, but it gives us a lot of leeway to help a lot of different people.”

History: On September 17, 2003, Andrew “Andy” Palmeri, an eleven-year-old, was struck by a vehicle while playing tag. He was taken to the pediatric intensive care unit of the nearby hospital. Unfortunately, Andy was in a coma and died five days later. The death of Jill Palmeri’s son was the reason for the formation of The Andy Foundation; to honor his life and pay tribute to his memory. Their motto is “By Kids - For Kids” and they are dedicated to achieving lasting improvements in the lives of less fortunate children. Andy’s friends and family decided to start fundraising after he died. The early years of the Foundation were mainly about raising money to get the Foundation started. The first fundraiser of the Foundation was a roller hockey tournament and all of Andy’s friends and other children participated. They also started what is now an annual yard sale. This sale has become a big fundraiser for them. They have talent shows at schools and these have been successful as well. The Andy Club of the Garden City High School was also created to raise money to donate to children’s charities of the students’ choice. Their biggest success so far is the High Top Shop. The store was opened in December of 2010 and features consignments and donated items for sale. All proceeds go directly to the Andy Foundation which continues its mission to help children in need. The community support and the support from the children is still are unbelievable, and soon after the Foundation’s inception, they started raising money and donating it to various causes. As the fundraising progressed, The Andy Foundation has been able to establish a presence on Long Island. Most of the fundraising is geared towards children, and children helping others. The community loves their mission and that their children can participate and have a voice to decide where the money is donated.

Agency Mission: The Andy Foundation’s mission is to raise funds to help promote, protect and sustain the physical, emotional, mental and behavioral health of all children. By pledging 100% of its profits, it gives all children regardless of race, religion, social or economic status, a chance to live healthy, safe and happy lives, and become successful adults. The Foundation pledges to continue with the spirit of generosity through its fundraising efforts and donations. The Andy Foundation is dedicated to achieving lasting improvements for all children.

Scope of Activities: Grants, donations, and on-hand assistance are given to worthwhile child-based groups. A playground for autistic children at The Martin Burrell School in Commack was designed,

planned, funded, installed and landscaped. Shelters for horses were built at Pal-O-Mine, an equestrian therapy center for handicapped youth in Islandia. Funding was provided for a media center and playground repair at the Whitestone School for Child Development, a preschool for children with special needs. Food items and toiletries have been provided to U.S. troops serving overseas and to homeless men and women locally. Backpacks and school supplies are provided in September to students at the Interfaith Nutrition Network. An after-school room was designed, furnished and decorated with a cheerful mural at a safe house for battered women and children in the Bronx. Video game consoles and other entertainments were supplied to the Cancer Center for Kids. Non-medical expenses, including emergency mortgage assistance, have been provided to the families of critically ill children through a program called A Mother's Kiss. A library room at the De La Salle School in Freeport was repaired and painted by The Andy Foundation's young members and the shelves were stocked with titles gathered through book drives. Gifts, food and clothing have been supplied to underprivileged children on Long Island, as well as to the children of handicapped adults. Furniture, household goods and clothing have been distributed to recipients at the INN and at Hour Children, which services the minor children of incarcerated women. The Andy Foundation is dedicated to raising money and looking for groups to help and donate to.

Volunteer Involvement: The volunteers of The Andy Foundation consist of children and adults of all ages. Any person is able to volunteer. The responsibilities of the volunteers vary by the event being held. Responsibilities for the annual yard sale include set up and clean up, selling of items, and making sure everything is paid. For the talent show they are responsible for check-in, ticketing and payments, and making sure everything is organized and on schedule.

With a board comprised of children on a Junior Committee and adults, they plan fundraising events that are 100% child friendly and have raised more than \$500,000 to date. The Junior Committee of the Foundation has given hundreds of young people the opportunity to embrace community service as a way of life and continues to honor the memory and spirit of Andy Palmeri.

Funding Sources: The Andy Foundation raises funds through annual yard sales, football clinics, bingo parties and other events. All funding is through donations.

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**Submitted by:
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