



*From:* **AUTISM SPEAKS**

Rubenstein Communications, Inc.

Adam Pockriss – 212.843.8286; [apockriss@rubenstein.com](mailto:apockriss@rubenstein.com)

Jane Rubinstein – 212.843.8287; [jrubinstein@rubenstein.com](mailto:jrubinstein@rubenstein.com)

---

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**AUTISM SPEAKS ADVOCACY WEB SITE AUTISMVOTES.ORG  
NAMED OFFICIAL HONOREE FOR 14<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL WEBBY AWARDS**

**NEW YORK, NY (April 19, 2010)** – [AutismVotes.org](http://AutismVotes.org), the Autism Speaks government advocacy web site, has been named an Official Honoree for the 14th Annual Webby Awards, which recognize excellence on the Internet. The site is one of six honorees in the Politics category, joining the likes of Politico.com and the WashingtonPost.com's Obama Accountability Series. According to [webbyawards.com](http://webbyawards.com), of the nearly 10,000 entries from all 50 states and over 60 countries submitted to the 14th Annual Webby Awards, fewer than 15 percent received the Official Honoree distinction.

"We are excited that AutismVotes has been recognized as an important resource about the work happening at the state and federal levels to advocate for the interests of people with autism and their families," said Peter Bell, Autism Speaks executive vice president of programs and services. "Our talented government relations team takes pride in keeping the site current and vital, providing updated and actionable information for the entire autism community."

Launched in 2007, AutismVotes.org is **focused on Autism Speaks'** federal and state legislative advocacy efforts, including the ongoing fight for autism insurance reform in states across the country. The site is viewed by hundreds of parents, advocates, legislative staffers and others each day and allows them to watch news footage of rallies, read testimony from hearings, learn more about current autism policy issues, and take action in support of autism-related legislation.

The Webbys, established in 1996, are presented by The International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences, which includes an executive 750-member body of leading web experts, business figures, luminaries, visionaries and creative celebrities, as well as Associate Members who are former Webby Award Winners and Nominees and other Internet professionals.

**About Autism**

Autism is a complex neurobiological disorder that inhibits a person's ability to communicate and develop social relationships, and is often accompanied by behavioral challenges. Autism spectrum disorders are diagnosed in one in 110 children in the

United States, affecting four times as many boys as girls. The prevalence of autism increased 57 percent from 2002 to 2006. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention have called autism a national public health crisis whose cause and cure remain unknown.

### **About Autism Speaks**

Autism Speaks is North America's largest autism science and advocacy organization. Since its inception only five short years ago, Autism Speaks has made enormous strides, committing over \$142.5 million to research and developing innovative new resources for families through 2014. The organization is dedicated to funding research into the causes, prevention, treatments and a cure for autism; increasing awareness of autism spectrum disorders; and advocating for the needs of individuals with autism and their families. In addition to funding research, Autism Speaks also supports the Autism Treatment Network, Autism Genetic Resource Exchange and several other scientific and clinical programs. Notable awareness initiatives include the establishment of the annual United Nations-sanctioned World Autism Awareness Day on April 2 and an award-winning "Learn the Signs" campaign with the Ad Council which has received over \$210 million in donated media. Autism Speaks' family resources include the Autism Video Glossary, a 100 Day Kit for newly-diagnosed families, a School Community Tool Kit, a community grant program and much more. Autism Speaks has played a critical role in securing federal legislation to advance the government's response to autism, and has successfully advocated for insurance reform to cover behavioral treatments. Each year *Walk Now for Autism Speaks* events are held in more than 80 cities across North America. To learn more about Autism Speaks, please visit [www.autismspeaks.org](http://www.autismspeaks.org).

### **About the Co-Founders**

Autism Speaks was founded in February 2005 by Suzanne and Bob Wright, the grandparents of a child with autism. Bob Wright is Senior Advisor at Lee Equity Partners and served as vice chairman, General Electric, and chief executive officer of NBC and NBC Universal for more than twenty years. He also serves on the boards of the Polo Ralph Lauren Corporation, RAND Corporation and the New York Presbyterian Hospital. Suzanne Wright has an extensive history of active involvement in community and philanthropic endeavors, mostly directed toward helping children. She serves on the boards of several non-profit organizations and is also Trustee Emeritus of Sarah Lawrence College, her alma mater. Suzanne has received numerous awards such as the CHILD Magazine Children's Champions Award, Luella Bennack Volunteer Award, Spirit of Achievement award by the Albert Einstein College of Medicine's National Women's Division and the Weizmann Institute of Science. In 2008, the Wrights were named to the *Time* 100 list of the most influential people in the world for their commitment to global autism advocacy.

###