

Disney Receives Gold Autism Award

LAKE BUENA VISTA, Fla., Aug. 15 – Walt Disney World Parks and Resorts was awarded the Gold Autism Award earlier this month by The United Kingdom Autism Foundation for its efforts supporting and accommodating autistic guests.

The Gold Autism Award, accepted by Greg Hale, Chief Safety Officer and Vice President of Worldwide Standards and Auditing, was presented by Ivan Corea, father of an autistic child, Charin Corea. The award recognizes Disney's initiatives to help guests with disabilities navigate the Walt Disney World Resort properties in an easy and effortless way.

Charin has inspired an entire autism movement in the United Kingdom. His parents initiated 2002 as Autism Awareness Year and they founded Autism Sunday which is now a massive international event celebrated in many countries including the United States. The inspiration behind all of this is Charin, a teenager with [autism spectrum disorder](#) and a [communication disorder](#), who has inspired world leaders to speak up for people with autism and Asperger syndrome.

"I don't want the public to see the world they live in while they are at the park. I want them to feel they are in another world," said Corea quoting Walt Disney. "Disney World does just that, and makes it possible for (my son) Charin and other guests to truly enjoy their time in the parks because of its excellent attention and service."

Raising awareness about autism and the needs of those who suffer from this condition is the main goal of the UK Autism Foundation.

Disney works to accommodate guests with disabilities by appropriately training Cast Members, making the latest technology available to guests and constantly reviewing policies and procedures that govern park operations. In addition, guests with disabilities can plan their park experience by reviewing a copy of the *Guide for Guests with Disabilities*.

"Part of Disney's heritage is to have no one feel excluded," said Hale. "Our goal here is to make experiences accessible to any guest that enters the parks."

To learn more about Disney services for guests with disabilities please visit <http://disneyworld.disney.go.com/guests-with-disabilities/>