

Golisano FOUNDATION

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News

March 1, 2017

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Today! Spread the Word to End the R Word Pledge Activities Going on All Across the Region

ROCHESTER, N.Y. -- March 1, 2017 -- Today is the national day of awareness to [Spread the Word to End the R-Word](#). In the Rochester, Syracuse and western NY region, more than 70 organizations are joining the [Golisano Foundation](#) asking people to pledge to take a stand against using the R-word, "retard" or "retarded," a word that is offensive and derogatory to people with developmental disabilities.

The Rochester movement has become the largest in the country for a single region.

"Most people who use the words retard or retarded do not mean to be hurtful, but to the millions of people around the world have intellectual and developmental disabilities, and their families and friends, it is hurtful, it is a form of bullying, and is as cruel and offensive as any other slur," said Ann Costello, Executive Director of the Golisano Foundation.

Spread the Word to End the Word was founded in 2009 and is an ongoing effort



**SPREAD
THE WORD
TO END
THE WORD**

The word "retard(ed)" hurts millions of people with intellectual disabilities. Together we can make a difference.

Help end the word!

by [Special Olympics](#) (SO), [Best Buddies](#) to inspire respect and acceptance. The Golisano Foundation has spearheaded this initiative in Rochester since 2011.

The goal is to promote more inclusive communities for people with disabilities and special needs, and reach out to more people who can spread the word and pledge to use respectful language that promotes more accepting attitudes for all people. The R-Word initiative also helps celebrate the unique gifts and talents that people with intellectual and developmental disabilities have and can share with the world.

To date more than 50 regional organizations and associates of the Golisano Foundation are planning Spread the Word to End the Word pledge activities. Additional activities will be announced as details come in.

"Our thanks to everyone who has stepped up to spread the word," added Costello. "We hope even more schools, businesses, organizations and communities will join our campaign to take the pledge to end the r-word and use the new r-word, respect. It's easy, it doesn't cost anything and takes just a minute to take the pledge online. We also invite people to come to one of the many pledge events, take the pledge and show your support, because it can make a big difference. Let's build on the awareness and keep the message going."

Special Events - Open to the Public

- **Wednesday March 1 -City of Rochester Mayor Lovely Warren will host a Press Conference and Proclaim the Day End the R Word Day.**
 - WHEN: 10 a.m.,
 - WHERE: City Hall, 30 Church Street
 - WHO: Mayor Lovely Warren, City Council President Loretta Scott, Golisano Foundation Director Ann Costello, Arc of Monroe CEO Barb Wale, Project Search City of Rochester interns and employees
 - The public is invited to take the pledge at City Hall anytime from 10 a.m. on March 1st and throughout the month of March in the Visitors' Room of City Hall, which is just inside the Church Street entrance.
 - City Media Contact: [Tiana Stephens](#), 585.428.6678
- **Thursday March 2 - Rochester Premiere of the film, "Diffability Hollywood," & Panel Discussion to Follow**
 - WHERE: [Little Theatre 5](#), 240 East Avenue,
 - WHEN: 6-8:30 p.m., FREE
 - WHO: [Adrian Esposito](#), Filmmaker, from Rochester and has Asperger's Syndrome, a form of autism; and Jack Garner, writer and D&C Film Critic
 - Diffability Hollywood is a documentary about Hollywood's portrayal of people with disabilities in films throughout history.
 - Presented as part of the WXXI and Golisano Foundation's [Move to Include](#) initiative
- **Friday March 3 - Rochester's First Inclusive Fashion Show**
 - WHO: Hosted by Best Buddies Nazareth and featuring models from Pittsford Central School District, Brighton Central School District and Nazareth College
 - WHERE: Nazareth College, 4245 East Avenue,
 - WHEN: 7-9 p.m.
 - [Tickets and More Info](#)

The following Rochester organizations will be Spreading the Word to End the Word on Wednesday March 1 and other days with pledge activities on site, email and social media campaigns and more.

- AADMD
- AP Plumbing

- AVS Active Wear
- Baytrail Middle School
- Best Buddies - each school chapter will have an event
- **Bishop Kearney HS**
 - Bring a Buddy to School Day in Conjunction with Best Buddies WNY and School of the Holy Childhood
 - 11:15am - Assembly and pledge signing, *Ann Costello is attending*
 - 125 Kings Highway S, Rochester NY 14617
 - BK Media Contact: [Fred Tillinghast](#), 342-4000 x246
- Brighton High School
- Bulb Direct
- Catholic Charities Community Services
- Churchville High School
- **City of Rochester**
 - Pledge station at City Hall throughout March; Press conference on March 1 hosted by City of Rochester Mayor Lovely Warren (See above)
- Companion Radio
- Cornell University
- Dansville High School
- Eastman Institute of Oral Health
- Fairport High School
- Gates High School
- Golisano Children's Hospital, University of Rochester Medical Center
- Greece Odyssey High School
- Harter Secrest & Emery LLP
- Heritage Christian Services
- Hillside Family of Agencies
- Hilton High School
- Holy Childhood - Buddies will be joining their peer buddies at Bishop Kearney for lunch and "bring a buddy to school."
- Institute for Innovative Transition, University of Rochester Warner School
- LEND Fellows
- Mary Cariola Children's Center
- McQuaid Jesuit High School - assembly on March 8
- Monroe Community College
- Nazareth College
- Norman Howard School
- Our Lady of Mercy High School - assembly
- Paychex
- Penfield High School
- Pittsford Middle Schools - Special Olympics NY Unified Game, March 16th
- Pittsford-Mendon High School
- Roberts Wesleyan College
- Rochester Institute of Technology
- Rochester Knighthawks - attending schools to assist with pledges
- Rochester Museum and Science Center
- Rochester Razorsharks
- Rochester Regional Health
- Rochester Rhinos -- Social Media PSA by goal keeper Danny Lynd
- Spencerport High School
- Starbridge
- State University of NY at Brockport
- Strong Center for Developmental Disabilities
- The Bonadio Group
- **University of Rochester Medical Center**
 - WHAT: Pledge Signings and Art display by students from Mary Cariola Children's Center
 - WHERE: Cafe 601 at Strong, is located on the first floor of the hospital by the red elevators, 601 Elmwood Ave

- WHEN: 12 - 2:00PM
- WHO: Organized by American Academy of Developmental Medicine and Dentistry (AADMD) student members
- UR media contact: [Sean Dobbin](#) - 585-273-2840
- **University of Rochester (River Campus)**
 - WHAT: Pledge Signing Event, Students will be signing the pledge, and can take pictures in a faux-selfie booth, and learn about why the r-word is harmful
 - WHERE: University of Rochester River Campus, Wilson Commons
 - WHAT: Performances by Vocal Point (all female acapella group), No Jackets Required and Xclusive Step Team
 - WHEN: 12pm-2:30pm.
 - UR media contact: [Sean Dobbin](#) - 585-273-2840
- **Eastman Institute for Oral Health**
 - Pledge signings, Lobby, organized by American Academy of Developmental Medicine and Dentistry (AADMD) student members
 - Eastman Media Contact: [Karen Black](#) 275-1131 C: 7210647
- Warner School of Education
- Wayne High School
- W. Irondequoit High School
- Webster Schroeder High School
- Webster Thomas High School
- **WXXI & The Little Theatre**
 - Rochester Premiere of the film, "Diffability Hollywood," with panel discussion to follow with the filmmaker [Adrian Esposito](#), who is from Rochester and has Asperger's Syndrome, a form of autism; and D&C Film Critic, Jack Garner.
 - Diffability Hollywood is a documentary about Hollywood's portrayal of people with disabilities in films throughout history. Theatre 5, 6-8:30 PM, FREE
- YMCA of Greater Rochester - Pledge signings in branch locations and social media campaigns

Friends of the Golisano Foundation that are participating outside Rochester

- Canisius College
- City of Buffalo - Mayor Byron Brown will kick off pledge signings
- Daemon College, Buffalo - organizing pledge events at multiple locations in Buffalo: Spot Coffee, Mr. Bills Coffee (Golisano Clinic), Grateful Grinds, Daily Planet
- Golisano Center for Community Health at Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center
- Golisano Children's Hospital of South West Florida (Lee Health)
- Museum of disABILITY History, Buffalo NY
- Niagara University
- Niagara Falls Catholic (School System)
- Special Olympics NY
- State University of NY at Buffalo - night of Inclusion: games, food and Spread the Word give-aways
- State University of NY Cortland
- University at Buffalo
- Upstate Golisano Children's Hospital Syracuse, NY

Video Message from Tom Golisano





How to Organize a Pledge Event



Go to r-word.org and take the pledge, and to get information and resources on how to Spread the word to end the word in schools, companies and organizations.

Email the Foundation with Pledge Activities

The Foundation will recognize those organizations that are spreading the word on the golisanofoundation.org web site. To be included organizations should send an email to egleason@golisanofoundation.org.

Social Media

The Foundation will also be following along on social media. Tag us in your pictures and tweets on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#)

using the hashtags #respect, #rword, and #RocRespect, [@GolisanoFdn](#) / facebook.com/GolisanoFoundation

About Golisano Foundation

The Golisano Foundation is one of the largest private foundations in the United States devoted exclusively to supporting programs for people with intellectual disabilities. Founded in 1985 with an initial gift of \$90,000 from B. Thomas Golisano, the founder and Chairman of Paychex, the Foundation now has more than \$36 million in assets and awards about \$2 million annually, to non-profit organizations in a multi-county region surrounding Rochester, New York that serve people with developmental disabilities.

The Golisano Foundation is committed to opening doors, changing perceptions, and forging unprecedented partnerships in pursuit of the goal to provide individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities with pathways to self-sufficiency, personal dignity, and the best possible expression of their abilities and talents throughout their lifetimes.

Through our targeted initiatives, it is our vision that communities will encourage and commit to inclusion, acceptance and opportunity for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities; and provide services that empower individuals to make their way productively and creatively in

their communities. In addition to providing funding, the Foundation also serves as a proactive partner with organizations that serve people with intellectual disabilities, working together to promote acceptance and inclusion in the community and workplace.

For more information see golisanofoundation.org.

Spread the Word to End the Word

Spread the Word to End the Word was founded in 2009 and is an ongoing effort by Special Olympics (SO), Best Buddies and SO supporters to inspire respect and acceptance through raising the consciousness of society about the R-word and how hurtful words and disrespect can be toward people with intellectual disabilities. The campaign, created by youth, is intended to engage schools and organizations and communities to rally and pledge their support at www.rword.org and to promote the inclusion and acceptance of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

GolisanoFoundation.org

