

## **The David Conforti – Reach for the Stars Award**

---

David Conforti was a remarkable and caring young man who made a difference in his community and inspired others through his volunteer work in York Region, Ontario. His family has described him as someone who never thought of his autism as a barrier throughout his life; to him, autism is “a difference that makes us who we are.” David’s contributions directly challenged stereotypes associated with autism as he became a confident self-advocate, even reaching out to encourage other peers to work through their anxieties about getting involved and connecting to others whenever possible. He was recognized by the broader community for his academic and volunteer efforts when he became a recipient of Autism Ontario’s Eleanor Ritchie Post-Secondary Scholarship.

David's eagerness and enthusiasm in academia with the 'Voices of Youths' research project (<https://voicesofyouthresearch.com>) provided insight on quality of life and inclusion for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. His volunteerism and community building brought awareness that "belonging really does matter", people with disabilities have important and intelligent things to say and do and can contribute to society. David aimed to redefine Autism by; coaching soccer to people with disabilities, through his public speaking, and by reaching out to parents of children with Autism so they could see their own children beyond the prognosis.

### **The Award**

In order to recognize the importance that volunteering had on David’s life, and to further encourage and recognize volunteerism with community impact among other people with autism, his family, together with the Autism Ontario – York Region Chapter, created **The David Conforti - Reach for the Stars Award**, as a lasting tribute and in memory of David Conforti’s life.

### **How To Apply**

To apply for this award, the candidate must submit the application package by **May 15, 2018**. The following documentation must be mailed to:

Autism Ontario  
C/O David Conforti – Reach for the Stars Award  
1179 King Street West, Suite 004  
Toronto, ON, M6K 3C5.

1. David Conforti - Reach for the Stars Award Questionnaire
2. Application form
3. A copy of the individual’s diagnosis from a qualified medical/psychological diagnostician.
4. Two references from someone with knowledge of the applicant’s volunteer work who can support their nomination for this Award.

Autism Ontario York Region Chapter is committed to offering a minimum of one award per year. If Autism Ontario York Region Chapter receives more applications than we have funding to support, a lottery could be conducted. This is in consideration and respect for those individuals who all rightly deserve support.



If you are the successful recipient of The David Conforti Reach for the Stars Award, your name will be published in Autism Ontario communications (including Autism Matters and Social Media channels) to highlight the achievements of people in the Province living with autism.

**Your application must be received by May 15, 2018. Applications received later than this date will not be accepted.**

For additional information please contact [scholarships@autismontario.com](mailto:scholarships@autismontario.com)



- 4) Explain the impact your volunteering had on the community?

Please mail this application along with the application package to: Autism Ontario C/O The David Conforti – Reach for the Stars Award, 1179 King Street, West, Suite 004, Toronto, ON, M6K 3C5. A confirmation email will be sent to the email address indicated on the application once your application has been received.



**The David Conforti – Reach for the Stars Award  
Application ~ 2018 (submission deadline May 15, 2018)**

**Required Information**

Name of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_  
(First, Last)

Date of Birth (Day/Month/Year)  
\_\_\_\_\_

Application by: (check which applies) Individual \_\_\_\_\_ or Legal Guardian \_\_\_\_\_

Social Insurance Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/Town: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Other Cell: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that:

- In applying for this fund, that an Autism Ontario Committee will be reviewing this information and selecting candidates from among other eligible applicants, and that I may or may not be chosen to receive the funds available for 2018.
- The decision regarding the successful candidate is final.
- If I am the successful candidate, my full name will be published in Autism Ontario communications (such as social media and Autism Matters magazine).
- If I am the successful candidate, I will receive a cheque in the mail for \$500.00.
- A T4A for scholarships greater than \$500.00 will need to be completed upon receiving the scholarship cheque.

I have enclosed these items in my application:

- A copy of proof of diagnosis for the applicant of an Autism Spectrum Disorder by a qualified diagnostician,
- The application with answered questions
- Two reference letters

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Applicant                      Signature                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Witness                      Signature                      Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Parent or Guardian                      Signature                      Date  
\*\* (If applicant is under 18) \*\*