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## DIX HILLS

# Hills Takes On Autism

### *Bowling event supports kids on the spectrum*

By **Jacqueline Birzon**  
[jbirzon@longislandernews.com](mailto:jbirzon@longislandernews.com)

When tasked with a single community service project for his bar-mitzvah last year, Drew Quinto was determined to affect long-term change. Rather than signing up for a one-time experience, Quinto and his parents, Paul and Allison, founded Hills vs. Autism, an organization that promotes tolerance for children on the autism spectrum.

This year, with the help of his parents and his brother, Quinto will host the second annual Hills vs. Autism Bowling fundraiser at Commack Vets Lanes on Friday.

The event, which raised \$15,000 last year, fundraises for various local groups and agencies that provide social and recreational services for adolescents and teenagers on the spectrum.

The issue hits home for Quinto, who has a close relationship with his older brother, Corey, who is on the autism spectrum.

“We as a family felt there was a need for socialization, and we thought it would be great to make a donation in that way,” Quinto said. “We thought socialization because people who donate for autism usually donate toward research, and at this point there’s no cure, and social programs are important, so this was really the right place to start.”

Last year, Hills vs. Autism donated a chunk of their proceeds to bring a challenger lacrosse team all the way from Maryland to play in a tournament against a Half Hollow Hills-based team. The challenger league provides students on the autism spectrum with the chance to participate on a team sport, a valued opportunity for any child.

Quinto, a member of the Hills East lacrosse team, also remains active with the local challenger league.

The Quintos have also donated to the Suffolk Y Jewish Community Cen-



Long-Islander photo/Jacqueline Birzon

**Drew Quinto and his older brother, Corey, model their custom Hills vs. Autism shorts.**

ter’s theater program, an interactive after-school experience for students to engage with peers over common theatrical interests. Corey has found his passion in the industry and is an aspiring film critic who can quote movies along with the most seasoned of crit-

ics. Corey has also participated in a vocational program where he shadowed employees at a local movie theatre, learning the ins and outs of the industry.

“I’ve seen a change; he gets more excited and positive,” Quinto said of

his brother since finding his passion.

The event is set to take place on May 3, from 7-10 p.m., and will feature raffle items and custom Hills vs. Autism shorts for purchase. For more information on the organization and event, go to [www.hillsvsautism.org](http://www.hillsvsautism.org).