



For Immediate Release
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Long Island Family to Receive Special Honor at Annual Dinner Gala

EAST MEADOW, NEW YORK, January 14, 2015 – EPIC Long Island will present The Naomi and Barney Silverman Family of the Year Award to John and Pauline Messina and sons, John Anthony and James, at the agency’s 31st Annual Dinner Gala on January 28, 2016. More than 200 guests are expected to the event, which kicks off at 6:00 p.m. at Carlyle on the Green in Farmingdale. Proceeds from the gala will help to enhance vital programs and services for individuals with epilepsy, developmental disabilities and mental health challenges.

The [Messinas](#) have been active at EPIC Long Island for several years, inspiring the community with their strength and courage while overcoming challenges of living with epilepsy. John Anthony currently serves on EPIC Long Island’s Youth Council, providing support and guidance for other young people diagnosed with epilepsy. In 2014, he represented the agency at a national conference in Washington, D.C. where he advocated for more research and education to treat the condition. That same year, John Anthony was Grand Marshal of EPIC Long Island’s Walk for Epilepsy. He and his family remain instrumental in raising awareness about the agency’s community education and outreach programs.

“We’re delighted to receive the Family of the Year Award,” said John Messina. “We’re grateful for the honor, and proud to be involved with an agency that offers tremendous support and resources for families like ours living with epilepsy.”

Other honorees include [Rebecca Spiegel, MD MA](#), Associate Professor of Neurology and Director of EEG/Epilepsy at The Long Island Comprehensive Epilepsy Center at Stony Brook Medicine. Dr. Spiegel will be presented with EPIC Long Island’s Professional Leadership Award, recognized for her work to implement a state-of-the-art epilepsy surgical program at Stony Brook and an epilepsy clinical trials division. [The Long Island Comprehensive Epilepsy Center at Stony Brook Medicine](#) will receive EPIC Long Island’s Corporate Leadership Award for its efforts to continually improve the quality of life of patients with epilepsy. Stony Brook Medicine is also sponsoring the event, along with Columbia Care, Don and Grace Luneburg, Gibbons P.C., Bob and Lynn Karson, Moritt Hock & Hamroff LLP and TD Bank.

During the gala, EPIC Long Island will also pay tribute to former Board member, Fred Abrams, who recently passed away after serving on the Board for nearly 50 years. Abrams cherished his involvement with the agency, stating in a recent newsletter article, “The reward of knowing you have helped someone else is immeasurable.”

Commenting on EPIC Long Island’s 31st Annual Dinner Gala, Tom Hopkins, President and CEO, said, “We’re thrilled to honor the work of individuals dedicated to enhancing epilepsy knowledge and care. Congratulations to all our award recipients, and a heartfelt thanks to our sponsors and gala committee for helping to make this event possible.”

To purchase tickets or to make a donation to EPIC Long Island, contact Eileen Colletti at 516-739-7733 x 626, or visit the event website at epicligala.org. Sponsorship opportunities are also available.

[ABOUT EPIC LONG ISLAND](#)

EPIC Long Island began in 1953 with a small group of parents whose mission was to help children with epilepsy lead productive lives. Over sixty years later, the organization has fulfilled that promise with 17 residences, two clinics, a wide range of programs that serve over 10,000 individuals annually. EPIC Long Island has broadened its mission to offer more social and health services across Long Island and has grown to serve not only individuals with epilepsy, but also those with developmental disabilities and mental health challenges. While epilepsy is at its core, the organization offers a spectrum of superior services for individuals and families with different needs. EPIC Long Island’s mission is to enrich the lives of those they serve through quality care, a broad range of services and an unwavering commitment to excellence.

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