

NEXT for AUTISM Names Gillian Leek as New Chief Executive Officer

Ms. Leek to Lead National Organization's Innovative Work to Support Adults with Autism

NEW YORK, UNITED STATES, February 8, 2021 /EINPresswire.com/ -- NEXT for AUTISM, a national nonprofit committed to changing the paradigm for how individuals with autism thrive throughout their adult lives, announces the appointment of Gillian Leek as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) effective immediately.

Ms. Leek has been with the organization for more than twelve years, conceptualizing and building state-of-the-art initiatives as a key member of the NEXT for AUTISM team. Most recently, Ms. Leek served as Senior Vice President of Operations. As CEO, she will guide NEXT for AUTISM's current vision to positively impact the lives of the estimated 5.4 million adults with autism nationwide, especially in the critical areas of home, work, social, and overall health and wellbeing.

"It is with great pride and the utmost confidence that the Board of Directors whole-heartedly welcomes Gillian Leek into her new role as our organization's CEO," said Laura Slatkin, NEXT for AUTISM, Co-Founder and Board Chair. "She has a keen understanding of NEXT for AUTISM and has been pivotal in charting our strategic direction, building a best-in-class team, and positioning the organization to be a national thought leader and standard bearer around initiatives for adults on the autism spectrum. Coupled with her integrity, passion and exceptional sense of service to our cause, she is the perfect leader to advance our mission and growth."

Ms. Leek has consistently been at the forefront of NEXT for AUTISM's success, whether heading the coordination of the televised benefit [Night of Too Many Stars](#) which has raised more than \$30 million or supporting the launch of [The Center for Autism and The Developing Brain](#). During her tenure, Ms. Leek has implemented key programmatic, brand awareness and fundraising efforts, and she has cultivated a multitude of national corporate partnerships to benefit NEXT for AUTISM and its grantee and partner organizations.

"It is an honor and a great privilege to represent such an amazing organization founded by two indomitable women, Laura Slatkin and Ilene Lainer, and now supporting autistic adults to achieve their dreams. Individuals with autism want what we all want, to be valued members of society," said Ms. Leek. "I truly believe we can create a world where everyone living with autism has the supports, resources and opportunities they deserve to succeed in life. With an

outstanding team by my side, I am so proud to lead this next chapter.”

Under Ms. Leek’s leadership, NEXT for AUTISM is poised to become a standard bearer of best practices that will positively impact adults living with autism. She looks forward to building meaningful collaborations with like-minded nonprofits, policy makers, media, corporations, and the community at large.

“Gillian has a bold vision, yet a thoughtful and pragmatic approach for our organization’s future,” said Michelle Smigel, Board Member and Co-Creator of Night of Too Many Stars. “She is a natural leader of the highest integrity. She is trusted, genuine, respected, valued by her team, and consistently fosters an open spirit of collaboration. Gillian is key to our organization’s continued growth and progress, and we are so fortunate to have her at the helm.”

Ms. Leek holds a J.D. from New York Law School and an undergraduate degree from Elon University. She lives in New Jersey with her husband and daughter.

ABOUT NEXT FOR AUTISM:

NEXT for AUTISM transforms the national landscape of services for people with autism by strategically designing, launching, and supporting innovative programs. We believe that individuals with autism have the potential to live fulfilling, productive lives when supported by excellent services and connected to their communities. We continually ask, what’s next for people on the autism spectrum? www.NEXTforAUTISM.org

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