

Proclamation

Whereas, autism is a developmental disability that affects how people think, communicate, and experience the world around them; and

Whereas, in April 2011, autistic people moved beyond “awareness” when Paula Durbin Westby organized the first Autism Acceptance Month, created by autistic people to change the conversation around autism, shift from stigmatizing to acceptance, and honor the contributions of people on the autism spectrum and the autism community; and

Whereas, acceptance is an action that goes beyond changing how we talk about autism. We must also change how we think about autism and how we work with autistic people to make the community more accessible for them; and

Whereas, autism acceptance means centering the perspectives and needs of all autistic people, including those with intellectual disabilities, who are non-speaking, and those with the highest support needs; and

Whereas, autism acceptance also means recognizing the systemic barriers people with autism face in their daily lives and the inequities and unique challenges that are created for people with autism and their families which have been compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas, autism acceptance means celebrating our differences, following the leadership of autistic people of color, making anti-racism a core part of our work, and emphasizing that autistic people belong and deserve welcoming communities, inclusive schools and workplaces, and equal opportunities; and

Whereas, as Alameda actively strives to be a city where *Everyone Belongs*, Autism Acceptance Month provides an opportunity to reaffirm our commitment to ensuring Alamedans who live with autism are able to make the most of their talents and participate fully in our society.

Now, therefore be it resolved, that I, Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft, Mayor of the City of Alameda, do hereby proclaim the month of April 2022 as

Autism Acceptance Month

in the City of Alameda and encourage all residents, businesses, civic groups, government agencies, and other organizations to learn more about autism, spread awareness, promote acceptance, and celebrate our differences.



Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft
Mayor

