



For Immediate Release

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All in for Autism Leadership Award presented to Katherine DeStephano by Claudia Balducci, King County Council Member

Bellevue, WA. – January 25, 2019 – The Bellevue Breakfast Rotary Club is pleased to announce Katherine DeStephano, owner of Escape Outdoors, as the recipient of the 2019 All in for Autism Leadership Award presented by Claudia Balducci, King County Council member. The All in for Autism Leadership Award is presented in recognition of Katherine DeStephano’s outstanding contribution to the Bellevue Breakfast Rotary club’s efforts to support Autism organizations and other programs that benefit the local Bellevue community.

The Bellevue Breakfast Rotary Club (BBRC) organizes the All in for Autism 5K/10K Run/Walk in Bellevue in April each year. Now in its 13th year, this event has become Bellevue’s premier running event that caters to enthusiasts and families alike and has successfully attracted over 2,500 people. The event raises over \$125,000 each year, thanks to the sponsorship and long term support from local organizations such as Escape Outdoors, The Bellevue Collection, Starbucks, Amazon and the City of Bellevue. Funds raised from this event supports Autism and other Rotary programs and organizations that benefit children and families in the Bellevue community and internationally. Kindering will continue to be the primary beneficiary of this year’s event.

Katherine DeStephano continues to be a long-term champion of the BBRC. She has been generous both with her time and financial commitment to support the causes and programs of the BBRC. Katherine DeStephano and Escape Outdoors, a boutique with 4 stores in the Pacific Northwest and tenant of The Bellevue Collection, has sponsored over \$35,000 for this event over the years. In the early years of the All in for Autism event, Katherine played a key role to grow the event with her leadership, and brought the community of businesses and residents together to make the event a premier running and family friendly event in Bellevue and raise awareness for Autism and other programs of the BBRC.

“We are grateful for Katherine DeStephano’s leadership, commitment and support of All in for Autism and BBRC over the years. On behalf of the BBRC and the beneficiaries of the All in for Autism event, we thank Katherine for her continued support, enabling BBRC with our mission to help disadvantaged children and their families lead happier, healthier and more productive lives” said Chris Boland, President of the BBRC. “We are proud of our association and long-term partnership with Katherine who shares the BBRC’s vision to serve our local and world communities, providing systemic and enduring change.”



"I am delighted to present the All in for Autism Leadership Award on behalf of the Bellevue Breakfast Rotary Club to Katherine. Katherine and Escape Outdoors personify our deeply rooted ties to the Bellevue community, particularly through her partnership with the BBRC to give back and enhance the vitality of our ties to the local community to prosper together," said Claudia Balducci, King County Council member.

About Katherine DeStephano & Escape Outdoors

Katherine DeStephano is a Bellevue based entrepreneur, community leader and co-owner of Escape Outdoors. Katherine led the All in for Autism 5K/10K Family Walk/Run, while a member of the BBRC and was instrumental in establishing this event as one of the foremost Bellevue City events. She has continued her support of this event as a key sponsor from its inception.

Escape Outdoors was born in 2006 in Seattle Washington as the brainchild of two entrepreneurs with over 50 years combined experience in the outdoor industry. Escape Outdoors is a boutique that caters to its customers by providing superior customer service and finding products that its clientele is looking for. Katherine makes running multiple retail locations look easy, and finds great joy in outperforming industry standards.

About Claudia Balducci

King County Councilmember Claudia Balducci is a mom, transportation leader and former public safety official. She represents King County District 6, which encompasses all or part of Bellevue, Bothell, Clyde Hill, Hunts Point, Kirkland, Medina, Mercer Island, Redmond, Woodinville and Yarrow Point, Beaux Arts Village and the Sammamish Valley.

Claudia first became active in politics when she joined her neighbors to advocate for the revitalization of her local shopping center in the Lake Hills community in Bellevue. She was later elected to the Bellevue City Council where she served for 12 years, including two years as Deputy Mayor and two years as Mayor.

About Bellevue Breakfast Rotary Club

The Bellevue Breakfast Rotary Club (BBRC) is known as "*The Best Darn Club in the World*" with a membership in excess of 90 community-minded individuals. The club was chartered in 1985 and its membership is dedicated to "service above self" and participating in Rotary International's mission to promote understanding, goodwill, and world peace. The vision of the BBRC is to cultivate a dynamic membership that enhances our club values to serve our local and world communities, providing systemic and enduring change. Learn more online at www.bbrc.net.

For more information, please contact:

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