



February 12, 2020

Dear Sir/ Madam:

April 2nd is World Autism Awareness Day. On the nights of April 1st and April 2nd, over 16,000 global landmarks light up blue (the color for Autism) in order to promote Autism Awareness. Niagara Falls and CN Tower in Canada, the United Nations, the Empire State Building, the White House, the Sydney Opera Center, Christ the Redeemer in Rio de Janeiro, the Great Buddha in Japan, the Nelson Mandela Bridge in South Africa, and the Great Pyramids in Egypt are some landmarks who Light it up Blue annually.

Horizon Academy wants to make 2020 the year that Belize participates in this global Light It Up Blue campaign as a way to promote Autism Awareness and get Belizeans talking and learning about Autism. Horizon Academy is taking the lead to encourage businesses, government offices and landmarks to Light It Up Blue.

For this campaign, we plan to

- 1) Encourage business to light up their buildings blue
- 2) Send out messages via text about Light It Up Blue and Autism
- 3) Create a frame with the autism logo (puzzle piece) that we can encourage people to use on FB with the hashtag **#LightItUpBlueBze**

Using social media and speaking to the public via talk shows, Rotary and Lions meetings, visiting schools, flyers, and so on, we will try to promote more awareness. On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, we will ask Belizeans to

**Wear blue:** Choose to wear something blue

**Share blue:** Post about the campaign using the hashtag **#LightItUpBlueBze**

**Spread blue:** Add **#LightItUpBlueBze** photos to your social media accounts, tell others about the campaign and what it means

**Light blue:** Light your home or business with blue light bulbs

In order to make this campaign a success we are asking community-minded businesses to participate by lighting up their building blue on the nights of April 1st and April 2nd, or even better, for the entire month of April. We also ask that you encourage your staff to wear blue on April 2nd. By taking part in such an initiative, you will be helping to spread Autism Awareness and help us get an important conversation started in this country about what Autism is, how it affects families in Belize, and how people with different abilities need to be accepted and understood.

These events are completely organized and executed by Horizon Academy and our parents. Horizon Academy, since its start 10 years ago, has been fully inclusive, with over 20 percent of the student population having a range of special needs from Down syndrome to ADHD, from visual impairment to Autism Spectrum Disorder. This school offers a dynamic, holistic academic and expressive arts and sports program. We are committed not only to our students, but also to promoting awareness and acceptance of people with special needs. We hope that through events like these we can help to educate the Belizean public.

If you are interested in participating in this campaign or if you have further questions, concerns or need more information, please do not hesitate to contact me. We hope to have the chance to work with you to promote Autism Awareness and acceptance in Belize, to educate Belizeans about different abilities, and to help families with children with special needs.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration in this matter.

Sincerely,

Christy Almeida  
Autism Mom & Horizon Academy Parent  
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*Placing new steps of change...*