

## Dave Stark

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**From:** Dave Stark  
**Sent:** Monday, April 29, 2019 9:55 AM  
**To:** Dave Stark  
**Subject:** Livermore REALTORS Support Autism Team



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Livermore REALTORS® Support Autism Team**

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*Pleasanton, California (April 29, 2019)* – Livermore REALTORS® turned Easter Baskets into support for an innovative Autism awareness program.

The Real Estate Alliance of Livermore (REAL), a weekly meeting of real estate professionals, raised \$4,430 for the Creative Autism Solutions Team (CAST) by selling Easter baskets during their April 18 meeting.

CAST is a nonprofit organization founded in 2011 by Annette Musso to help families and organizations affected by autism. Musso was inspired to establish CAST when her then 12-year-old Autistic son Matteo, developed techniques to communicate non-verbally. Matteo has since become a popular speaker whose presentations demonstrate that those with autism and limited verbal skills can effectively communicate and inspire.

“Matteo has a huge mission and we have a huge job to do,” Musso said. “Autistic people in the world have been misunderstood since the beginning of time and they now have one of a few voices that were previously silent that are now able to express what’s really going on inside their brains.”

“Our dedicated members of REAL recognize how important it is to help create and promote a strong sense of community in our city. We want to do our part to give back, support those in need, and encourage those organizations that are committed to making a difference in our community,” said REALTOR® Nicole Sweeney, who serves as the REAL Special Events Coordinator.

REAL participants auctioned more than 20 Easter baskets and signed copies of Matteo’s books. Sweeney said the baskets “were just fun, a combination of Spring and Easter that also included home-made goodies.”

Musso appreciated the financial and other backing from REAL members. She said, “I was amazed at how generous and sweet and supportive they are and a lot of people came up to us afterwards and expressed their emotional support as well which means just as much.”

She said the CAST will be able to expand it’s program thanks to the contribution from REAL. “It allows us to continue producing Matteo’s messages out to those who really need to hear it. That’s what this money does.”

REAL holds several fundraisers throughout the year to support a variety of community organizations. Sweeney said REAL members are asked to suggest organizations that could benefit from their support. CAST was selected because their cause appealed to the REAL Board of Directors. “April is also National Autism Awareness Month, which I thought was particularly fitting.

It is definitely a positive feeling for our entire REAL community to see the gratitude on the faces of the recipients and to know that we have had a positive impact on those who need our support,” Sweeney said.

“This auction was a little different because we invited the recipients to attend,” Sweeney said. “It gave everybody goosebumps and there wasn’t a dry eye in the house. Matteo had a message for everyone in the group thanking them for their support and believing in his cause.”

PHOTOS FROM THE EVENT ARE AVAILABE ON REQUEST

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