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Autism Alliance of Michigan Applauds the Unanimous U.S. Supreme Court Decision in Miguel Perez v Sturgis Public Schools Case

Southfield, Michigan (March 23, 2023) — The **Autism Alliance of Michigan (AAoM)** congratulates Miguel Perez, his family and their legal team, including Disability Rights Michigan, for successfully pursuing justice in protecting the rights of students with disabilities under federal law.

“Miguel Perez is a 27-year-old man facing a life of dependence, isolation, and limited opportunities to be a fully included, productive member of our community. It didn’t have to be that way,” says **Colleen Allen, PhD., President and CEO of AAoM.**

Miguel is a deaf immigrant, whose school failed him. His family was led to believe he was graduating with honors, only to find out months before leaving Sturgis Public Schools, he would not earn a high school degree, but a certificate instead, which significantly limits his post-secondary potential. He was denied basic, appropriate educational support, such as an interpreter and forced into online learning, although he couldn’t read or write. With nowhere else to go, he took his case to the U.S. Supreme Court.

“Michigan remains in the bottom ten states for education,” said Allen. “Students with disabilities experience some of the lowest graduation rates in the country. Populations of color and those who speak English as a Second Language are doubly impacted, with fewer resources, fewer inclusive opportunities, and a more limited understanding of the educational due process system. We can and should do better.”

Let the unanimous decision of the U.S. Supreme Court raise a flag that access to justice for students with disabilities cannot be denied. The Autism Alliance, along with other disability

rights organizations, is working tirelessly to demand full civil and human rights for individuals with disabilities. Defying generations of systemic bias and barriers, we are heeding the call and leading a movement for equity and inclusion in the education system for ALL students.

ABOUT THE AUTISM ALLIANCE OF MICHIGAN

The Autism Alliance of Michigan (AAoM) is a 501(c)(3) organization and trusted ally and partner for thousands of families dealing with Autism. AAoM's mission is to lead efforts to raise expectations and expand opportunities for people affected by autism across their lifespan. We work to create a more accepting future for all people by cultivating a world rich in diverse abilities, talents, and ideas. An AAoM navigator can be reached at 877-463-2266 (AAOM) or email at navigator@aaomi.org. More information about AAoM can be found at www.autismallianceofmichigan.org.

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