



Joe Landry, Supervisor

TOWN OF NISKAYUNA

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Niskayuna Announces New Police Department Program

“Take Me Home” Program to Assist Autistic or Certain Senior Residents

Niskayuna, NY. The Niskayuna Police Department is pleased to announce the commencement of a new program entitled “Take Me Home,” which is an initiative to assist families in our community who have voluntarily registered for the program.

The “Take Me Home” program is a computer-based system developed by the Pensacola Police Department for people who may need special assistance if they are alone or in times of emergency. This kind of assistance may be required if a person is unable to speak or properly identify themselves, or if they become disoriented or act in a manner that could be misinterpreted by first responders. The system includes a current digital picture, demographic information and caregiver contacts. If a police officer encounters such a person, the officer can query the “Take Me Home” database, searching by name or by the person’s physical description. Once the individual’s “Take Me Home” record has been located, the officer will have the information to appropriately assist the person.

The “Take Me Home” program will be available to Niskayuna residents who wish to provide information about the persons who need special assistance. Application forms are available on the Town’s website (www.niskayuna.org) or are available at the Niskayuna Police Department.

“I would like to thank Councilman Bill McPartlon, Chief Dan McManus and Deputy Chief Michael Stevens for their work in researching and implementing this program here in Niskayuna,” stated Town Supervisor Joe Landry. “I believe that this information is critical for our police officers when interacting with non-verbal, confused or disoriented persons from our community,” continued Supervisor Landry.

“The Take Me Home program helps address a serious concern in our community. By providing a mechanism for the safe return home of people who may have trouble communicating with law enforcement and first responders, this program is a lifesaving resource for our most

vulnerable citizens, including senior citizens and people with autism, and their families,” said Assemblyman Angelo Santabarbara, D-Rotterdam.

“As the father of a son with autism, one of my biggest fears is that my son could wander off and not be able to communicate important information to responding officers, and I know other parents have similar concerns. I’m working in the Assembly to establish an optional statewide autism I.D. card that can help with emergency communication and could supplement programs such as Take Me Home to help return loved ones home safely. It’s great to see the Niskayuna Police Department bring Take Me Home to our area, and I’m hopeful that we can bring this program to more Capital Region communities soon,” continued Assemblyman Santabarbara.

“Since the ‘Take Me Home’ program is a voluntary program, we ask all affected families to review the program and consider its benefits and the advantages of participating,” said Councilman Bill McPartlon. “We believe that this program can help certain seniors and autistic persons should they come in contact with first responders and are unable to effectively communicate essential information,” stated Councilman McPartlon.

"The "Take Me Home" registry will be an invaluable tool for our police in assisting those community members who cannot communicate their needs," stated Councilwoman Lisa Weber "It will also give caregivers better piece of mind in knowing that if a loved one is found wandering by police officers their identity and their address and health needs can be quickly identified," said Councilwoman Weber.

“This program enhances our officer’s abilities to quickly identify and assist those people who cannot communicate because of a certain need. In cases where that person has been separated from a care giver or loved one, reducing the time it takes to reunite them can greatly reduce stress on everyone involved,” said Chief Dan McManus.