



For Immediate Release

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**First Place® AZ and Maricopa County Sheriff's Office
to Conduct Autism Awareness Training on September 16**

Visuals Include Role-Playing Scenarios of Traffic Stop and Pat Search

PHOENIX (September 14, 2022) — [First Place® AZ](#), an Arizona nonprofit with the vision of ensuring housing, healthcare and community options are as bountiful for people with autism and other neurodiversities as they are for everyone else, is conducting an autism awareness training with the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office on Friday, September 16.

Sheriff's deputies and employees will role-play three scenarios to help both law enforcement and individuals with autism work better together:

- **Role-Playing Scenario 1:** Lost person approached by law enforcement officer on foot
- **Role-Playing Scenario 2:** Traffic stop with individual with autism acting as passenger
- **Role-Playing Scenario 3:** Demonstration of a pat search

WHAT: First Place® AZ and Maricopa County Sheriff's Office to conduct autism awareness training

WHEN: 10:15 to 11:45 a.m. Friday, September 16

WHERE: First Place–Phoenix, 3001 N. 3rd Street in Phoenix

VISUALS: The Sheriff's Office and First Place–Phoenix residents will engage in three role-playing scenarios. Law enforcement will interact with a lost person, conduct a traffic stop and demonstrate a pat search.

"It's important for our deputies to connect with our diverse community and understand the challenges that someone with autism may face when interacting with law enforcement," said Maricopa County Sheriff Paul Penzone.

First Place–Phoenix, First Place AZ’s \$15.4 million, 81,000-square-foot, 63-unit apartment property, is a residential community with a suite of supports and amenities for individuals with autism, Down syndrome, traumatic brain injury and other neurodiversities. Ushering in a new era of housing and community options for special populations, First Place combines apartments, the Transition Academy residential life skills program and the Global Leadership Institute to expand more independent, community-integrated living options.

For more information or to get involved, email info@firstplaceaz.org or visit firstplaceaz.org.

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About First Place® AZ

First Place AZ, a charitable 501(c)(3), is advancing innovative residential and community options for adults with autism and other neurodiversities through its vision for fueling a new wave of real estate and community development. First Place–Phoenix, the nonprofit’s flagship property, is an 81,000-square-foot apartment community set in the heart of the urban area and recognized by PBS NewsHour as “[the most autism-friendly city in the world](#).” The First Place Global Leadership Institute leverages this award-winning property to serve as an R&D site, support the replication of residential and post-secondary education models and foster collaboration among the public, private, philanthropic and nonprofit sectors. Read First Place’s groundbreaking 2020 report, [A Place in the World: Fueling Housing and Community Options for Adults with Autism and Other Neurodiversities](#).