



**For Immediate Release:**

***Media Advisory***

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**ELITE ANIMATION ACADEMY OPENS  
'DIGITAL ARTS FOR AUTISM' TRAINING PROGRAM**

*“Program offers Job Training for Autistic Adults with Scholarship Support from the State of Florida Gardiner-StepUp for Students program”*

**December 24, 2020 (Orlando, Florida)** - Well known, Windermere-based, Elite Animation Academy will be expanding their educational programming to offer an innovative training program for art-minded individuals on the autism spectrum. The new program, ‘Digital Arts for Autism,’ (DAFA) begins next month; the expansive program will encompass an extensive digital media training model for autistic adults looking to learn animation and graphic design disciplines.

“The goal of the program is to give students employable skills with autism friendly employers,” said Gladys West, president of DAFA. “We have designed an in-depth teaching model to educate students on a comprehensive digital media program. Our syllabus is led by a team of skilled animation instructors who have built immensely successful careers as graphic artists and movie animators for animation studios such as Disney MGM. The yearlong DAFA module will teach students the fundamentals of animation, digital media, creative regimen skills and overall instruction to maximize marketability and career opportunities.

Additionally, West says Elite Animation Academy is thrilled to announce the State of Florida just approved DAFA as a statewide partner provider for their Gardiner-Step up for Students Scholarship program which provides up to \$10k, per student, in scholarships for the animation school.

**(MORE)**

In business since 2012, Elite designed a program syllabus to train students of all capabilities for specialized jobs with printing, animation, and publishing for the digital-media field. Program disciplines include training on Adobe Suite, Illustrator, Photoshop, InDesign, Animate and WordPress. With traditional classes having six students or less, the format better enabled individualized attention; however, with COVID-19, the majority of the Studios classes have transitioned to online.

“Our core DAFA student is a high-functioning adult, age 18 to 22 years old with a passion for art and animation,” adds Todd West, the program’s director. “We’re looking for students who are highly focused on learning animation and graphic design skill sets with dreams of working in the business.”

Elite Animation Academy is currently accepting students for the DAFA program. Each student must be able to function independently in a structured classroom or online setting and able to successfully manage his or her emotional behavior.

“We’re seeing more companies who are interested in hiring and training individuals on the [autism] spectrum,” added Gladys West. “These individuals tend to be very focused, honest, punctual and reliable with extreme attention to detail.”

Since opening its doors almost ten years ago, Elite Animation Academy has experienced remarkable growth with campuses in Orlando and Tampa, serving more than 300 year-round students. For more information on the ‘Digital Arts for Autism’ training program or the Gardiner-Step up for Students Scholarship visit [digitalartsforautism.org](http://digitalartsforautism.org) or call **407.459.7959**.

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**About Elite Animation Academy:** Founded in 2012 by former Disney animators, Elite Animation Academy provides art and animation training. Bringing students together with experienced animation instructors to maximize marketability and opportunities. Our vision is to become the best Animation Academy in Florida, instructing students on the ‘Art of Animation.’

**Founders:** Nearly ten years ago, husband-and-wife team, Todd, and Gladys West took a gamble on Elite Animation Academy. Envisioning a vibrant design studio with a noble mission: to develop young minds through the art of animation. In less than a decade, Elite Animation Academy has grown to include an expansive lineup of summer camps, hands-on courses, and virtual opportunities through which students acquire vital art and animation skill's while developing an eye-grabbing portfolio as they pursue a future in the arts.

**Location:**

Elite Animation Academy, 8933 Conroy Windermere Road, Orlando, FL  
|eliteanimationacademy.com | digitalartsforautism.org