

## March Newsletter

### Inaugural STRIDE 100k Vertical Challenge HUGE success!

This past Leap Day 2016, STRIDE introduced the 100k Vertical Challenge event at the Jiminy Peak as a fund raising skiing/riding endurance event to accomplish 87 runs off the top of the mountain. This 12-plus-hour team relay raised \$25,000 with 11 registered teams. Congratulations to Team 'Free Heelers' as the top fund-raiser and to 'Sunday Crew' and 'Red Jackets' who finished simultaneously first in just under 11 hours. Thank you so much to all who participated and those who donated to help our programs at STRIDE Adaptive Sports, especially WEQX radio; AlpinHaus; Key Bank; Haight Brown Bonesteel LLP; Essential Power; FritoLay. And Freihofer. Recruit your team now for next year's event!



Great Race cancelled ..Sad winter!

The Great Race has been cancelled for the first time in 24 years due to the lack of wintery conditions. It was a great ski season despite the fact that Mother Nature did not want to cooperate! Jiminy Peak did an outstanding job making snow all season! We look forward to next year's ski season. Thank you so much for your support.

### STRIDE Snow Ball Dance

Colonie Central High School iCARE Team was proud to host its first STRIDE / Best Buddies Winter Snow Ball Dance. The dance brought together youth from around the Capital Region to socialize, dance, & eat together celebrating diversity and differences that make us all uniquely special. DJ Amanda Diaz kept the crowd dancing as students formed bonds that broke the boundaries of stereotypes, labels and judgment. The evening was a true reflection of inclusivity and an opportunity for everyone to have fun.



STRIDE Special Olympics Competitors bring home GOLD!

Four athletes from our STRIDE Ski team attended State Games at Holiday Mountain in Monticello, NY. The team collectively came home with all gold and silver medals! Thank you to Special Olympics for wonderful opportunities that allow our athletes to enjoy competition.



STRIDE Special Olympics Bowling competition:

The STRIDE Team participated in their 1<sup>st</sup> Doubles Tournament at Sportsmans Bowl in Rotterdam, NY. Patrick Mao an all-around athlete in our STRIDE programs had a great tournament with a 142 game and a 146 high game. Patrick and partner Victor, were first place finishers. Thank you NYSO and congrats Team STRIDE!



11the Annual Wounded Warrior Snowfest!

The event was held March 3-6, welcomed 10 new Warrior participants along with their families and 4 alumni Warrior mentors for 4 days of therapeutic snowsports at Jiminy Peak Mountain Resort..

Thanks to our sponsors Jiminy Peak, Disabled Sports USA/Warfighter Sports; 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division, Brown Coach, News channel 13, CAPCOM, Plastic Extruded Parts, FritoLay and Freihoffer. Also thanks to the Mendelssohn Club of Albany, Schenectady Pipe Band, our Keynote Michael Abrams of FourBlock, & La Salle Institute Color Guard for Welcome Ceremony participation. After a tour of NYS Police Aviation and Welcome Banquet we enjoyed a weekend of sunny days and great snow for a perfect weekend of reaching mountaintops! With support of STRIDE's trained instructors and adaptive equipment, each veteran overcame personal challenges and enjoyed independence and freedom through sport! Family members enjoyed time together in this truly inspiring gateway event to other STRIDE Activities that the warriors were very grateful for. Welcome 2016 Warriors to the STRIDE Family!

GROUP PHOTO HERE

**Spring Programs: Registration is OPEN! Join in on the fun!**

*Dance* April 16th– Saturday's 4:00pm – 5pm

Isabelle School of Dance, Castleton NY, Just off exit 10 of I90  
Program Director: Katy Almon

*Basic dance movements and instruction*

**Golf** April 17<sup>th</sup>, 8 sessions, no golf May 29<sup>th</sup>

Start time: 9am

Where: Route Fore Golf Center

Program Coordinator – Clark Hussey

**Spring Hiking** \*Five Rivers Environmental Center

\*Albany Pine Bush Preserve

\*The Crossings

\*Thatcher Park

\*Lake George!

Director: Melissa Lachanski

Saturday's at 1pm-3pm starting April 16th

**Yoga** April 26<sup>th</sup> – May 31<sup>st</sup> at 6pm

East Greenbush YMCA

Program Director: YMCA Yoga Instructor Sharon Babala

Basic movements, relaxation techniques and stretching. STRIDE athlete will be accompanied by a family member interested in participation in this program. Great winter activity to stay active! Participants should bring their own blanket.

**Seeking Volunteers – Please contact Melissa Lachanski at [mlachanski@stride.org](mailto:mlachanski@stride.org) if you are interested!**

Meet a Cool Volunteer Team: Tim and Gail Tagan

Tim and Gail from Torrington CT are 62 years old and have been married for 42 years, have 3 grandchildren and have been involved with STRIDE for 20+ years. They started with STRIDE when Tim worked with LJ Whitney at Johnson Controls. Gail was only a "wedge" skier and progressed with training from the STRIDE instructors. They began at Jiminy Peak, and transferred nearly 15 years ago to launch the Catamount program. Tim, now PSIA Level II, have been there ever since. Their oldest grandson, Max is now involved with STRIDE too, as a young assistant and equipment manager. Together they have developed a paperless computer system for record keeping.

“Without Catamount support we would not have a successful and growing program. They are our second

family. We want to continue to be with STRIDE for as long as we can. In a way, it keeps us feeling younger. We definitely do it for the kids; and the appreciation of the parents also motivates us.” Tim stated.

Meet our Awesome Athlete: Ricky Wang

Rick is turning 12 in June. He is from Stamford, CT, and began skiing in 2014. His family learned about STRIDE from friends. He loves skiing so much that 2 years at STRIDE have helped him with body movement, balance, and confidence that cross over to his educational and academic skills. He loves his ski instructors, Alan and Mindy.

He loves reading and playing with computer. when he was young he did horseback therapeutic riding, basketball. He also tried football last fall. He continues to swim since 2 years old. He also does hiking when it is warm.

Mark Your calendar!

**CNY Sled Hockey Tournament** at the Skaneateles NY YMCA. April 1-3<sup>rd</sup>

**2016 New England Invitational Sled Hockey Tournament** Amelia Park in Westfield, MA April 15-17<sup>th</sup>

**Special Olympics Aquatics Competition** Skidmore College in Saratoga NY. Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Volunteer Appreciation Bash** – SCORE Center, Chatham NY May 21

**Strides 4 STRIDE 5K Run Walk Roll** - June 11 at Corning Plaza in Albany register here:

#### STRIDE Cares

Congratulations to Warrior Kevin Flike on the birth of their baby girl, Everly

Deepest sympathies to Volunteers Will Reynolds & Heather Daniels on the loss of his mother

Get Well wishes to JP instructor Kristin Johnson, after surgery

Get Well wishes to volunteer Kathy Witt, after surgery

Deepest sympathies to Instructor David Salz on the passing of his father

Welcome to Jenifer Whiston, our new Development Director!

Get Well wishes to Catamount instructor Ronnie McTiernan, after surgery.