Silver linings in a Covid World!  
_from the Desk of Mary Ellen Whitney, CEO_

COVID-19 has turned our sport programs and organization upside down. Additional planning and re-inventing has been required, and yet uncertainty still remains as winter approaches. Staff, coaches and athletes have been on a roller-coaster ride since March 2020 when our ski season abruptly ended. It has been unprecedentedly chaotic. The list of lost opportunities is endless, but let’s look positively at what the pandemic has done for us. That is right, what benefits have been realized from the pandemic?

**Reflection:** All of us have had more time to reflect on important values we hold. At STRIDE we reflect on our passions about health, teaching kids, or working with veterans. We reflect daily on how to reach people and keep their spirits up.

**Time:** We all were given time – time to take care of ourselves. Volunteers who give so much to others, have time to focus on themselves. Read More.....

COVID-19 has certainly given its share of “lemons” – let’s make lemonade together.

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Snowsports Season Announcement!

As a forecast to the winter, a national panel was constructed through Move United and NSAA which included Mary Ellen Whitney, STRIDE’s CEO. **Listen HERE!**

All 3 STRIDE programs will offer our continued outstanding lessons for skiers and riders in a ‘touchless lesson’ protocol. Please note that indoor capacity for seating will be limited so plan accordingly. Follow the flow chart below to see how you fit in! We hope to see more families together on the slopes!

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**STRIDE Snowsports Athlete Self-Assessment**

Please answer (you/participant/family) the following questions to decide if reserving a STRIDE ski or snowboard lesson is right for you this season. Working with ski area management due to COVID—19 protocols, we must revamp the structure of our program.

After reviewing the information, if you wish to proceed with booking a lesson please contact STRIDE Program Director—Megan Evans: mevans@stride.org or 518-598-1929.

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**Click Here for More In-depth Information**

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**STRIDE Hiking**

**Group Hike Info:**

- **11/8- Grafton State Park**—led by Linda F w/State Park Nature Guide
  @ 11am: 254 Grafton Lakes State Park Way, Grafton, NY 12082

- **11/21- Thatcher State Park**—led by Linda F w/State Park Nature Guide
  @ 11am: Mine Lot parking area. (On the left past the overlook)
  Details: A one mile walk to explore geological features such as waterfalls, karst, native fossils, signs of wildlife and history of Thatcher Park. Sturdy shoes are recommended with warm layers, hat and gloves. [https://www.dec.ny.gov/parks/48111.html](https://www.dec.ny.gov/parks/48111.html)
  email mevans@stride.org to enroll in each hike

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Keep your eye out for more group hikes being planned for November!
When David started skiing with STRIDE in 2014, he was a quiet, six year old in kindergarten. He was reluctant to separate from his parents and therefore, reluctant to try new things. Because skiing is a favorite in the Margolin family, we were very excited to try STRIDE at Jiminy Peak for kids with different needs. At his first lesson, David was anxious and refused to separate from us, but creative, quick thinking STRIDE instructors took over. They gave David a squishy toy and told him all about the adventures they would embark on. To our surprise, David left us behind in the lodge and willingly went off to learn to ski. In the years to come, STRIDE skiing has become a mainstay for our family. We visit the mountain as many weekends as possible. David competes in the The Great Race each March. Throughout the years, David has developed into a skilled skier.

In 2016, we sent him to STRIDE overnight tent camping in Chatham, NY. He now spends a few weekends each summer camping with STRIDE and looks forward to meals cooked around the campfire, hiking, and boating on the pond. He loves interacting with volunteers and his peers.

Looking back to that first winter morning in 2014, as my husband and I anxiously awaited the return of our son from his first ski lesson, a wise STRIDE volunteer told us that by giving him the opportunity to ski, he will always have a vehicle to relate to other kids who ski. When David is on the slopes, he is just another avid skier. He is equal to all his other peers on the mountain. The ability to ski has given him the gifts of independence, confidence, and the ability to succeed.

Because of the STRIDE and the amazing and dedicated staff and volunteers, our son’s life has been vastly enriched. And by extension, has enriched the lives our entire family. The smile on David’s face when he is skiing or camping is priceless.

Thank you STRIDE, Gillian Margolin

Volunteers Needed:
- **Family/ Individual Volunteer Opportunities:**
  - Office & virtual work projects
  - Web management
  - Photography, video editing
  - Social media and graphic design
  - Contact mwhitney@stride.org if interested

STRIDE Programs:
- Snowshoe & winter hiking leaders
  - Contact mevans@stride.org if interested

We have a very active "SOCIAL" life at STRIDE, too. We have: Socially Distanced Socials, Virtual Yoga Classes, Socially Distanced Social Media (aka FB Live), Socially Distanced Social Media Challenges, Socially Distanced Social Media Scavenger Hunts, Socially Distanced Social Media Trivia, Socially Distanced Social Media Videos, Socially Distanced Social Media ..... you get the idea!

We welcome you to join in!

Click here for More Info on Grafton Hike

Click Here for more Info on the Thatcher Park Hike

2019-20 Annual Report is Complete!

Take a closer look at how STRIDE did this year after the completion of our financial audit. Click here for the latest annual report.

Thank you to The Dance Experience of Delmar & instructor Anna for hosting our Hip Hop class! The dancers are having a blast learning the beginning of their routine.

We are looking forward to a new class that is being offered in November. Enroll today, if you are interested in having your athlete learn ballet!

Physical Education Classes - Get Covid Credit??

Can your child’s sport activity count towards physical education credit? We are wondering the same thing! Every child is required by state law to have 120 minutes of physical education per week. If you are now participating remotely in PE classes, wouldn’t it be great if your STRIDE lesson counted as credit and all that was needed was verification? You can approach your school Board of Education, Special Education Director or IEP Committee to find out.

Boards of Education have often given variances for team athletes to receive sport credit, and we are in unusual circumstances due to the pandemic. Contact mw whitney@stride.org if you get permission; help us help other families!
We have a very active "SOCIAL" life at STRIDE! Join us at Facebook, for all the latest and greatest activities and resources.

AmazonSmile Org Central

Holiday shopping is beginning this month! Don't forget to put Smile Amazon on your desktop with STRIDE as your designated charity. Find us here! The more you shop - the more we get!

2021 Wounded Warrior Snowfest - Yes!

We are underway rethinking the plan, and want everyone to know there will definitely be an event. It may be re-shaped and our large gathering dinner could be virtual, but just as fun as always. Watch our web for information. March 4-7, 2021. Thanks to Move United sports for grant support funding!

Sponsorships being accepted now. Contact phayslett@stride.org

SCORE Camp Season Concludes Successfully!

With an amazing group of 15 employees from Empire Blue Cross to clean, clear trails and split wood for next season, the camping season and archery program concluded on a perfect weather weekend! Thank you once again to Anthem Foundation for grant funding for the 2021 season! #AnthemCares

This season was quite different, yet successful on so many levels. Great thanks to two of our Warrior Volunteers Steve Pechacek and Kevin Binkley who worked tirelessly all summer keeping the trails cleared of debris, culvert cleared, beaver kept at bay, grass cut and tents in tip top shape for our family campers.

Did You Know?

...the SHARE Center is available for community use for programs, meetings and events (nominal donation for use is suggested)
...the Alter-G treadmill is available for individual training sessions for mobility impaired individuals
...the SHARE Center fitness equipment is available for individual workouts. Contact mevans@stride.org

...we are considering using SCORE this winter for a snowshoe program on the trails. It requires snowplowing expense; let us know if you are interested. the more interest we get, the more likely we will provide the program

...our in kind donations equate to more than 1/5 of our budget. Every item has $ value and we keep track for our audit; which keeps our expenses lower.

GET WELL WISHES GLOBALLY

to all those suffering and affected throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic

• Deepest sympathies to the family of Pam Tobin on the loss of her sister
• Birthday wishes to our Program Director Megan
• Thanks to Student volunteer Gavin Feller for his graphic and video work!
• Deepest sympathy to Gail Tagan and family on the loss of her Dad
• Get well wishes to ski coach Rob West after shoulder surgery

We are seeking your help in collecting wine & spirits for an upcoming online auction. Please click here to read more about the details.
We also need unique auction items...Anything helps!! Contact phayslett@stride.org to donate.

Ideas include: services, art, jewelry, lessons, memorabilia.

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**Program Leader Accolades!!**

Huge thanks to our fall program leaders!

Tim McDonough - archery; Dave Graham - tennis, many volunteers for hiking; Diane Grugan and Denise Tune - bowling; Linda Finkle - Kayak; Anna Krupa - Dance; and Anthony & Kelly Curro - golf program leaders!

*We couldn’t do this without you!!*

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American Legion Joseph Gallipeau Post No. 294
American Legion Olean Post 530
American Legion Oneonta Post No. 259
American Legion Post 78
American Legion Post 79
American Legion Post 181
American Legion Post 289
American Legion Post 950
American Legion West Seneca Post 735
Charles L Jacobi Post 183
Nopiates Committee
Voorheesville American Legion Post 1493

**Foundations/Grantors**

- Berkshire Bank Foundation
- Move United Sport
- US Tennis Association

**In Memory of David Hagymas**

Anna Chenery
Mary Ellen Whitney

**In Memory of John Fratianni**

Walter Myers

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If you are a New York State employee - please consider donating to STRIDE through the SEFA Campaign, which runs through December 31.

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