Making the most of Outdoor Fall program time!
From the Desk of Mary Ellen Whitney, CEO

STRIDE has been paving the way for putting together our “Return to play” programs safely and in-person. We’ve been recognized as a national leader; and a lot is planned for autumn outdoor time to make the most of being in fresh air and learning how to social distance in sport. We have a lot on tap for the fall, programs are nearly full so sign up as quickly as you can.

Golf: Summer golf was so popular, that our leaders have continued the program for six more weeks until October. Kayak, New to STRIDE, a small introductory “learn to kayak” program takes place on Crooked Lake for 3 weeks.

Hiking: Fall hiking is one of the most popular activities in upstate New York and the Berkshires for leaf peeping, and we’ve put together a challenge for all our athletes to join our hiking club. Hike on your own, or join in some of our selected hikes being led by volunteers. Prizes to athletes who complete all 10 hikes!

Tennis: After a long search for outdoor courts, Indian Meadows has been contracted and our outdoor tennis program is back. Thanks to USTA grants for their support. Archery: Hosted at our SCORE camp in Chatham, our newly certified USAA coaches will instruct new youth athletes in bow shooting.

Indoor Programs are back too! Bowling: Both East Greenbush and Latham programs are back underway with 50% capacity and shorter time (indoors) Sled Hockey: We have contracted with Albany County Ice facility for our team to conduct weekly clinics. There will be no tournaments this year, but practice clinics will resume from October through April unless otherwise changed.

Dance: Hip hop lessons at Dance Experience in Delmar with a smaller group.

It goes without saying that social distancing and masks will be mandatory in all programs. Here’s the other measures we are taking to ensure everyone’s safety:

All participants will have their forehead temperature taken prior to activity with names and phone numbers logged for contact tracing.

Measures for cleaning and sanitizing protocols are in place for all equipment before and after use.

In place of volunteers, family members or caregivers are expected to be involved with athletes who need close contact for learning skills. Volunteer directors will instruct family members from a distance.

Please see the enclosed flyers for more info or consult our website calendar.

Back In Action! In-person programs Old & New!

Tennis: Tennis is a family affair! The sports requires hand-eye coordination and typically our trusty volunteers have helped with skill development with out athletes. Our tennis program leader extraordinaire, Dave, planned his weekly curriculum to ensure that the athlete and family participants are not only safely distant but have plenty of activities to rotate through to ensure that fun and learning was also had. Where would we be with out our dedicated volunteer’s?!?

Kayaking: This has been a new endeavor for our organization. Typically, kayaking has been an option in our sailing program for when the winds weren’t strong enough to set sail. Thankfully, we came across a certified instructor and generous homeowners on Crooked Lake and the program is born. Teen participants had a great 1st outing alongside their parent /caregiver. Two more excursions are planned, and hope to be able to offer this program in a longer session in the spring.

Golf: Due to the nature of the sport, our golf program is expanding with more interest from different athlete participants. We believe that due to our policies on returning to play we are not only providing instruction to our youth but our families to learn how to continue sports
STRIDE Hiking

sponsoring provided by: Empire BlueCross Foundation

Group Hike Info:

- **9/26—SCORE Campground** led by Mindy F.
  2182 State Route 203, Chatham, NY 12033—accessible
  https://www.stride.org/sports/score-center/

- **10/3—Pleasant Valley Wildlife Sanctuary** led by Jonathan B.
  472 West Mountain Road, Lenox, MA 01240—accessible
  https://www.massaudubon.org/get-outdoors/wildlife-sanctuaries/pleasant-valley

- **10/10—Mt. Greylock; Stony Ledge Trail** led by Kevin W.
  286-16 Roaring Brook Rd, Williamstown, MA—accessible
  https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/massachusetts/stony-ledge-trail

email mevans@stride.org to enroll in each hike

Keep your eye out for more group hikes. More are being planned for October & November

More Info on Pleasant Valley Hike

More Info on Mt. Greylock Hike

Our first hike was a great adventure. Families came to SCORE camp in Chatham, NY to walk the trails and learn a bit about hiking do’s and don’ts when they are out exploring on their own. We ended our trek with a bonfire and smores!

We hope you will join us for other planned hikes this fall. Contact Megan for any questions.

Archery

A sport that is open to everyone; it is inclusive of all ages, genders and abilities. Athletes with physical or cognitive impairments, who may otherwise be dissuaded from participating in sports can participate in archery alongside athletes without any disability. Whether your goal is to just get out and socialize or be active, or to make a U.S. Paralympic Team, archery is a sport that lends itself to any need.

Simple adaptations to archery programs can help anyone hit the mark! STRIDE has 5 certified coaches, one who is a national champion and disabled veteran, Tim McDonough. We are happy to report that our fall session is comprised of athletes of all ages abilities and some combat injured veterans.

Watch our talented coaches in last week’s video:

Veteran’s Get Back on the Horse...

The weekend of September 11th, our veterans and their families, appropriately gathered together for a weekend of respite and relaxation.

The weekend was filled with family friendly activities including riding at High & Mighty in Ghent, NY. Special guest, Sonya Ward of IBI Semper Training, came to help provide some tips and trick to those veterans with service dogs. Thanks to the local Crandall Theater, the campers had and added treat of theater candy, for watching the outdoor movie.

For more information about our veteran programming, email dtallman@stride.org
 Moments in STRIDE

The Curro Family

As a two-year old with no speech, our son Anthony was diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Now, at almost 20 years old, Anthony does not stop talking and loves to be social! We believe adaptive sports has been invaluable to his transformation.

STRIDE offers a unique opportunity for recreational sports that can become a lifetime gateway for physical activity, socialization, and connection. Anthony has participated in camping, hiking, golf, bocce, archery and bowling! STRIDE has also given him many years of opportunities to socialize at teen dances. When COVID hit, the loss of these opportunities – especially to connect with his peers – was devastating since they were part of his routine.

If our son was missing these opportunities, then so were others who were used to the robust lineup of STRIDE programs pre-pandemic. My husband Tony is a retired physical education teacher. When STRIDE asked us to coach the golfing program as part of its return to play, we knew this would be great for Anthony and the other kids. We now have the added value of a special time for our family on Sunday mornings! STRIDE has once again given Anthony a safe avenue to develop skills, enjoy physical activity and make friendships. We are so proud to be a part of that for him and his peers!!! I have our PPE supplies ready to go and check all of our participants in each week with a temperature screening. Everything is going great! Kelly Curro

HUGE thanks to Anthem Foundation for their continued 4th year of supporting all STRIDE programs!!! #AnthemCares

HEARTFELT THANK YOU TO OUR DONORS

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our September contributors and following groups, clubs and individuals for their financial and in-kind support. These contributions help make STRIDE adaptive programs possible.

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In Memory of Linda Hare
Janet Scammell

In Memory of John Robert Lafferty
Janet Scammell

GET WELL WISHES GLOBALLY to all those suffering and affected throughout the COVID-19 Pandemic

Deck sympathies to the family of David C. Hagymas, 1999 STRIDE Volunteer of the Year and 20+years of volunteering at STRIDE as a ski instructor.

Deepest sympathy to the family of
Outdoor Family/ Individual Volunteer Opportunities:
- SCORE Camp
  - Trail clearing and fall cleaning
  - taking down tents
- SHARE Center
  - Mowing & fall lawn care
  - Gardening
- STRIDE Office
  - Office work
  - Web management
  - Photography, video editing
  - Social media
  - graphic design
Contact mwhitney@stride.org if interested

STRIDE Programs
- Fall Hiking Leaders
- Snowshoe leaders
Contact mevans@stride.org if interested

We have a very active “SOCIAL” life at STRIDE!
Join us at Facebook, for all the latest and greatest activities and resources.