



2021-22

Annual Report





We are **35** years
STRONG

A message from the Chief Executive Officer

Dear Friends and Supporters of STRIDE Adaptive Sports,

This year and into the foreseeable future, our athletes with special needs faced pandemic challenges that placed unprecedented stress on their physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being. Youths with disabilities felt the disruption effects even more keenly, not only because of special needs, but because of several unfair disparities:

- Nearly 1/3 of the children with disabilities in the Northeast live in poverty, and these households only make about half the income of their peers.
- Kids with special needs have a significantly higher rate of obesity. The vast majority of these children do not participate in sufficient physical activity to maintain health; when they do attempt to participate, they have high dropout rates.
- Nearly 1/4 of these kids will fail to graduate with a high school diploma, and about 85% will never achieve a Bachelor's degree; as adults, nearly 2/3 will be unemployed.

Fortunately, the challenges are far from insurmountable. Many of these youth have potential to find a place in our society where they can be productive, healthy, and thrive; they simply need a little extra help, which often comes down to time, resources, and expertise that the community at large lacks.

That's how we help. STRIDE not only makes the highest possible impact on youth with disabilities at a fraction of larger organizations' budgets, but we are recognized as a national industry expert in knowledge and best practices.

For the past 35 years, I have seen the power of STRIDE's adaptive sport and recreation programs firsthand. An entire generation of kids with special needs has learned to move beyond their disabilities and achieve life-changing results. By emphasizing a holistic approach that culminates in a new lifestyle, we enhance physical, mental, social, and emotional health, helping kids find their place and their voice in life.

Covid-19 not only forced under-served youth to "adapt" to new times and circumstances; it also forced STRIDE to adapt at a level and speed we have never previously experienced. Financial support from our constituents ensured that we could adapt into 2021-22 and continue moving forward with innovative, safe programs.

In addition to a full array of adaptive winter programs, including new activities such as snowshoeing, kayaking and ice fishing, STRIDE is continuing to advance its collaboration with local educators and school systems. We are working to advocate to parents for having STRIDE activities count as PE Credit for distance learners. We collaborated with Special Olympics for a new program at our SHARE Center, and are considering new waterfront programs in the Berkshires and Nordic skiing in Connecticut. Our expansion and adaptations are all thanks to our large community of supporters and innovative staff.



Mary Ellen Whitney
CEO & Founder

table of contents

Message from the CEO.....pg. 1

Board of Directors.....pg. 4

Mission and Vision.....pg. 5

Who We Are & What We Do.....pg. 7

Program Highlights.....pgs.9-10

Number of Lessons Provided.....pg. 12

Highlights.....pg. 14

Athlete of the Year.....pg. 17

Volunteer of the Year.....pg. 18

Athlete’s Creed.....pg. 21

Honorary Board.....pg. 22

STRIDE Staff.....pg. 22

Major Funders and Donors.....pg. 23

Consolidated Financial Statements.....pg. 24



500+ trained
and dedicated volunteers

Board of Directors



President
Mary Ellen Whitney
*Founder and CEO
STRIDE Adaptive Sports
Wynantskill, New York*



Medical Counsel
Dr. Steve Ferro
*Physician Resident
Westerly, RI*



Treasurer
Amy Earing, CPA
*Partner
Lavelle & Finn LLP
Castleton, New York*



Secretary
Linda Reiss
*Retired VP Operations
Matthew Bender Publishing
Wynantskill, New York*



Counsel
Patrick Fitzgerald, III
*Attorney and Partner
Girvin & Ferlazzo, P.C.
Loudonville, New York*



Board Member
Dan Rhatigan
*Safety Manager - Regeneron
Delmar, New York*



Board Member
Richard Miller
*Retired Partner
Farm Family Insurance
Glenmont, New York*



Board Member
Mark Moran
*Retired STRIDE Business Manager
Niskayuna, New York*



Board Member
Tom Gilbert
*Retired Owner,
Catamount Ski Area
Lenox, Massachusetts*



Board Member
Curtis Butler
*Financial Advisor
Darien, CT*

Our Mission

STRIDE's mission is to educate and empower Individuals with disabilities in life-changing sport and recreation programs to sustain active, healthy, and fun lifestyles.

Our Vision

Building a community with equal opportunity and access for sport and recreational activities. No one should be left behind because of a disability!

Our Priority

Safety, health and well-being of everyone in our STRIDE community

Our Core Values

CREATE opportunities and provide outlets for individuals with special needs to make friends, increase self-esteem, develop life skills, realize their potential and become productive members of society.

EDUCATE volunteers, families and communities about opportunities that exist for individuals with special needs.

PARTNER with leading professionals, educational institutions, agencies and communities in order to create top-tier recreational programs for individuals with disabilities.

LEAD in the arena of adaptive sports by providing opportunities for STRIDE participations that are safe, fun and help achieve personal goals.

ENGAGE a committed team of volunteers, parents, family, friends and community members in our services and mission.

CHALLENGE the status quo by removing boundaries and breaking down barriers of ignorance and attitude that can block the path of independence for individuals who have disabilities.

Who we are *and what we do*



1,500+
STRIDE Athletes

- A volunteer non-profit educational organization founded in 1985-86
- Provided **8,294** free/low-cost adaptive sport and recreation lessons
- Over 500 skilled sport instructors and volunteers (previous to Covid)
- Served over **1500** families in 2020-21
- Offered programs in **14** sports in **19** locations in 3 states
- Focus is education for individual life-time sports
- Funding goes directly to programs with modest operating budget
- Operates with a paid staff of four
- Chapter member of Move United Sports (Disabled Sports USA)
- Official US Paralympic Sports Club
- Member of Professional Ski Instructors of America / American Association of Snowboard Instructors
- Member of Special Olympics and an official Red Cross provider
- Recognized as one of the largest adaptive sport organizations in Eastern US & among the leading adaptive organizations in the USA
- Collaborates with school districts, colleges and other non-profits
- Partnerships with Warfighter Sports & Move United providing rehabilitative sports to regional Wounded Warriors and veteran communities
- Programs are primarily cost-free or low-cost for participation with scholarships available when cost is prohibitive
- Operates a tent-camping facility in Chatham NY, on 86 environmentally protected wooded acres with miles of trails, ponds, camping areas, and a large pavilion/main lodge.
- Funding is diversified and comes from grants, private donations, fund-raisers, and corporate sponsorships. No government grants are solicited.
- Operates a 5,000 sq. ft. adaptive fitness and community facility called SHARE Center (*STRIDE Health and Recreation Education Center*) that opened in 2020.
- Dave & Marisa Clark Memorial Foundation awarded **8** athletes with skiing awards (no biking awards due to COVID-19).
- Staff & Volunteers are COVID-19 trained.

2020-2021 Highlights

sport & recreation programs



101

veterans participated
in *STRIDE* Wounded
Warrior Programs

- ~ Sled Warriors practiced year-round without any competition tournaments.
- ~ The SHARE Center was a focus point for individual fitness training and small group sessions during the pandemic.
- ~ Created virtual program '*Adapt in STRIDE*' to provide on-line resources and programs for youth and veterans to maintain healthy lifestyles during the pandemic.
- ~ Re-invented the 5K Run, Walk, Roll as a virtual event with 8 week '*couch to 5K*' fitness program.
- ~ Hosted individual family camping weekends at the SCORE Center as a response to Covid-19.
- ~ Hosted Wounded Warrior Bootcamp weekend and Alumni Wounded Warrior Snowfest with Covid protocols, adding a new Winter Carnival day on Crooked Lake with ice fishing, hockey and more!
- ~ Introduced inclusive Women's yoga, Zumba and circuit fitness training classes at the SHARE Center as gyms were re-opening.
- ~ Hosted a successful Brewfest as a BBQ 'take-out' event at the SHARE Center with outdoor seating and music.
- ~ Created a kayak program on Crooked Lake as a fall outdoor program.
- Created Wellness Wednesdays program at the SHARE Center to introduce fitness and movement for youth.
- ~ Our hiking program had more popularity due to Covid environment and encouraged family participation.
- ~Partnered with Special Olympics to host floor hockey team practices in SHARE Center
- ~ Encouraged touchless lesson protocols in Snowsports for parent/caregiver participation to help make the program possible.
- ~ Utilized virtual technology for snowsport instructor training, allowing Jiminy Peak, Catamount and Ski Sundown volunteer coaches to work together in Zoom format.
- ~ Created an archery program through USAA for young adults at SCORE using disabled veteran instructor(s).

2020-2021 Highlights

sport & recreation programs

The nucleus of our winter programs continues to be alpine skiing and snowboarding. This year we taught 1,240 total lessons in a shortened ski season ending early March due to COVID-19. Our sled hockey team had 11 total members including 4 Warriors totaling 3,588 lessons with a shortened season and no tournaments due to COVID -19. Summer program nucleus is our SCORE Camp in Chatham, NY, yielding only 2 weekend programs, but family use of the grounds . We count 'lessons' that last 1 to 2.5 hours in each sport or activity. As the COVID-19 pandemic unfolded we re-invented our programs in ways that were molded to remake of every program possible to do things safely when being in-person was not possible. We succeeded and led the industry across the nation with new protocols.

PROGRAMS & Activities Offered

- Archery • Bocce • Bowling
- Cycling • Dance • Disc Golf
- Fishing • Fitness Training • Golf
- Hiking • Ice Fishing • Kayaking
- 5K Run • Zumba
- Skiing • Sled Hockey
- Snowboarding • Snowshoeing
- Tennis • Individual Fitness
- Tent Camping • Alter G Training
- White Water Rafting
- Wounded Warriors
- Yoga



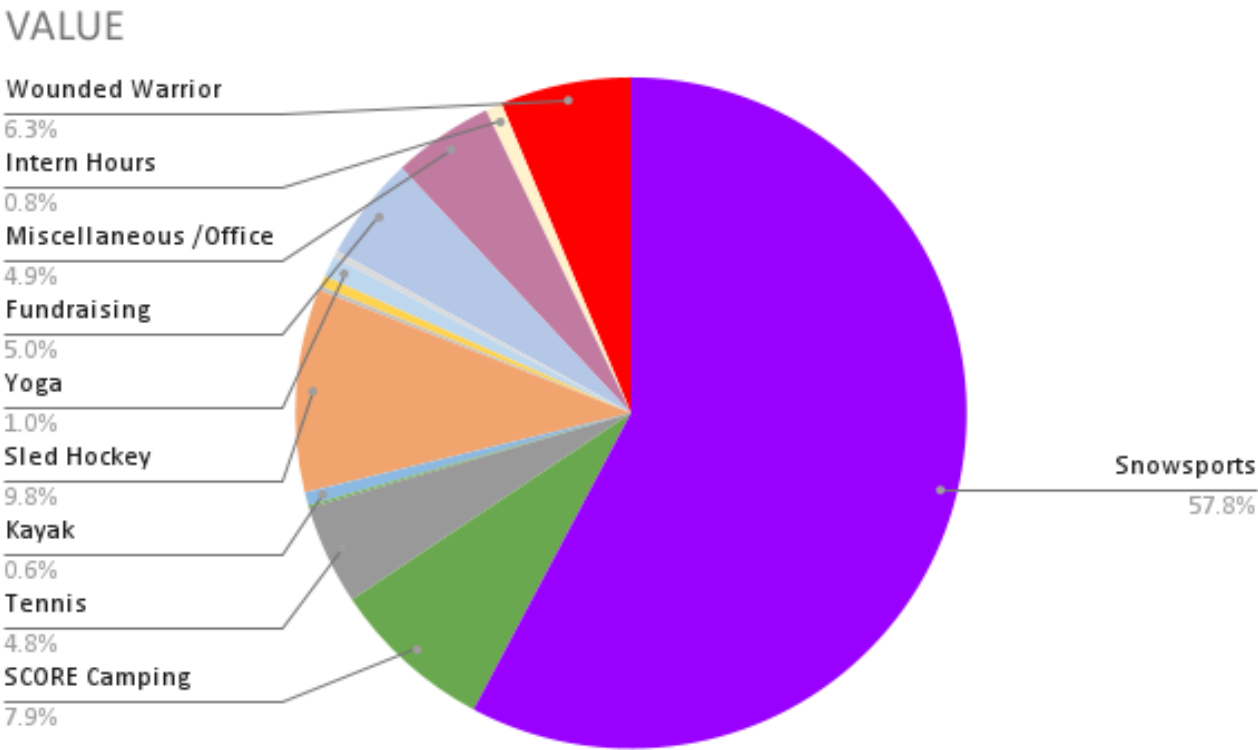
Programs generously supported by: **Empire** 
BLUECROSS
Empire BlueCross Foundation



1,240 adaptive ski and snowboard lessons provided

Volunteer hours = \$ 661,476

Volunteer hours expressed by dollar amount per program at average NY, MA, CT, RI rate \$33.15 / hour



9,072
adaptive sport lessons



2020-2021 Highlights

STRIDE Adaptive Sports

Staff:

- ~ STRIDE Administrative team operates with 4 full-time staff with oversight from the Executive Board of Directors; we maintained all 4 staff without furloughs through-out the pandemic time of lay-offs and closures.
- ~ Due to the pandemic, we had no college interns.
- ~ We utilized resources of corporations and agencies who provided employees for outdoor work days at our facilities.

Development:

- ~ Due to COVID-19 we lost revenue from major fund-raisers, but were awarded 2 PPP loans which offset the losses.
- ~ Program revenue from administration fees was lost due to many programs being canceled because of COVID -19.
- ~ In-kind donations were 50% lower totaling \$104,000.
- ~ Corporate sponsor support decreased for our 4 fund-raising events.
- ~ Growth in the 100K Vertical Challenge was down by 50%.
- ~ Reinventing our 5K race to a virtual event was successful.
- ~ Grants and individual contributions remain steady streams of revenue.

Communications/Marketing:

- ~ Our social media presence is still growing.
- ~ We updated our website and continue to make improvements in our IT developing
- ~ STRIDE's presence in the community continues to grow in awareness through many avenues including media, press and recognition awards.
- ~ Nearly all of our materials and registrations are digital, and we are mostly a paperless organization with conscious efforts to be 'green'
- ~ We have integrated Safe Sport athlete training into every volunteer application with criminal background checks annually.
- ~ We are rated Platinum level for transparency by Guidestar.



58 new athlete applications
received this year

Athlete of the Year

Anthony Curro

STRIDE Moments 

STRIDE congratulates Anthony Curro. Anthony is a success story embodying everything about the STRIDE way of life. Diagnosed with Autism at age 2, he began his journey with STRIDE in 2016 at a SCORE Camp weekend. Ever since, there hasn't been a program STRIDE offers that Anthony hasn't attended or tried. His positive attitude brought him progress, and STRIDE has become a family affair as his parents took over directing the adaptive golf program.

"Now at almost 20 years old, Anthony does not stop talking and loves to be social," his mother explains. "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. STRIDE has given him many years of opportunities to socialize and a safe avenue to develop skills, enjoy physical activity and make friends."

Anthony has enjoyed camping, hiking, golf, dances, archery and bowling. His attitude and growth are infectious – STRIDE instructors have witnessed many adaptive athletes open up and socialize after being around him. STRIDE has been greatly enriched by this wonderful family. **Congratulations Anthony!**



17 adaptive sport
and recreation programs
offered year round





STRIDE Moments 

Volunteer of the Year Marleah Lybolt

Congratulations to Marleah Lybolt! Marleah, age 21, is a graduate Occupational Therapy Assistant student from Maria College. She aspires to work in education and has put her talents and training to great use as a STRIDE volunteer since 2016. Marleah came to STRIDE as a participant athlete, and realized how much she wanted to help kids camping at SCORE. Marleah jumped into the water (literally) as a volunteer with STRIDE's swimming program, teaching individualized lessons and assistant coaching for STRIDE's Special Olympics swim team. She is a favorite coach with kids and parents alike because of her friendly and caring nature.

More recently, Marleah took on leadership and organizational tasks. She organized STRIDE's Harvest Dance for teens. Due to her passion and maturity, she served as Assistant Director for SCORE Camp program. She typically spends all her summer weekends helping STRIDE kids.

Marleah also served as Volunteer Coordinator for the 2021 Bike Camp at Union College, dealing with the complexities of Covid-19 with campus restrictions. She rolled up her sleeves and succeeded in recruiting and coordinating enough volunteers for the program to be successful.

Marleah has accomplished incredible milestones for STRIDE despite ongoing personal health issues. The entire STRIDE community believes she will be as successful outside the organization as she has been within it.

Congratulations Marleah Lybolt, STRIDE 2021 Volunteer of the Year.

over **32,547**
volunteer hours



STRIDE honors our 500+ volunteers for making a huge difference in the community. Whether they run a lap with a biker, rake leaves, clean the gym, teach a ski lesson, decorate for an event, take a child camping, or collect a raffle prize, every single volunteer hour has a ripple effect that positively affects the lives of individuals with disabilities in our communities. Our program services wouldn't exist without the assistance we receive from so many big-hearted people. Calculated volunteer hours given for the year were **19,942 at a NY, CT, MA average value from Independent Sector of **\$33.17**, equaling **\$661,476** given in time! The intrinsic rewards received from volunteering for STRIDE are valued much higher than any tangible award we can think of. We honor all those who help us throughout the year.**

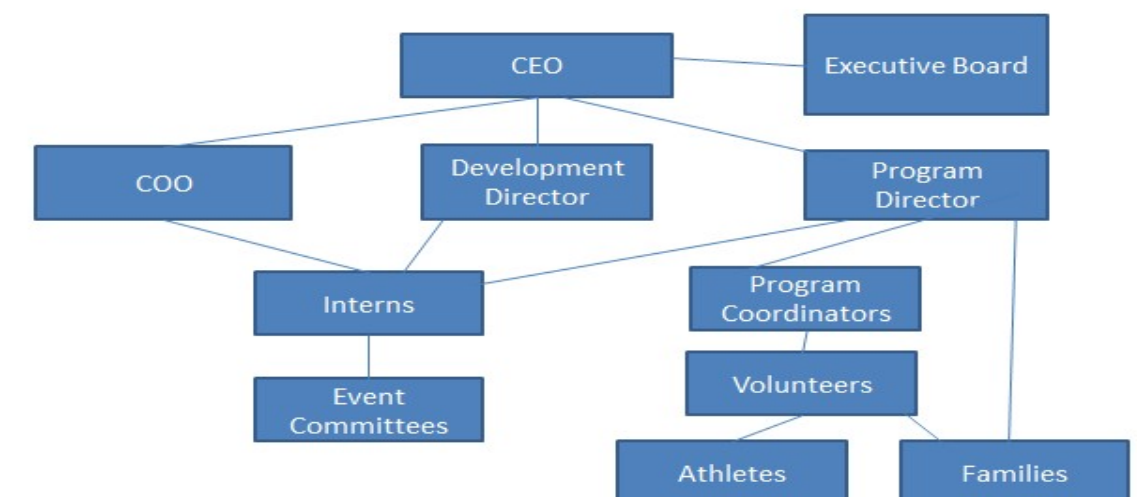
Strategic Plan 2020- 2025



Wounded Warrior Winter Carnival Ice Fishing

27 active partnerships with educational organizations through Partners in Education

- 1 **TRANSITIONING PRODUCTIVE NEW LEADERSHIP**
 - Execute a succession plan for transition of leadership within 5 years
 - Create a work staff team that promotes and sustains growth and productivity
 - Build community activity in the SHARE center for awareness
- 2 **LONG TERM SUSTAINMENT**
 - Develop a long-term funding plan and solidify funding relationships
 - Measure success through quantitative and qualitative means
 - Full use of the SHARE Center and SCORE camp for income stream
- 3 **GROWTH IN SUSTAINABLE RELATIONSHIPS**
 - Build a base of volunteers to enhance the quality of programs and allow growth
 - Partner with other organizations to meet mission goals
 - Maintain quality administrative staff with long-term career goals to meet the need of organizational growth and sustenance
- 4 **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM EXPANSION**
 - Develop a full schedule for use of the SHARE Center with varietal activities
 - Develop and strengthen new and existing athletic and recreational programs working with partner organizations and community
 - Strategic growth in developing competitive elements in existing programs such as competition tournaments and races, to further develop athlete skills



STRIDE Honorary Board

Greg Adams

Vice President, Americas, SABIC Houston, Texas

Phil Bayly

Anchor, WNYT NewsChannel 13, NBC Clifton Park, NY (Retired)

Robert Braverman

Attorney/Partner Braverman/Greenspun New York, NY

Tyler Fairbank

CEO, The Fairbank Group
Jiminy Peak Hancock, MA

Pat Flaherty

NFL Consultant Coach
NY Giants

Chris Gibson

President of Siena College
Former U.S. Congressman, 19th District, NY
Kinderhook NY

John Gray

News 10 ABC Anchor
North Greenbush, NY

Thomas Haffner

Attorney (Retired)
Schenectady, NY

Kathleen Jimino

Rensselaer County Executive (retired)
Lansingburgh, NY

Brian P. McLane

CEO Paradigm Solutions
Syracuse, NY

Dr. Ann Myers, Ed.D.

Director of Doctoral Programs, The Sage Colleges
Rensselaer, NY

Honorable David Paterson

Former NYS Governor
New York City, NY

John Robinson

CEO Our Ability
Glenmont, NY

Chaplain (Major General) Donald L. Rutherford, US Army

23rd U.S. Army Chief of Chaplains
Averill Park, NY

CSM Frank Wicks

Command Sergeant Major (Retired), US Army
West Sand Lake, NY

STRIDE Adaptive Sports Staff

Mary Ellen Whitney

CEO & Founder

Joe Russo

Chief Operations Officer

Patrick Hayslett

Development Director

Megan Evans

Programs Director

Interns:

Due to Covid-19 we did not have any interns this year.

Thank You Major Sponsors & Funders

Major Corporate Sponsors (\$1,000 +)

AllSquare Wealth Management, LLC
American National Insurance Company
Braverman Greenspun, LLC
GE Foundation
Hannaford
Jiminy Peak
Lavelle & Finn
NPA Financial
Phillips Hardware
Plastic Extruded Parts, Inc.
Regeneron Pharmaceuticals
Ski Sundown
True Value Hardware
Warfighter Sports

Grant Makers

10th Mountain Division Foundation

Anthem Foundation
Berkshire Bank Foundation
Dralla Foundation
Fredericka V. Slingerland Family Foundation
John E. Sackett Foundation
Killington World Cup Foundation
Miloslava Leukhardt Living Trust
Move United Sport
SBA Paycheck Protection Program
Stewart's Shops / Dake Family Foundation
Stuart and Joan Seliger Sidney Family Fund
USA Archery
U.S. Tennis Association (USTA)
William Gundry Broughton Foundation

Third Party Fundraising Events

DAV Chapter 38 Troy
Liberty Bank Dress Down Day
Marc S. Zeplin Foundation Concert
MetzWood Insurance Referral Program
Ski Sundown
Society of the Friends of St Patrick Annu

Major Donors (\$1,000+)

Alan Hart
Ancient Temple Lodge #14 Free Masons
Barbara Hrachian
Daniel Bopp
Don Reutemann
Doug Bauer
James Duffy
Jay & Deirdre Epstein
Jeff & Kim Sutton
Jon Phillips
Mary Nelen
Paul O'Leary
RADM Martin Leukhardt
Roy D Graves VFW Post 1194
Sam S. Bloom Foundation
Sigrid Gray
Timothy Rotolo

United Way Major Donors:

Gregory Adams
Laurie Woodcock
Chris Shattuck
David Van Hoesen
Samuel Colborn
Crystal Coso
Mark Bachand

Major In-Kind Donations

ACP Equipment
Alan Justin
Ann Boehm
Brendan Sullivan
Burton / Anon
Commercial Investigations
Delmar Fire Department
Girvin & Ferlazzo
Heims Auto Care
Jiminy Peak Mountain Resort
Joel Glickman
Lavelle & Finn
Mary Ellen & LJ Whitney
Mirror Lake Inn Resort & Spa
Paul O'Leary
Pfc Dwyer Program
Ski Sundown
Troy Hilton Garden Inn
Union College
Wilson Bros. Heating & Cooling

Together we change lives!

Financial Performance & Outlook

As a 501 (c) 3 nonprofit organization, STRIDE depends on the generosity of its donors and funders to support our athletes and programs.

STRIDE now operates with a budget just over \$500,000, making us one of the larger and strongest independent adaptive sport organizations in the Northeast. Being good stewards of the money we receive, we put our athletes and people first. We are family.

For every dollar we receive, more than 88 cents goes directly into our programs, better than the

national average and earning STRIDE a Guidestar Platinum ranking, the highest.

Nearly 45% of STRIDE program resources are supported by in-kind donations (non-cash items such as food, venue rental, professional services, equipment, and auction items or prizes) and other donated services. This helps maximize our impact. This year, due to the pandemic cancelling so many programs, our expenses were low, and we received two PPP grants.

	2020/21	2019/20
Total Revenues & Program Support	576,832	693,388
Total Expenses		
Program Services	416,376	474,360
Management & General Operating	69,887	74,084
Fundraising	47,462	39,004
Total:	533,725	587,448
Change in Net Assets	43,107	105,940
Net Assets - Beginning of Year	1,382,870	1,382,870
Net Assets - End of Year	1,425,977	1,276,930

We feel a great responsibility to our donors, large and small.
That is why we are proud of our efficient operations.

Over 80% of our budget is a direct expense to our programs that provide life-changing experiences for individuals with disabilities through participation in adaptive sports and recreation. We are masterful at keeping costs low with our leverage of in-kind donations! Thank you to every donor, large and small!



\$104,389
donated in-kind
products and services

Wounded Warrior Alumni Snowfest 2021



STRIDE CENTER FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION & EDUCATION

STRIDE Adaptive Sports

***4482 NY Highway 150
West Sand Lake, New York 12196
518-598-1279 / info@stride.org
www.stride.org***