



CHAUTAUQUA  
**STRIDERS**  
MENTORING & GUIDING YOUTH

*Chautauqua Striders is dedicated to the mentoring & guidance of youth through education, advocacy, & athletics.*

**MAKING STRIDES NEWSLETTER**

**SPRING 2010**

By Deb Kathman, Executive Director

Prior to writing my quarterly newsletter, I took a peek at what other staff had written. I can tell by some of their themes they are all ready for warm weather, sunshine, and spring break! With that thought in mind, many program coordinators also reminded parents and students we are now seven months into the school year and it is time to plan for state tests and final exams. Striders is here to help with the final push to May and June.

With programs throughout Jamestown and surrounding school districts, we are available to work with students at all levels and are flexible enough to meet the needs of most students and their parents. Last week, I was reminded of this during our United Way presentation. Pam Gustafson, High School Coordinator, identified our flexibility as one of the key components to our success. Students know we will make every attempt to work around their schedules. They also know they can just drop by our main office for help. Sometimes the assistance they need is not academic. Sometimes it is just someone to listen to them. **We do that well.** In fact, I would say the key ingredient to our success is the personal commitment we make to each young person who comes through our doors. We know the development of relationships with children are often the crucial link to their success. We also know they need to feel comfortable and safe in their surroundings.

Finally, as our programs grow, so does the family of Striders. This year, we have welcomed Kate Hockenberry, daughter of track coach Cristin Hockenberry; Calvin Gesing, son of Mentoring Coordinator, Amanda Gesing, and last week, Brynn Davis, daughter of Project REACH Coordinator, Arrick Davis. We look forward to this next generation of Striders!

## Downtown Dash Kicks Off Runner of the Year Series



*Prejean led from start to finish in capturing his first road victory in three years.*

Former Chautauqua Striders athlete and four time USATF All-American, Travis Prejean, led a group of 131 participants in the first St. Patrick's Day 3 Mile Dash. Kathy Gustafson of Jamestown was the first female finisher.



The event was held in conjunction with the Downtown Jamestown Development Corporation's St. Patrick's Day Celebration. The Jamestown Savings Bank Ice Arena hosted the race's pre-and post-race activities.

Over 50 volunteers helped make this event possible. Many of the volunteers were members of the AM Rotary Club of Jamestown, Jamestown High School Honor Society, track club parents and athletes and members of the Southwestern Central School's track team.

The St. Patrick's Day Dash is the first race in the new Chautauqua Striders Runner of the Year series. Ten local races have joined forces to help crown the area's best male, female and age group runners. Complete race results and Runner of the Year standings are available on our website.



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**See what's new at.....**

[www.chautauqua-striders.org](http://www.chautauqua-striders.org)

# Tutoring Corner

## Elementary & Middle School News

### Preparing Elementary Students for State Exams

By Michelle Waterman, Elementary School Coordinator

As spring is rounding the corner, so are the state exams for elementary school children. The New York State English Language Arts exam, previously held in January of each year, has been moved to the end of April. Elementary students in grades 3 and 4 take this exam after spring break. Immediately following the ELA is the NYS Math test for the same children. At the end of May, the fourth grade students will be completing their NYS Science test, which includes a performance segment measuring their knowledge of science equipment and procedure.

You may ask, "How can I help my child prepare?" The answer is simple: READ with your child! "How does reading help with math and science?" Understanding and comprehending what the test question is saying or asking of the test taker is the most important part of taking the test. Many mistakes are made simply because students don't read correctly or don't comprehend what they are reading. The best way to build comprehension skills is to read, read, read. Spend 15 minutes a night reading with your children. Ask them questions during and after your reading session about what you've read and what they predict might happen next. If you feel your children need more help, don't hesitate to give us a call. Striders offers various programs for all age levels. Call 488-2203 for more information.



Tutors and students at Persell Middle School recognized Dr. Seuss on his birthday during "Read Across America Week"

### Tutoring and more.....

By Julie Dudgeon, Middle School Coordinator

The tutors at all three middle schools incorporate so much more into their programs in addition to homework help. While assignments are a priority, there is plenty of time for activities designed to reinforce state standards and curriculum or to promote personal growth and responsibility. At Jefferson, for instance, students are being challenged to produce their own newsletter. They are interviewing people, writing stories, and gathering information that will eventually be compiled and published. At Washington, tutors are leading a "Boys' Club" where issues facing today's young men are discussed. Persell tutors recently held a Dr. Seuss day and celebrated the famed author's birthday by reading his books and making posters.

Younger students at C.A.R.E. also thrive while participating in math games and doing research on the computer. Reading aloud to the tutors and spending one-on-one time with wonderful, new volunteers, Paul Hedberg and Ruth Lundin, has become a favorite activity, as well. Lincoln Elementary was recently added to the list of Striders tutoring programs in mid-February. Students in grades 2-4 receive the same excellent opportunity for academic support, individual care, and guidance now provided in all Jamestown schools.

### Brain Food on Test Day

By Annette Bittorf, Academic Program Coordinator

School districts throughout Chautauqua County are preparing students for their New York State exams and breakfast is a key test-taking strategy. In the weeks leading up to the test; all students should get up early enough to eat breakfast. Vitamins and minerals from a healthy meal will boost a student's concentration, alertness, and memory skills. Families should have the following foods available to children at home: low sugar cereals, eggs, yogurt, cheeses, other foods high in protein, oatmeal, and whole wheat or multi-grain breads and bagels. The right food choices will give students energy, "feed" their brains, and contribute to their academic success.



**".....breakfast is a key test-taking strategy"**

What Are

### Developmental Assets?



Answer on Page 3

- A) Opportunities, skills, relationships, values and perceptions that all youth need in their lives.
- B) An investment strategy used by Wall Street investors to calculate their year end bonus.
- C) A new 40 second a day training program that guarantees a new you in only 40 days, or your money is refunded!!



By Galena Duba, SAFARI Program Coordinator

The end of the third quarter provides us with an opportunity to reflect on our students' academic progress and personal growth. With the beginning of a new semester in January, we challenged them to set high goals for themselves and identify the steps necessary to achieve these aims. We are proud of the progress our students have made toward their goals, and congratulate those who will achieve perfect attendance and Honor and Merit Roll.

With the end of the school year rapidly approaching, our students are hard at work preparing for Regents exams. In addition to our regularly scheduled classes, we are continuing to offer our after-school tutoring class here at the high school. Tutoring is scheduled Monday through Thursday, from 3:00 to 4:00 pm, in all subject areas. Students who are interested in this opportunity are referred and scheduled by their guidance counselors.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the teachers, counselors, and principals here at JHS who keep an open line of communication with our staff. Their continued support and cooperation is essential to the success of our students.



**2010 Board Members**

- Susan Churchill
- Laura DeCinque
- Marissa DeLeón
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- Michael Engdahl
- Connie Evans
- David Hedberg
- Rosary Kolivas
- Jeff Kresge
- Rob Liebers
- Mike McElrath
- Tim Shults
- Daryl Wadsworth
- John Zabrodsky

**Northern Lights**

By Michele D. Starwalt, North County Coordinator

**Third Semester Student Blues**

*We're looking out the window,  
Day dreaming of the spring.  
Never want to do our homework,  
we have nothing else to bring.*

*School year's almost done,  
we want to be outside.  
From our teachers  
and those tutors,  
we will always hide.*

So goes the song of most students at this time of year. Long days in school, sunny afternoons thinking about bike rides, rollerblading, the beginning of baseball and neighborhood basketball and football games; all of these lure the students away from studying for tests, organizing

their backpacks, and completing their assignments on time. Striders tutors fully understand the frustrations of our students and we go beyond the traditional tutoring sessions to motivate, encourage, and keep our participants on track. Tutors bring in new games from home, create more hands on activities, schedule educational contests, and take our super children outside whenever possible! Sidewalk chalk, bubbles, hoola hoops, pebbles, marbles, etc. can all be incorporated into their daily lessons and assignments with a little imagination, advance preparation, and organization.

Boys & Girls Club of Dunkirk students, along with Striders, have begun monthly field trips to area businesses. The students look forward to breathing in the fresh spring air and learning about the small businesses and industries that make Northern Chautauqua County great. Spreading the Striders word through the group's actions and behaviors throughout the community is a positive endeavor.



"Joel Ferree was not only a tutor and a teacher, but a friend; someone that I could talk and relate to. He had done everything from working at Mickey-D's just for fun to reading 95% of the writers in my ELA book. I loved his stories. He was a writer, even though I didn't read many of his writings in the newspapers. He would tell me of his life experiences which were just as interesting as any book I've ever read. He was a good man and will be missed."

– Summer, Ripley Central School student

Our sympathy goes out to the family and friends of Joel Ferree, who passed away last month. He was a great tutor and friend in the Ripley afterschool program.



What Are Developmental **Assets**?

Contact Chautauqua Striders to learn more about the 40 Developmental Assets approach.

**ANSWER A**

# Outreach Program Bridges School and Home

By Karisse Rotger-Gonzalez, Hispanic Outreach Program



Jamestown High School ESL students learn to support each other through team building exercises at Mission Meadows.

In the five months I have been with Striders' Hispanic Outreach Program, my office at Washington Middle School has become a point of reference for students, faculty, and parents. It has also become a very popular place to have lunch meetings and be a place for interaction with the many students visiting the office on a daily basis. This location has provided me with the opportunity to invest in the lives of young Hispanics.

Recently, a meeting was held at the Eastside YMCA in collaboration with Billy Torres, Branch Manager; Ignacio Parra, Hispanic Outreach Liaison for Jamestown Public Schools; Liz Feinen, Assistant Principal, and Stacey Childress, ESL counselor at Jamestown High School. The idea was to create an open forum for them to express concerns and receive feedback on various topics.

We have been able to establish two groups in which we can provide life experience, character building, and celebrate Hispanic heritage. *The ESL Divas* at Washington Middle School teamed up with ESL teacher, Mrs. Linda Smith, and *Futuro Latino* in collaboration with Ignacio Parra, Kristen Samuelson, and Stacey Childress at Jamestown High School.

To celebrate Valentine's Day, *Futuro Latino* had a gift exchange and offered traditional Hispanic food and music while the *ESL Divas* had a very successful candy sale. We are also recognizing Rafael Kercado-Martes, a senior at Jamestown High School, for being one of the few Hispanics inducted into the Honor Society, a great achievement! This has been a very busy beginning, but I've enjoyed every minute of it and look forward to the months to come.

## Face to Face

By Arrick Davis, Project Reach Coordinator



In today's society, the thrills associated with new technology, including instant messaging, texting and Facebook, create a challenge and even a concern that kids are spending less time in activities face to face.

Springtime is upon us again. Like hitting the refresh button on a computer, it's time to enjoy games and activities that result in spending time together.

This time of year gives children the opportunity to be engaged in a variety of outdoor activities. Simply walking to a park with a friend, playing in a pickup game of basketball, or participating in a spring clean-up day in the community are some great choices. In addition, group games and activities with "ice breakers" and team building concepts are effective ways to connect.

At Striders, our ultimate goal is to reach as many children as we possibly can and to focus on activities that build self esteem, inspire them to believe in themselves, and have respect for others.

"No kind action ever stops with itself. One kind action leads to another. Good example is followed. A single act of kindness throws out roots in all directions, and the roots **spring** up and make new trees. The greatest work that kindness does to others is that it makes them kind themselves."~ Amelia Earhart.

## Transition TEAM

By Sharon Matson, Transition Team/APP Coordinator

We were very pleased to announce that we had two Transition students graduate in January 2010, and one immediately enrolled at Jamestown Community College for this Spring semester. Then we can add more positives because two Alternative Placement Students, who had quit school, decided to return to Jamestown High School, and they are both at the Ashville BOCES Alternative Education Program. Guidance Counselor for the At-Risk Students, Patty Duncanson, maintains a caring and honest relationship with the students, and they return to her for guidance and encouragement for their future goals. I am hopeful that I will get to see more graduations from our Transition students.



I am eager to attend the Middle Schools' 8th grade orientation programs in May to get a list of the students who will be entering Jamestown High School in September 2010. We need to continue to guide and mentor our students and to be ready for the challenges they might have for us.

Think spring and thank you for supporting Striders!

# Mentoring at Striders

Community and School Based Mentoring Programs  
By Loretta Smith, Project Visions Mentoring Coordinator  
and Lorraine Walker, Project ME Mentoring Coordinator



Congratulations to Amanda and Josh Gesing on the birth of their son, Calvin James, who arrived on February 5, 2010. Baby Cal has already made his first office visit and thinks mom needs to stay home for awhile. Amanda will return to work in early April.

David and Loretta appreciate the cooperation of the JAM mentors and thank them for their continuing dedication in mentoring the young people in the JAM program. Field trips for May and June are still in the planning stages.

## Project VISIONS



In February and March, Project Visions and Project JAM participants took part in joint activities. On a sunny but crisp Saturday afternoon in February, mentors and mentees enjoyed a horse drawn wagon ride through Chautauqua Institution. After getting warmed up with some hot chocolate, the group went on to Mayville to look at the Ice Castle. In early March, participants from both programs took in an exciting hockey game between the Jamestown Jets and the Wooster Oilers. Unfortunately Jamestown lost in an overtime shoot-out.

There will be no planned activity in April due to the spring break. May's activity is yet to be determined. June's activity will be the annual family picnic.

We encourage all mentors and mentees to get outside and enjoy the spring warmth. There are many opportunities to get some exercise such as walking the trails at the Audubon Center or Erlandson Overview Park outside of Frewsburg. Just do it!



Project ME

Boy, are we busy preparing for the future! Class of 2011 mentoring students and mentors are researching careers, colleges, technical schools, and the military. Spring will bring college visits and the opportunity to attend the National Gear Up Conference in Buffalo. Some students will attend JCC's summer camp while others will be gainfully employed. We'll celebrate everyone's hard work with a year-end celebration at a "dude ranch" - yeehah!  
**LOOK OUT WORLD - WE'RE READY FOR SENIOR YEAR!**

## What's on track in 2010?

**Hershey's Track & Field Games**  
Thursday, May 27 at 6:00 p.m.

**National Day of Running**  
Wednesday, June 2  
Check website for event schedule

**Track & Field Development Program**  
Registration & First Practice  
Monday, June 14 at 6:00 p.m.

**Track & Field Club Practice**  
Monday, June 7 at 6:00 p.m.

**Golf Scramble at South Hill Country Club**  
Saturday, July 24 at 10:00 a.m.

**Five Week 5 K Training Program**  
Tuesday, August 3 (see website for more information)

**Dan Feather Memorial 5 K Run**  
Sunday, September 5 at 9:30 a.m.

## Student Athlete Spotlight *Savantuary Boyette*

**How long have you been a Chautauqua Strider?**  
Six years!!

**Who is your favorite track and field athlete?**  
Steve Prefontaine

**What is your favorite book?**  
Running with the Buffalos— by Chris Lear

**Who do you look up to as a role model and why?**  
I look up to my grandmother because she's had struggles in life, but they haven't stopped her from being a great person and she raised me to be the person I am today.

**What are your future goals?**  
To break the Jamestown High School record for 3200 Meters

**Where are your college plans?**  
I will be attending California University of Pennsylvania in the fall.

**What is your favorite pre-race meal?**  
Strawberry Pop-Tarts



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## Finish Strong!!

By Pam Gustafson, High School Coordinator

As spring approaches, the days are growing longer and the air is becoming warmer. With just one quarter remaining in the school year, students are beginning to prepare for the rigors of final exams and Regents exams. They are completing projects and looking for summer employment. They are excited about the closure of a year and apprehensive about what the future may bring. Seniors are enjoying their remaining days in high school and finalizing their plans for life as a graduate. Some of them may have a clear picture of what they will do and where they will go, while others are still in the decision-making process. Juniors are completing what was probably one of their most difficult years and gearing up for the rigors of final exams as well as SAT's and other college entrance exams. Their mailboxes have begun to fill with college brochures as they begin the arduous task of deciding what they may want to do in the future. Freshman and sophomores are celebrating being one year closer to graduation and exercising their independence by driving and looking for the perfect summer job.



All that being said, it is important to remind students to remain focused on the days that lie immediately before them. With the pull of nice weather and sunshine, it can be tough for students to remain motivated. Encourage them to finish strong and remain true to their goals. Often when the finish line is in sight, final projects, final exams, and final days can be hurried through and neglected. Striders can be the support students need to help them through the last weeks of school. Programs at the Jamestown YMCA, Eastside YMCA, and the Boys & Girls Club offer tutoring immediately after school and at the Jamestown Y, two evenings weekly. Our tutors understand the stress that young adults experience at this busy time of the year. They are compassionate and deliberate in their attempts to help each student be successful as this year comes to a close.