



CHAUTAUQUA
STRIDERS
MENTORING & GUIDING YOUTH

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

MAKING STRIDES NEWSLETTER

FALL 2010

From the Director's Desk

By Deb Kathman, Executive Director

In August, I marked my 20th year with Chautauqua Striders. It was not only a momentous occasion but also a time to reflect. I, along with most people, cannot believe how quickly those years have passed. For the most part, they seemed to have blurred into one.

When I first arrived at Striders, there were three fulltime staff members with one, used IBM computer. Back then Striders was located in the YMCA administrative offices. Our staff was in one office and our students were in the other. Strider Field had just been dedicated.

During those twenty years, we shortened our name, changed our logo, went through four strategic plans, increased our youth numbers tenfold, added outreach and mentoring programs, partnered with Jamestown Public Schools, expanded services to the North County, secured a federal grant, and much, much more. But when I look back, I see the people who made it all possible (and the youth who benefitted from the work of those people). They are what made Striders great and they are what made twenty years seem like one. I have always said "Striders is about people helping people." We have surely accomplished that!

LIVE UNITED™



and WALK UNITED!

Chautauqua Striders and other United Way agencies recently participated in Walk United at the Jamestown Savings Bank Ice Arena. Pledges for the one mile walk were collected and \$2,368.00 was raised to help support the local United Way campaign. If you would like to make a contribution, contact the United Way at 483-1561 or www.uwayscc.org.

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Tutoring Coordinators, Administration, Program Directors, Teen Center & Project Reach

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Chautauqua Striders North County Office
Boys & Girls Club of NCC
55 East Benton Street
Dunkirk, NY 14048
Phone 716-680-2358
Fax 716-366-2418

Chautauqua Striders Hispanic Outreach
Washington Middle School
159 Buffalo Street
Jamestown, NY 14701
Phone 716-640-5934
Fax 716-483-4268

Additional program information is available online at www.chautauqua-striders.org

Tutoring Corner

Elementary & Middle School News

Preparing Elementary Students for State Exams

By Michelle Waterman, Elementary School Coordinator

Parent involvement is key at the beginning of a new school year. Parents, please get engaged in your child's education! It could mean the difference between school success and failure. When you are involved, students, teachers, schools, afterschool programs, and ultimately, communities are stronger! Here are some great ways to get connected with your school, compliments of www.pta.org:

- Know the names of your child's teachers, principal, and afterschool staff; give them positive feedback, and show them appreciation.
- Approach interactions with school and afterschool staff with a positive attitude and an open mind.
- Listen to others' viewpoints when having a discussion.
- Share your child's strengths, talents, and interests with teachers and tutors.
- Share expectations and set goals for your child with his or her teacher and afterschool staff.
- Make appointments as needed to discuss your child's progress and any questions or concerns you might have and address them honestly, openly, and early on. Attend parent-teacher conferences with specific issues.
- Decide with your child's teacher the best way to stay in touch (phone, email, notes, etc.)
- Understand and reinforce school rules and expectations at home.
- Participate in informal opportunities to talk with and get to know school administrators, teachers, and afterschool staff.
- Attend PTA meetings and afterschool program events regularly.
- Read classroom, school, and afterschool newsletters; visit your school's Web page.

Tutoring and more.....

By Julie Dudgeon, Middle School Coordinator

Tutoring began in earnest on September 7, at Thomas Jefferson and George Washington Middle Schools and is offered Monday through Thursday from 3 pm to 6 pm during the Advantage After School Program. Students are expected to attend Striders for at least one session per week. They receive help with homework and study skills and, in addition, are offered fun and academically enriching activities. Special emphasis is put on fifth graders who get a little extra instruction in organizational skills and what it means to accept the responsibilities of middle school. Students must enroll in the after school program in order to receive tutoring and there is a minimal fee. Applications are available by contacting the schools or Advantage site coordinator.

Beginning in October, tutoring programs will resume at George Persell Middle School, Abraham Lincoln Elementary School, and the Lighted Schoolhouse C.A.R.E. program located in Chautauqua Striders' offices at the Jamestown Y.M.C.A. Contact Julie Dudgeon, Middle School Coordinator, at 488-2203 x 221 for additional information.



At the Washington Middle School Afterschool Program tutor, Ryan Pollino, is playing a game with Zanayah Brackman, after she completed her homework. Daniela Ramirez looks on.



Strider Claus is Coming!!!

Chautauqua Striders annual Striders Claus will be held on Monday, December 13th. We are accepting donations of tissue paper, scotch tape, gift bags, wrapping paper, and new (non- apparel) items for children of all ages, moms, dads, and grandparents. Strider Claus allows children to experience the gift of giving and brings the magic of the holiday season to our most deserving children and their families. Please call 488-2203 to schedule a pick-up of donations or drop off at our office.



By Josh Aufflick, SAFARI Program Coordinator

SAFARI, a tutoring and mentoring program located at James-town High School, is designed to offer students academic assistance during the school day and after school. We provide a supportive environment in which we assist students in identifying areas of difficulty, offer subject tutoring and test preparation, and help them to prioritize, organize, and develop other crucial study habits. For many freshmen, SAFARI plays a vital role in easing the transition from eighth to ninth grade and facilitating the adjustment to the high school environment.

We are excited about this new school year as we help our students build a strong foundation of effective skills, establish positive goals, and realize their potential to excel. Students who are interested in participating in the program should contact their guidance counselors.

Northern Lights

By Michele D. Starwalt, North County Coordinator



Our Summer Academic Enrichment Program at the Boys & Girls Club of Northern Chautauqua County (NCC) received a Community Impact Grant from the United Way of NCC and offered the students an incredible opportunity to attend an overnight field trip at the Niagara Falls Aquarium, and sail on the Spirit of Buffalo while participating in the Buffalo Outdoor Urban Education (BOUE) program.

The BOUE field trip allowed the students to work with hands-on projects, experiments, and actually steer the ship. Each activity reinforced topics of the NYS Learning Standards for science curriculum. During the overnight field trip at the Niagara Falls Aquarium students were able to sleep next to shark tanks and the penguin house. They awoke early to watch a sea lion show and then were able to view the sea lion up close as she demonstrated tricks directly in front of them. Science experiments during programming at the B&G Club consisted of several entertaining group activities including "Blood Candy," which helped the students understand white cells, red blood cells, plasma, and platelets. Candy red hots, corn syrup, candy sprinkles, and mini marshmallows were used to depict components of blood.

Summer is over, fall is now upon us, and we are in the "Back to School ~ Back to Striders" mode. We are looking forward to an outstanding 2010-2011 school year!

Class of 2012 – 2014!

Do you have what it takes to graduate?

By Annette Bittorf, Academic Program Coordinator

Don't expect someone else to make sure you graduate. Make sure that YOU graduate. The requirements have recently changed, and you must be aware. According to the New York State Education Department website, www.nysed.gov, the credit requirements for the Regents diploma program are as follows: **English:** 4 credits, **Social Studies:** 4 credits (including a half-credit each in economics and government), **Science:** 3 credits (including at least one credit each in both physical and life sciences), **Math:** 3 credits, **Physical Education:** 2 credits, **Visual Arts, Music or Performance Arts:** 1 credit, **Foreign Language:** 1 credit, **Health:** 1/2 credit, **Electives:** 3.5 credits.



In order to earn a New York High School Regents diploma, students must pass five Regents exams. A passing grade is 65% or higher. Regents exams are given in English, American history, world history, mathematics, and science. Students who complete all tests with an average score of 90% or higher may be awarded a Regents diploma with honors. Students can complete extra examinations to receive a Regents diploma with advanced designation. In order to earn the advanced Regents diploma, students must pass two extra exams in mathematics and one extra exam in science. They must also complete two extra class units of a foreign language. (Retrieved 9/17/10 from <http://education-portal.com>) This is the academic minimum required through New York State; each school district has its unique sequence and additional credits to earn a Regents diploma.



2010 Board Members

- Susan Churchill
- Steve Deyo
- Ellen Ditonto
- Rich Dixon
- Michael Engdahl
- Connie Evans
- David Hedberg
- Rosary Kolivas
- Jeff Kresge
- Rob Liebers
- Mike McElrath
- Tim Shults
- Daryl Wadsworth
- John Zabrodsky

Hispanic Outreach helps new school year start off *Derecho*

By Karisse Rotger-Gonzalez,
Hispanic Outreach Program

As a new school year approaches, we find ourselves facilitating translation, offering guidance, and providing advocacy to new and established Hispanic families. We see familiar faces and encounter new challenges. In collaboration with Jamestown Public Schools, the program has acquired 39 new students, a number that can increase at any moment. The Hispanic Outreach Coordinator is currently working on registering these students for tutoring and after school programs. In this process, home visits have played a key role. The coordinator's office at Washington Middle School continues to be a reference point for the Hispanic community in Jamestown.

New and exciting projects and activities are being planned for this year, including college trips, character building activities, informational nights, and more. We will continue to work on the development of the Futuro Latino Club at JHS, the ESL Divas and Let's Share Lunch at Washington Middle School.

Confidence

By Arrick Davis, Project Reach Coordinator



One definition of confidence is, having a firm belief, trust, and the resiliency to overcome the “curve balls” of life. As a child growing up, I was very fortunate to have a few people in my life that were influential in preparing me to become the person I am today. Paul Lombardo was my little league coach but he was more than just a coach. He was a mentor who believed in me and taught me how to have a winning spirit. Nancy Carlson was a tutor of mine in high school. She inspired me with her wisdom and passion for helping others. My mother, Daisy, was always there having faith in me, with love and patience, encouraging me not to give up.

As Project Reach Coordinator, my main purpose is to be a valuable resource to the youth in our community. I believe it is imperative to empower them with the importance of having a vision and the determination to stay focused on that vision.

“The reason you have confidence is because of how hard you’ve worked and how hard you’ve prepared.”- Peyton Manning

Making their Stride!!!



Pictured above are: John Strickland taking flight in the Young Men's High Jump at the USATF Region 2 Championships in Pomona, NJ, Mikayla Brown taking aim with the Pee Wee Girls' Turbo Javelin and the Bantam Boys Division taking credit for their participation in the Track & Field Development Program at Strider Field.

Transition TEAM Helps Ensure Success

By Sharon Matson, Transition Team/APP Coordinator

We have begun a new school year and welcomed the incoming 9th grade freshmen to J.H.S. Numerous contacts have been made to the students' homes, as well, in an effort to connect with their parents. Many students are already requesting referrals to other Chautauqua Striders tutoring programs, both during and after school hours. We are pleased to be able to provide support in so many ways and will continue to offer guidance and direction for students throughout the year in an effort to help ensure their success in high school.

In addition, there were many students who were unable to begin this school year with sufficient class materials and I want to especially thank those who donated school supplies. Your gifts definitely made a difference in getting them off to a great start!

Mentoring at Striders

Community and School Based Mentoring Programs

Graduation is on the horizon for Gear Up Project ME students!

By Lorraine Walker

They didn't think it would ever come – SENIOR YEAR! With five years of working toward goals for post-secondary education, the time has finally arrived. There's a flurry of activity as students tend to day-to-day classes and prepare for SAT and ACT tests. They are requesting reference letters, creating resumes and essays, visiting colleges and submitting applications. Technical school and the military will be the future for some upcoming grads.

Even with a full agenda, our mentees and their mentors remain community-minded and always willing to help. Look for our mentoring matches "ringing the bell" at Sam's Club on Saturday, December 4, from 10:00 am to 9:00 pm. for the Salvation Army Red Kettle Campaign.

Create a Game Plan

By David Reinhardt, Program Director

If you watch a football game on television, you can't miss it. A view of the sideline shows the coach reading scripted plays off a rainbow colored poster board. That colorful list of over a hundred formations and plays comes from months of offseason preparation, a week of practice, and hours of studying the opponent's down and distance tendencies. A coach only has a few seconds to pick one play and in some cases, that decision could determine the outcome of the game. Having a plan in place helps the coach be ready for any situation or circumstance.

There are three key elements in creating a successful game plan: 1) identifying the objective to be achieved 2) setting short and long term goals to follow, and 3) setting a time line for project completion. Below are a few examples of how an effective game plan can help get you from point A to Z:

In planning a large track and field competition at Strider Field, it could take a group of local organizers as long as a year to properly prepare. Sub-groups (or committees) are formed to work on the specific details of their assigned areas. Monthly checklists help those groups achieve both short and long-term goals. Communication is crucial to ensure the success of any event. For example, the Officials Committee is charged with making sure there are enough officials present for each competition. The committee would then need to work with the Games Committee to know the event schedules, with the Hospitality Committee to ensure proper food and housing, and with the Facility Committee to make sure the proper equipment is secured for the event.

A teacher uses daily lesson plans in much the same manner and each educator has a unique way of designing and completing them. Some lessons are based on strict district guidelines, while others come out of years of experience and successful practices. Ultimately, teaching young people to read and write, or add and subtract is an important job because the teacher cannot continue to leave children behind in the classroom.

This community is in the process of implementing the Search Institute's *40 Development Assets* as a template to reinforce the positive characteristics young people need to exceed. With this "game plan" in place, local youth will have a better chance to succeed in school, interact with their peers, and avoid the risks of alcohol, drugs, and violence.

Last year, my wife and I sat down and planned out some home improvement projects. For years, we had talked about wanting to fix this or paint that, but we never accomplished anything. The problem was we never could decide on what job to tackle first. This time, we developed a list of projects and prioritized them. Next, we assigned a budget, savings plan, and timeline for each job. Less than a year later, we have completed three major household projects and this fall we will begin another task.

So the next time you, your family, or a group to which you belong has a project to accomplish, draw up a plan, write it down, establish long and short-term goals, assign duties, create a timeline, and watch your "team" go from the sidelines to the end zone!!

JAM Sessions Continue at Striders

By Amanda Gesing



Chautauqua Striders received a three year U.S. Department of Education Mentoring Programs Grant in September of 2007. The main goal of the grant was to match 40 students from George Washington Middle School, C.C. Ring, and S.G. Love Elementary Schools with a caring adult mentor. Currently there are 41 students matched with a mentor in this mentoring program with an average match length of 19 months.

On September 30, the mentoring grant ended and thus a new beginning for mentoring programs at Chautauqua Striders emerged. Project Visions and JAM will be brought together under one name, Chautauqua Striders Mentoring Programs.

The new program has over 100 students matched with caring adult mentors. These mentor/mentee matches meet at school during the mentee's lunch or they get together on the week-ends or evenings to participate in community activities or just "hang out" together.

With our growing number of mentor/mentee matches, we must grow our staff as well, so please help us welcome Alexandra Caldwell. Alex is a Jamestown High School, Jamestown Community College, and SUNY Fredonia graduate. Alex will work with several of the mentoring matches, as well as, assist with monthly group activities.



Chautauqua Striders
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Strong Support!!

By Pam Gustafson, High School Coordinator

I feel incredibly fortunate to have lived my entire life in Chautauqua County. I graduated from high school, earned a bachelor and masters degree, and taught in both public and private schools, all in this county. My good fortune continued when I was hired at Striders as the high school tutoring coordinator. Staying near home has afforded me the opportunity to remain extremely close to my family and my childhood friends. As I said, I consider myself lucky to feel so connected to my community and share that "connectedness" with my children whenever possible. I want them to see that they are a part of something much bigger.

Recently at the Dan Feather Memorial, while I expected to see familiar faces, I couldn't predict that there would be so many of my friends, former students and parents, friends of my children, coaches, and former co-workers. The biggest surprise came when I noticed a large group of participants all wearing pink tie-dyed shirts. This group with "Support Our Striders," across their backs was comprised of members from my extended family. I was thrilled to see my Aunt Nancy surrounded by her children and grandchildren, gathering to begin the 5K as a team--as a family. According to her, there has been an "S.O.S." group in this event for the past seven years or so. This year, twelve members of the Sinatra family began and finished the course, while numerous other family members watched from the sidelines.

The pride that I felt that morning has stayed with me.



The start of the 2010 Daniel Feather Memorial 5 K



The Sinatra family shows its support for the Chautauqua Striders