



July Newsletter

PSL/STRIVE
28 Foden Road
South Portland, ME
04106

Mission Statement:

PSL Services/STRIVE provides a community of support and assistance to people with cognitive disabilities or mental health diagnoses who experience challenges seeking greater independence by respecting the value of each individual, initiating mutually beneficial, sustainable partnerships with business and community leaders, and by creating innovative opportunities responsive to the evolving needs of individuals and families.

July 1, 2018

STRIVE U Graduates Class of 2019



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On Saturday, June 22nd, the STRIVE U Class of 2019 had their graduation ceremony! Located this year at Eastpoint Church, the six graduating students reflected on their two years in the program and all their hard work leading up to this day. The students were awarded their diplomas from both STRIVE U and Purdue University Global. We also heard from community partners from The Greater Portland Metro, Drummond Woodsum, and Commencement Speaker Jane Gallivan, who encouraged the students to "live their lives with purpose" and "remember their roots." All of the graduates are now living independently in their own apartments in the community; achieving the final step of Transition in the STRIVE U Program.

Congratulations to Krista, Dylan, Romil, Bridget, Molly and Owen- we are so proud of you and can't wait to see all you will accomplish!

STRIVE U

Goodbye STRIVE U class of 2019, and hello STRIVE U class of 2021! We have had a whirlwind of a month and couldn't be more excited about it! On June 22 the class of 2019 graduated at The Point in South Portland. Each student made a speech talking about their journey to independence, where they're at now, and their hopes and dreams for the future. Krista, Bridget, Romil, Dylan, Molly and Owen- congratulations. Completing the program and living in your own apartments is a momentous achievement- you will be missed!



On June 23rd we welcomed the new first year students- STRIVE U's class of 2021! Staff, families and students all chipped in to make the day go smoothly. We welcomed 7 new students; Carter, Clare, Bridget, Crystal, Leeann, Patrick and Kirsten. The new students are currently in their few weeks of orientation where they'll learn the ins and outs of STRIVE U. They'll learn about all the residential and community support goals, experience some new places in Portland, take a few boat rides, go to STRIVE Night and SO much more! Moving into STRIVE U was the first step of many in these students journey towards independence, and while it is a busy time full of hard work- it is also fun!



For more information about STRIVE U, contact Caroline Cole at ccole@pslstrive.org.

TOPS Program

TOPS has been on break for most of June, allowing the team to focus in on the new group of students beginning in our ESY (Extended School Year) Program on July 8th. This will be the 5th school year for TOPS, welcoming in 18 students. Our ESY program is 6-weeks long and allows students to transition into the new program and maintain their skills before the busy school year begins.

TOPS is a collaborative program, partnering with area school districts. STRIVE would like to thank each school with whom we have worked and all of the amazing teachers and administrators that we collaborate with; Greeley, Portland- Deering and Portland High, Falmouth, Yarmouth, Old Orchard Beach, Gorham, Windham, Westbrook, Scarborough, Cape Elizabeth, RSU 4- Wales, The Collaborative School, Thornton Academy- Saco and Dayton School Districts, Kennebunk, and our new schools- Wells/Ogunquit, Gray-New Gloucester and Massabesic.



Preston, a TOPS student, at a Sea Dogs game!

For more information regarding TOPS (Transition Outcome program for Students) or to schedule a tour, please contact Betsy Morrison at 207-774-6278 or bmorrison@pslstrive.org.

STRIVE Night



We have been having some amazing Friday nights lately! In June we held an Outer Space theme night, with tons of twinkle lights decorating the room, a planetarium show running on the projector, and glowsticks galore!

We've had some wonderful volunteers join us this month — thank you so much to Darren, Dan and Lauren from USM who have shared their Friday evenings spending time and dancing with us.

In July, we're looking forward to our ever-popular 4th of July theme night! This will be held **Friday, July 5th**. Come rocking your red white & blue and celebrate with us!

Friday Nights at STRIVE , fondly refer red to as "STRIVE Night," is a relaxed but fun evening of socialization for 15-24 year olds. New members are always welcome, and your first night is free! STRIVE Night is every Friday from 6-9pm, with at least one special "theme" night happening each month. For more information, contact Olivia at ofraioli@pslstrive.org.

Tweens

Tweens has had quite a crafty month of June! We made some play-dough creations, friendship bracelets, and some incredible paintings together!

In July, we're looking forward to Spark's Ark joining us again to show us some of his incredible animals! We'll also be making some 4th of July "fireworks" (out of shaving cream!), as well as making some healthy summer snacks.

Tweens is a safe and fun environment to build new friendships and learn new skills for folks 11-14 years old. Structured in our Teen Center, we run every Friday from 3:30-5:30pm. We have a scheduled activity each week, with free time built in to maximize socialization. For more information about STRIVE Tweens, contact Olivia at ofraioli@pslstrive.org.

JULY TWEENS

Fridays,
3:30-5:30
11-14 year
olds

- 07/05
Shaving Cream
Fireworks
- 07/12
Spark's Ark
- 07/19
Fruit Kabobs
- 07/26
Dance Party!

FMI contact Whitney
at wwildes@pslstrive.org

Next STEP

This past month Next STEP has been busy planning for our annual garden. We first established a budget for what we could spend on our garden this season. Then we worked outside and got the beds ready for planting and bought new soil to freshen it up. We worked together as a group to decide what we wanted to plant in our garden. We decided on cucumbers, lettuce, tomatoes, basil, parsley, and strawberries. Every day we take turns in watering the garden and continuing to nurture the plants. In the words of one of our participants, “Teamwork makes the dream work!”

Summer is a great time to continue to learn about and practice health and wellness. We have been going on hikes and learning different ways for how to be active and stay healthy. We have been preparing healthy snacks and lunches in our cooking group and learning ways to stay under our program budget!

We have also welcomed several new participants as they wait for their funding to be approved. As this was the intent of the program when it was originally created, it is great to be able to meet the needs of folks in this manner. As has been mentioned in previous articles, Next STEP is a great option offering quality curriculum for those who are on a waiting list for other services or in combination with other services. We also are available for those who may not qualify for other services and who are interested in broadening their opportunities for independent skill development as well as social connections. Please contact Betsy Morrison at bmorrison@pslstrive.org or 207-774-6278 if you would like more information regarding Next STEP.



Emerge

Emerge is a 3-week, community-based experience for middle and high school students, starting with our TOPS program at the end of July. This year, Emerge will welcome 9 students from 3 different school districts. During Emerge, students practice executive functioning skills and how to learn to have meaningful social interactions with their peers. We are so excited to have our second summer of Emerge, and to meet our incoming students in a few weeks!

For more information on Emerge, please contact Betsy Morrison at 207-774-6278 or bmorrison@pslstrive.org.



Wednesday Night Ed.

In June, our Wednesday Night Educational Series was all about the Great Outdoors! We learned all about wilderness safety, camping skills, environmentalism and more! We also learned about hunting safety from a Maine Game Warden. A special treat this month was learning how to make a camp fire, and getting to make s'mores in the end!

In July, we're looking forward to learning all about Manners & Etiquette! For more information, or to sign up for the class, contact Whitney at wwildes@pslstrive.org.



Bayside

During the month of June, we continued to work on math, money and currency skills. These skills are vital to gaining independence! We have had a lot of fun working on these skills together, gaining more confidence each and every day. We had some amazing Adventure Days last month! Our morning participants took the ferry to Peaks Island to explore the island, catch some sun, and ended the day with some ice cream. On another Adventure Day, we made a return visit via bus to Kentucky Fried Chicken (our folks sure like the Colonel!). We also went to Old Orchard beach for pier fries, ice cream, and fried dough. While there, we visited the Palace Playland arcade.

In June, we also said goodbye to three of our participants as they headed off to STRIVE U! We will miss them, but are so excited for their collegiate endeavors.

For more information on STRIVE Bayside, please contact John at jfehlau@pslstrive.org.

Camp STRIVE



Camp STRIVE is in full swing for the summer! We've already completed two weeks of summer fun, but are so excited for all that lies ahead. So far in Camp, we've visited Pine Point Beach, Get Air Trampoline Park, the USM Planetarium, AND had a show from our friends at Mad Science!

What's most exciting about this summer is our brand new partnership with Camp Mataponi in Naples. Once a week in July we will be heading to Mataponi to swim in their lake, use their ropes course, and more, all while hanging out with their campers and making genuine friendships. We can't wait for all that this partnership will bring!

For more information on Camp STRIVE, contact Olivia at ofraioli@pslstrive.org.



Active & WAVES



In the Active & Waves programs, we have been enjoying the warming weather (on the days it isn't raining!). We have been getting outside and playing some outdoor games, as well as going for some wellness walks.

This month we had an awesome extended day visiting the Maine Wildlife Park and Cryptozoology Museum! We had lots of fun checking out all of the animals— especially the moose! We are looking forward to another amazing summer and enjoying all of the beauty Southern Maine has to offer.

For more information on PSL Services' Day Programs, contact Emily at ewright@pslstrive.org.

Join Our Team— We're Hiring!

Are you or is someone you know looking for work? Look no further! We have full-time, part-time, and per diem opportunities available! We offer flexible hours, generous benefits, and the opportunity to really make a difference in the lives of others and the greater community. We are also offering a \$500 sign on bonus!

For job opportunities or more information about employment with PSL Services/STRIVE, contact Betsy Morrison at bmorrison@pslstrive.org!

STRIVE WorldWIDE

STRIVE WorldWIDE is our new online program to teach independent living skills to individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities. WIDE represents **W**elcoming **I**ndependence **D**iversifying **E**ducation. We launched a successful pilot in April that focused on Personal Safety. Twenty-one students participated in the pilot program, and saw a 20% increase in personal safety knowledge! Our next course is beginning on September 9, 2019, and will be focused on Money Management. Registration for the course is not yet open, but if you are interested in the course, have a question, or want to receive updates on STRIVE WorldWIDE, contact Dr. Anne Ryan at ARyan@pslstrive.org.

AKTION CLUB NEWS:

Aktion Club has had a great start to summer! Our first Car Wash on June 19th collected over \$50.00.

We're excited for our next one on July 17th! Come get your car washed and support our efforts to help a family in need over the holidays!



July Birthdays at STRIVE!

Happy Birthday To:

- Elena Johnson
- Jack Prato
- Jakob McDonough
- Kaj Ovady
- Brady Fitzgerald
- Taylor Googins
- Carter Harnden
- Nate Murray
- Gabby Sloan
- Patrick Taylor
- Olivia Sailor
- Kiki Darling
- Nathan Ickes-Coon
- Jack Christensen
- Nolan Dorrance
- Camden Ryan



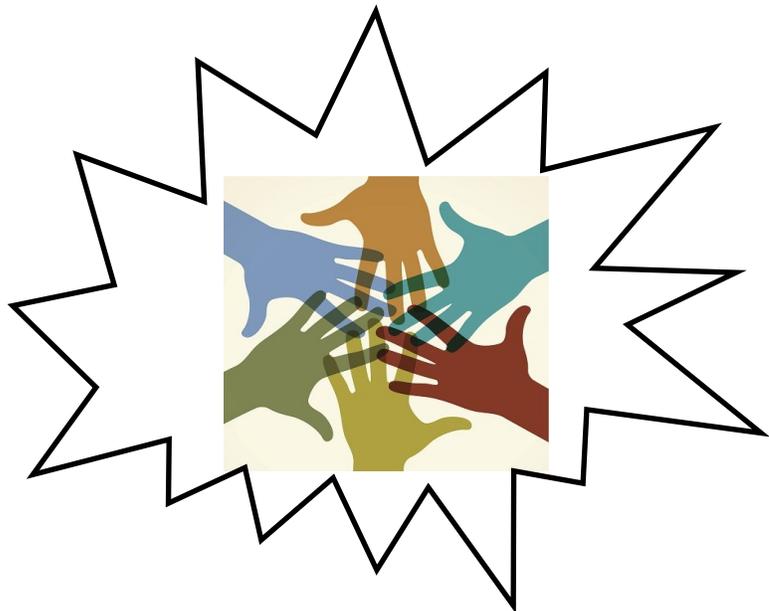
Volunteer Spotlight

Meet our Volunteer, Richard! Richard has been volunteering with STRIVE for several years now, as his two sisters (they are all triplets!) are STRIVE participants. Richard just graduated from Cheverus High School, and was the student body president! Richard spent the entire month of May doing a service project here at STRIVE, helping us with fundraising, and helping out in our TOPS & Next Step programs. Richard was featured in the Portland Press Herald's "Graduates to Look Out For," and will be heading to Boston College in the fall. We will miss you, Richard! Thank you for all of your help!



Thank you to our Donors

- Andre & Daniela Skalina
- Jean Ricciardeli
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- Liz Cotter-Schlaxs' Book Club, In
Honor of Deborah Anne Cotter
- Tracy Welsch
- Elizabeth Cote & Plastic & Hand
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Thank you for your generous support of our programs!



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