

AFK Youth Mentoring



Newsletter - August 2020



Davis and Buddy

"Being a part of the AFK organization, I have had amazing experiences and created friendships that will last forever. I am happy the Athletes for Kids Program gave me an opportunity to form a friendship with my buddy. I have had so much fun and learned a lot from all the hours we have spent together.

For fun, my buddy and I enjoy playing Xbox games (Minecraft and Rock of Ages), painting/building models, drawing, going outside, scootering, playing badminton, going to the store, and playing board games. Throughout the highs and lows of this year, I value the friendship we share, and I am grateful to be able to mentor such a bright individual."

"We have been very fortunate to have found Athletes For Kids 3 years ago and our son has befriended two amazing young men. Davis and our son had an instant friendship. It was like they had been friends for years. We are thankful for Davis's patience, flexibility, and compassion in making a positive impact in our son's life. They both encourage each other to try new things and our son looks forward to their weekly visits. He is accepted unconditionally and feels special. Our son said, "Davis shared a Japanese commercial that sold Calbee chips & I went out and bought them as a surprise and we tried them together. That was a favorite memory. We both enjoy looking a Memes, playing Xbox and he has helped me in more ways than I can think of. " Having a mentor in our son's life has given him more confidence and it has pushed him to be more independent and experience new things. They have Nerf battles, built wooden models, attended Lego Brick Con, ran in a Kids Challenge Mud Race together, went to the Burke Museum, played fun board games, baked, decoded and sent messages to each other with an Enigma Machine II and play Xbox. It has been such a rewarding experience for our families, and we look forward to what other adventures they explore together. Thanks, Davis, and AFK! There needs to be more love, understanding and acceptance in the world like this."

Beneath the Same Sky Virtual Auction



Save the Date for our biggest Fundraiser of the year

We are going "virtual"!

Instead of meeting in person this year, we're hosting our exciting live auction and fundraising celebration "virtually" with a special livestream broadcast on Thursday evening, November 12, 2020!

Watch for announcements later this summer for details on how to register, bid and join the party!

Upcoming Events



Virtual Drawing Workshop

For the third time in a row and back by popular demand, join us on Saturday, August 8th from 11:00 am to 12:00 pm on Zoom for a fun afternoon of virtual drawing the whole family will enjoy. Mentors, buddies and siblings are welcome!

[Click here to register](#)

Blast from the Past



Our monthly short feature highlighting special memories from former AFK mentors.

This month, we are featuring **Trevor Sytsma**, a 2015 graduate of Liberty High School who was an AFK Mentor during his junior and senior years (2013 – 2015) in Renton. In choosing a college, Trevor was very intentional about wanting to study in Southern California, so he scheduled campus visits to six universities in that region. Ironically, he ultimately chose to attend Pepperdine University, after making an *unplanned* visit to their Malibu campus during his college tour adventure. An accomplished cross country and track athlete at Liberty, he also participated in Division I athletics for the first two years at Pepperdine before being sidelined by injury.

Trevor is currently applying to medical school and working as a researcher at the University of Washington and Harborview Medical Center in Seattle, where he studies Alzheimer's and Parkinson's diseases.

AFK: Trevor, what are some memorable insights about your Athletes for Kids experience?

Trevor: “I was really excited to hear about the AFK opportunity at Liberty. At the end of my sophomore year, a classmate of mine had signed up to be a mentor and she encouraged me to get involved as well.”

“I was matched up with my buddy, who was starting 5th grade. I clearly remember my first visit to his home – the door opened and I was stamped by all of the family’s dogs...and then came my buddy.”

AFK: What challenges did you overcome through the experience?

Trevor: “Like many mentors, we got off to a slow start, trying to find a connection. We were both pretty shy in the beginning, but at one of my first visits, I noticed my buddy had a Nerf gun in his room. The next time I came over, I brought my entire Nerf arsenal. Playing Nerf battles outside became one of our favorite things to do.”

“Interestingly enough, the friendship with my buddy ultimately came full circle. We learned how to have fun being very active, but our time together also taught me how to just be present in the moment. I learned to be comfortable with silence and to really to pick up on his energy. I discovered that just being there with him was the true foundation of our friendship.”

With Gratitude

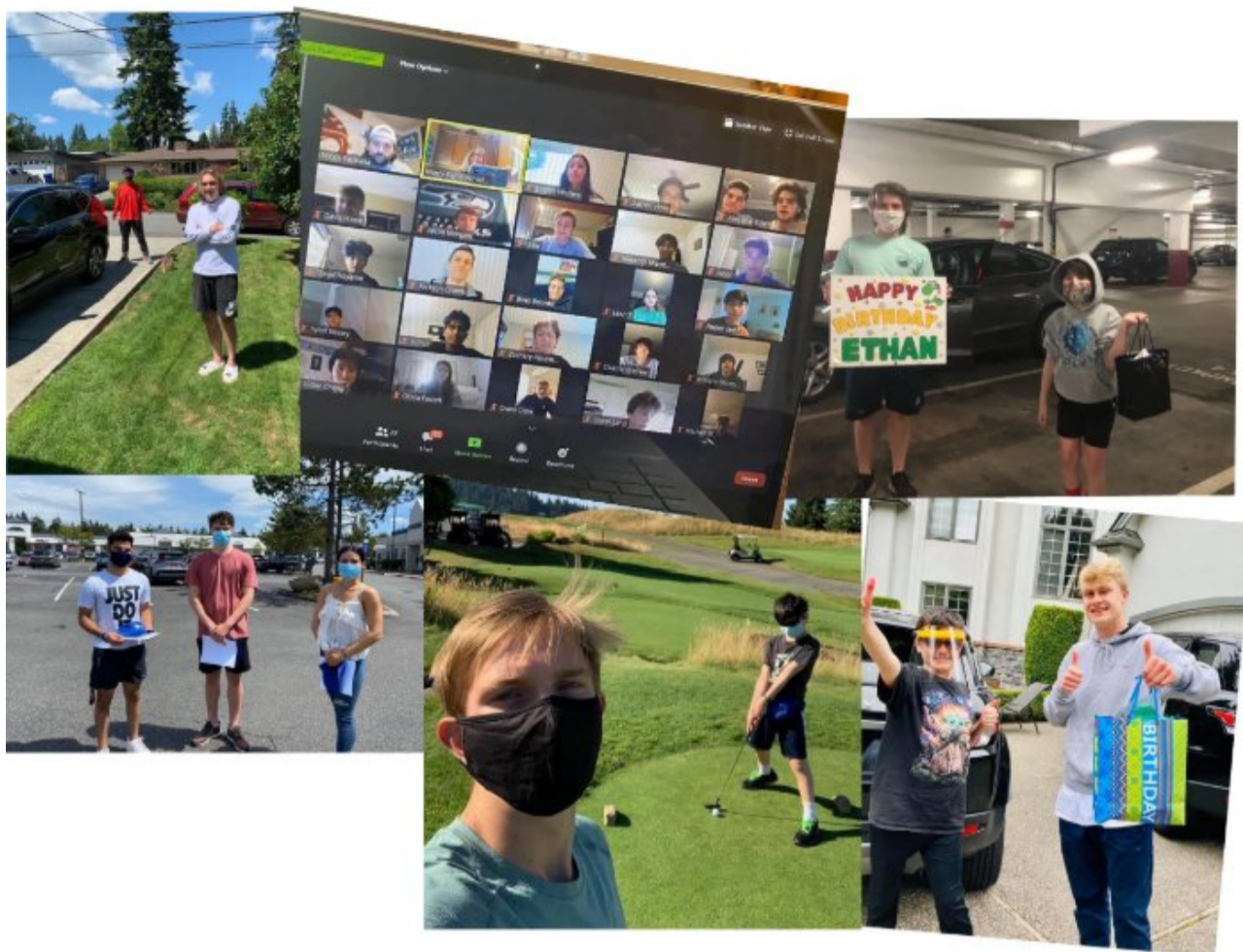


Thank you Niko Carste

This Month, we at Athletes for Kids Youth Mentoring, would like to acknowledge and thank Niko Carste. Niko is going to be a Senior at Eastlake High School this upcoming school year and joined the AFK community in March of 2020. On two separate occasions now, we have asked Niko for his help and expertise in video editing and directing, and twice now Niko has delivered a beautiful finished product. In May we asked Niko to help us with our video for the Mentor Celebration, and in July to help with a video for the JPW Virtual Auction. Both videos can be found on our website athletesforkids.org.

Again, Thank You Niko!

AFK Moments



As we say goodbye to a fun July shared with friends, we welcome sunny days and moments that make a difference and bring joy.

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