

# AFK Youth Mentoring



## Newsletter - May 2020



Athletes for Kids: an organization that believes friendship has the power to restore a child's faith in life. This group has given me the opportunity to mentor a young girl with autism. Being her mentor for two years now, we have created a unique and special bond. In the beginning, she would barely acknowledge me; it was hard to make a connection. However, we now hold hands as we walk, push each other on the swing, and always offer support. Even though she is non-verbal, she is intelligent and can communicate in many ways: her version of sign language, a talk box, gestures, etc. From my constant chatting to her random noises, we understand one another.

My buddy has taught me so much over the years. I have grown more patient, understanding, and creative. This mentorship forces both the mentor and the mentee to be open to new ideas and learn how to compromise with others. For example, I remember one day all my buddy wanted to do was go on her iPad; however, it was not the time for electronics. Of course, you want to give in and make your buddy happy, but AFK is not just about being a friend, it is about being a teacher; a role model. That day we learned compromise. My buddy and I made a deal that if she played outside with me first for a little bit, then we could

go back inside and play with the iPad for 10 minutes. Thanks to my buddy and AFK, I have grown so much, in such a little amount of time.

AFK has inspired me to continue making these connections and touching lives with those around me because everyone deserves a friend. Friendship is too precious to give up - it uplifts you, keeps you on track and helps you grow.

Madi, thank you so much for your friendship with our daughter. One of the things that we always worry about is that she has no connection with kids her own age. We often wonder if she feels hurt when she is not included in activities other kids are doing. For this reason, your friendship meant the world to us.

From the first time you met our daughter, you were completely relaxed and at ease with her. You were happy to get on the floor and sing and play any games she wanted to. You quickly learned how to help encourage her to use her voice box to help aid that communication piece that we are constantly working on.

We are very grateful that you took time from your busy Junior and Senior years to spend time with our daughter both at home, and out in the community. You were the perfect buddy for us - I cannot imagine anyone else could have been as good of a fit!!

## Upcoming Events



### Give BIG

We believe in the power of friendship to keep our community strong. Now more than ever YOU can make a difference in the lives of children with special needs and the high school athletes who mentor them and give friendships that keep our community strong.

[Click here to Give BIG today](#)



### Virtual Bingo

Join us on Saturday, May 16th from 1:00 to 2:00 PM on Zoom for a fun afternoon of virtual Bingo the whole family will enjoy!

[Click here to register](#)



### Mentor Celebration

Zoom on in on Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup> from 4:00 to 5:00 pm as we celebrate our wonderful 75 graduating mentors. Don't miss this special event!

[Click here to register](#)

# Amazon Smile



## Shop and support AFK!

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice. Choose Athletes for Kids as your designated charity next time you shop at Amazon.

# With Gratitude

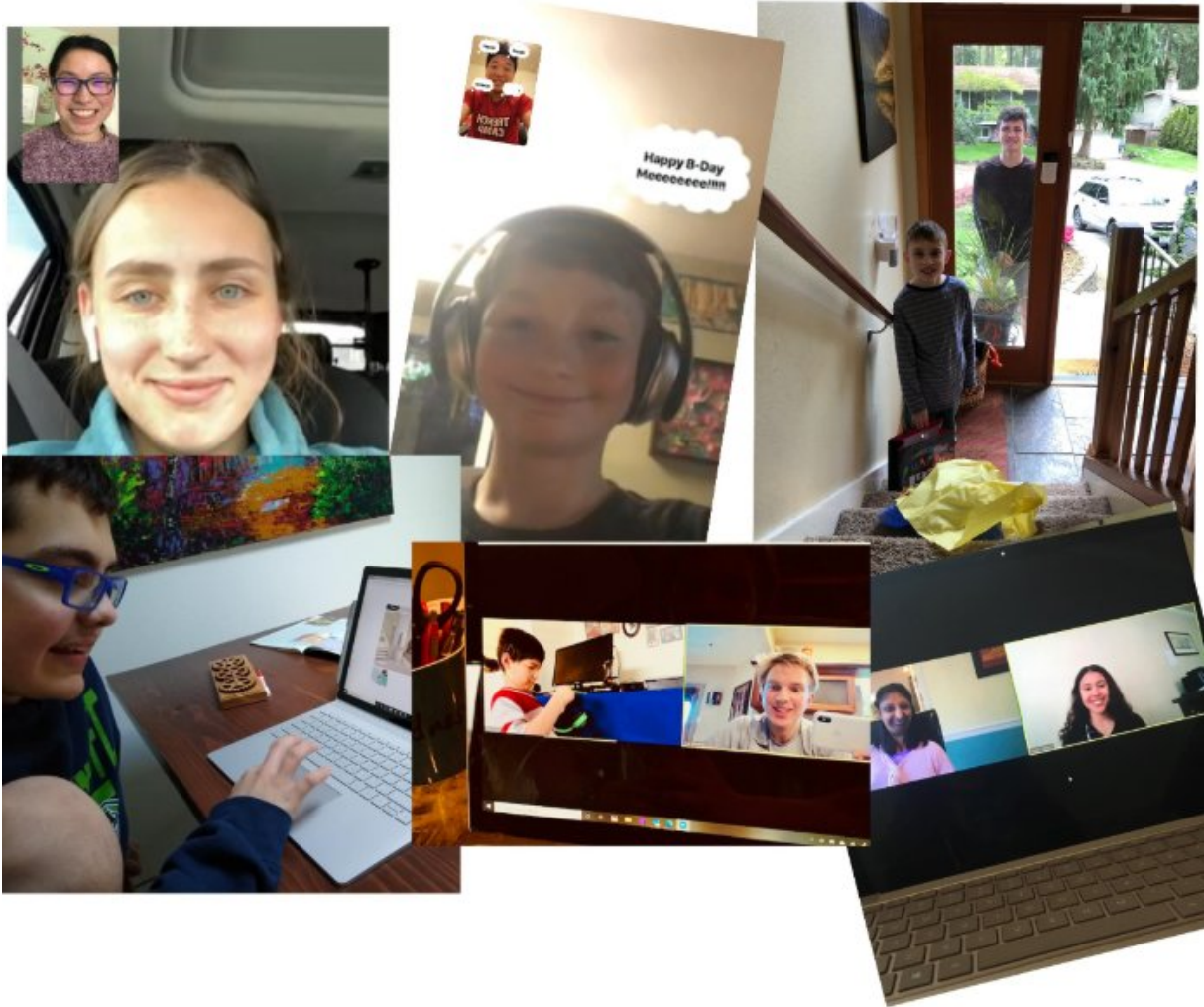


## Thank You Kumunduri Family & Josh Wolters

In April Athletes for Kids had the honor of being featured in Klahanie Neighbors magazine. We are grateful for the Kumunduri family and Senior Skyline Mentor Josh Wolters for allowing the community to see a glimpse of a very special mentorship. A friendship such as this transcends all boundaries and is a glowing example of our vision: A community where individuals of all abilities are celebrated. As Josh said, “What is so important about friendship is the motivation friends give each other. My and my buddy’s life will be forever changed because Athletes for Kids brought us together.”

# AFK Moments





We will continue to work every day to support our mentors, buddies and community and to fulfill our vision and mission in this new environment. We are in this together and we can make a difference, one mentorship at a time.

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