



## Newsletter - October 2020



### MIHS Mentor Derek and buddy

"Being a mentor has been an incredible journey for me so far! I have formed a close bond with my buddy and continue to look forward to seeing him every week. When first starting with AFK and meeting with my buddy, I was not entirely sure what to expect; but once we really got to know one another I found that he was actually the one teaching and helping me. My buddy has so far taught me to always go into things with a positive attitude and to always be ready for a challenge. During peak COVID 19 times, when we were not able to do socially distant meetings, we would FaceTime every week. I would always check in with him to see how he was doing and how he was feeling with all the craziness going on in the world. In turn he would check in with me and make sure that I was okay. He always reminded me that even though we could not hang out in person, at least we were able to see each other virtually. I have had a lot of great memories with my buddy and I look forward to making many more. Being a mentor is a fantastic opportunity and an even better experience.

Athletes for Kids has proven to be an incredible experience for our son. During this usual time where his entire world has been flipped upside down, his mentor Derek, has been a constant in his life. Derek, as our son says, "is a nice and cool pal!" Our son really looks up to Derek and although at times reluctant to try things, Derek has such a way of making him feel at ease with the situation. Derek's positive influence has led him to try new things, go with the flow, and be more flexible. Derek has created a space for our son to feel safe and confident. Derek really pays attention to his likes and dislikes. Their time together is so special. After hanging out, our son is beaming with excitement and enthusiasm. We are so grateful for Derek and AFK!"

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## ***Beneath the Same Sky Virtual Auction***

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### ***RSVP to 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!

[Click here to RSVP](#)

[Click here to procure an item](#)

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## ***Upcoming Events***

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## Halloween Spooktacular

Join us on Saturday, October 31st from 3:00 to 4:30 PM for a frightfully good time! Log on to watch "The Great Pumpkin Charlie Brown" and after the movie we will be drawing our own pumpkins. Mentors, buddies and siblings are welcome!

[Click here to register](#)

## Unity Day: Together Against Bullying



### Wednesday, October 21st - Unity Day

Join us on Wednesday, October 21st at 5:00 PM for a Facebook Live event where mentors from our high schools and Nick Riley, AFK's Mentorship Coordinator, discuss in a live session how they are standing up to bullying through kindness, acceptance and inclusion.

Your actions make a difference and we can help create a world without bullying. Did you know that 95% of AFK mentors reported that as a result of their service they gained compassion for others and their needs? AFK mentors choose kindness today and every day. Make sure to join us on our Facebook Live event and also to visit our website for resources dedicated to educating on bullying and helping victims of bullying.

[Visit our Choose Kindness page](#)

## Blast from the Past



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

**This month includes a special thank you from the AFK Board of Directors and Staff to an extraordinary mentor alumni member – Jayden Mann.**

Jayden holds a special AFK distinction: he became the very first former mentor to return to the organization and serve on the Board of Directors.

Initially, Jayden’s AFK journey began in 2010, when he learned about the youth mentoring program at Eastlake High School. After a rewarding two years of mentor service, he graduated in 2012 and began his college career at Michigan State University. Once he completed his degree in economics in 2017, he returned to the Seattle area and was hired at Costco corporate headquarters in Issaquah as a Financial Analyst.

While working locally, Jayden reached back to AFK to serve as a volunteer. Learning of his financial background and skill set, he was invited to serve on the AFK Board of Directors becoming the very first former AFK mentor to serve in this distinguished capacity.

A bittersweet update: In late September 2020, after two years of dedicated Board service, Jayden announced that he will be moving to Missouri in October to accept a job at Archer Daniels Midland. He will be missed, but he has promised to stay in touch with AFK, an organization that means so much to him (see below).

***AFK: Wow. What an interesting journey you have had at AFK – Mentor, Volunteer, Board Member! Any special memories?***

**Jayden:** “I can still remember the first time I heard about AFK - another Eastlake athlete and mentor from the cross-country team gave a presentation about Athletes for Kids, and I thought, ‘that sounds cool’. Looking back, I am so glad I became a mentor. I learned so much. I really believe that it taught me how to ‘step up’ and take on more direction and responsibility. Best of all, I had a great buddy and buddy family. In fact, I still keep in touch with them...even after all these years.”

***AFK: Jayden, any advice for new mentors joining the program?***

**Jayden:** “Absolutely. The great thing about the being a mentor is that the more you put into it, the more you get out of it. You will be amazed how much it will impact you.”

***AFK: On behalf of the Board of Directors and Staff of AFK: Congratulations on your new career opportunity, Jayden... and thank you for all that you have done for our organization!***

**Jayden:** “It’s been an honor. And just like with my buddy and his family – I plan on staying in touch! I’ll ‘see’ you at the virtual auction on November 12<sup>th</sup>!”

# AFK Moments



As we say goodbye to a fun September, we welcome October and celebrate the impact of kindness, acceptance and inclusion in mentors, buddies and our community.

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