



## January 2026 Newsletter



**IHS mentor Nick and his buddy**

### **Mentor**

I've been a part of AFK since my junior year. Ever since I was 10 years old and I saw the impact the program had on my sister, I knew I wanted to become a mentor. After being matched with my buddy, it felt like we clicked right away. That first meeting, we instantly bonded over our shared joy for lacrosse. We meet every week and spend time playing sports, video games, and just catching up. The thing I am most grateful for is the lifelong friendship we have made.

My favorite memory with my buddy and I happened while we were attending the same lacrosse tournament in Whitefish, Montana. I had the chance to watch him play and see all the things we had been practicing in action. He also watched my game, and hearing him cheer me on, louder than anyone else, was super special for me. The memories and lessons of our weekly meetings are no doubt something I will carry with me for life.

### **Mentee Parent**

Nick has been such a positive force in our son's life. He has done so much to connect and engage with him, from showing up at a lacrosse match to teaching him golf. Nick also shared his lacrosse experience to help our son gain new skills. He spends far more time with our son than he is expected to and has established a friendship and rapport with him that is invaluable. His commitment to building that relationship has been obvious from the beginning, as has been his commitment to making time to see our son, despite how busy he is during his last year of high school.

We are so grateful to have Nick in our son's life. His kindness and engagement have been invaluable.

## **Upcoming Event**



### **Movie with My Mentor**

Join us on **Saturday, January 24th**, at **11:00 AM** for our annual "Movie with My Mentor" event featuring Monsters University at the North Bend Theater!

Mentors, buddies, siblings, and parents are welcome!

**Please note:** Buddies may not be left at the event without their mentor or parent.

[Click Here to Register](#)

## **With Gratitude**

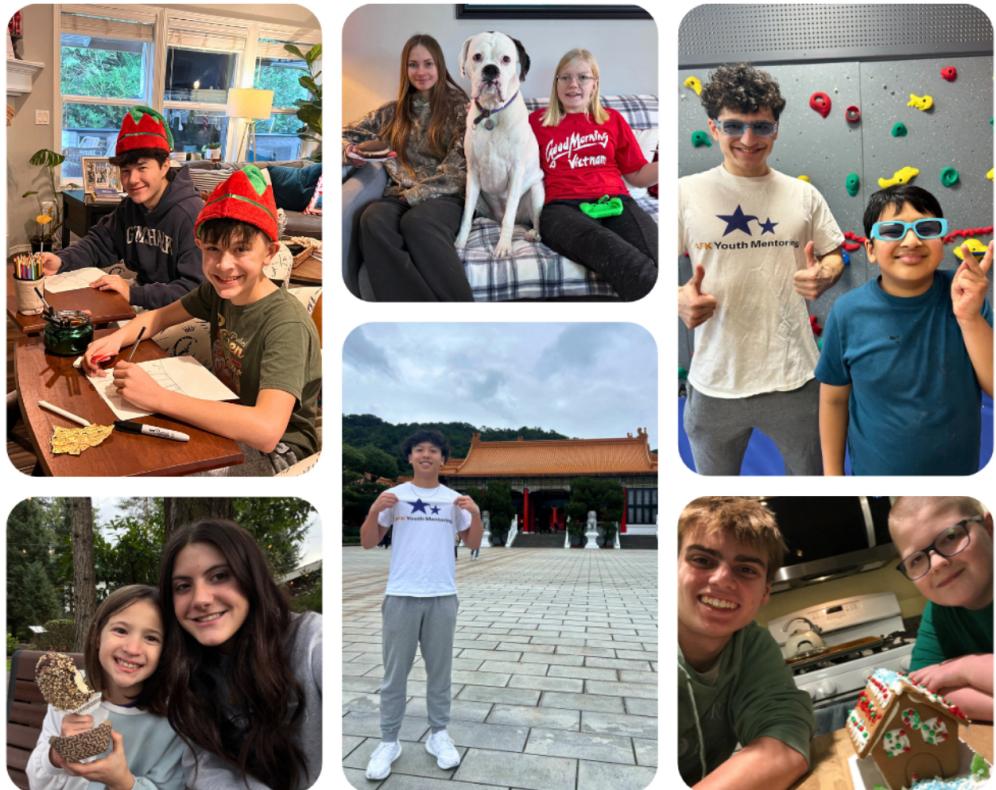




### Thank you, AFK mentors!

As we close out 2025, let us take a moment to thank the backbone of the AFK organization, our wonderful, caring, and committed mentors! In the past year, AFK mentors have completed 7,000 mentoring hours, volunteered at AFK events/partnerships for over 1,000 hours, and attended training for 300 hours. This level of commitment, as well as compassion, is what makes the Athletes for Kids program so unique. We are grateful for the young men and women in the program, and for the impact they continue to make in the lives of their buddies and the community as well.

### AFK Moments



As we reflect on a month of memories, we look forward to more mentorship moments and embracing acceptance, friendship, and kindness every day.

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