

Mission Statement

The Second Mile challenges young people to achieve their potential as individuals and community members by providing opportunities for them to develop positive life skills and self-esteem as well as by providing education and support for parents and professionals addressing the needs of youth.

**THE
SECOND
MILE™**
Providing Children
with Help and Hope

Fall 2007
Milestones
www.thesecondmile.org

Sounds of a Second Mile Summer

The sounds of this Second Mile summer began with applause for Chester County Friend Fitness participants. As their graduation from high school was celebrated, along with their admissions to Arizona State, Gettysburg, Ithaca, Kutztown, Lock Haven, Penn State, and the Culinary Institute in Philadelphia, seven seniors received recognition tee shirts and basked in the cheers of their mentors, families, and fellow Friend Fitness mentees at a gathering hosted by Outback Steakhouse. Several were also honored for their service as peer mentors during their senior year, and two hope to continue mentorship as they enter college in the “backyards” of our Friend Fitness sites in Centre and Clinton Counties. A few weeks later, seniors graduating from our Centre County site were similarly lauded.

But the joyous applause and accolades often don't capture some of the struggles on the road to these milestones or the important, supporting role of mentors in their attainment. Fortunately, some of the most heartwarming sounds of summer are from parents offering their thoughts about that support. *As one mother shared, “The Friend Fitness Program saved my son, more than his teachers, his counselors, and his family. His mentor is a savior. He calls. He comes by the house. He has made all the difference in my son's life. Thank you.”*



Friend Fitness seniors, mentors, and family members at recognition celebration.

More than 120 youth benefited from the caring support of mentors this past year.

Often echoing these sentiments about the importance of Second Mile support are the families of the 740 young people who participate in the Challenge Program. These youngsters kick off their year-round program involvement with a one-week residential summer program that focuses on goal-setting, social skill building, and community service. They then spend the year following camp trying to earn a return trip by meeting the academic and community service goals set at camp, supported by contact from The Second Mile. Thus, some of the sounds of summer include the enthusiastic reports of family members about their campers' school year progress. As one thankful grandmother emailed:

Sounds of a Second Mile Summer continued on next page

State Office
1402 S. Atherton Street
State College, PA 16801
(814) 237-1719
FAX: (814) 237-4605

Southcentral Regional Office
3607 Rosemont Avenue,
Suite 501
Camp Hill, PA 17011
(717) 763-4614
FAX: (717) 763-4616

Southeast Regional Office
588 North Gulph Road
Suite B109
King of Prussia, PA 19406
(610) 491-9440
FAX: (610) 491-9441

www.thesecondmile.org
office@thesecondmile.org

The official registration and financial information of The Second Mile™ may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling toll-free within PA, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.



Reflections from the Founder

Summer is a busy time for Second Mile programming, so it's a time that highlights our need to have the facility about which I've written previously, The Second Mile's Center for Excellence. I'd like to share obstacles we confronted this summer that would have been nonexistent with our own facility.

We started the season with a four-day camp staff and volunteer training for more than 100. Not only did we have difficulty securing a reasonable rental that met our program needs — with areas for initiatives and camp simulation and classrooms appropriate for both lecture and camper activities — but we also required a space that would allow us to "self-cater" since many of our meals were generously donated. Then, we faced the challenge of overnight housing for that staff — a challenge met through countless calls and donations of "floor space," often without shower facilities. Fortunately, these are camp counselors, but the time spent arranging by our office staff and the time spent traveling to and from the site by our camp counselor trainees would have been better utilized in further training and attending directly to Second Mile kids.

There were similar situations throughout the summer. SMILE campers needed last-minute indoor housing because tents and tarps wouldn't be safe in a major thunderstorm. Campers needed to be transported to a distant facility with appropriate high and low elements courses. These arrangements came at the expense of valuable program time for kids.

And there continue to be lost opportunities. Our Friend Fitness Program didn't have a place for all sites to come together for a year-end mentor training and mentee awards celebration. And our foster parents missed out on a family retreat. The Center for Excellence will provide opportunities and overcome obstacles. I look forward to sharing our progress in future columns and thank you for your support of The Second Mile.

Jerry Sandusky

Sounds of a Second Mile Summer continued from cover

"Good afternoon to The Second Mile. I'm sending a picture of one excited Second Mile camper as she arrived at camp this year. Sarah was so elated that Boot, her special counselor, returned to camp this year. Thanks to The Second Mile (and Boot), this camper studied hard all year so she could return and developed self-esteem and lots of love for others.



"When she came home at week's end, Sarah said she loved every minute of the week. She told her gram that to swim with Jerry Sandusky was very, very special. Thanks to you, Sarah hopes to "stay on the bus" [the camp theme] and take many right roads to success and happiness. She knows goals are so important, and her report card tells it all. She strives to do well so she can return to The Second Mile. Thanks for making this possible for her and so many." —Sarah's gram

Sarah's grandmother also reported, with justifiable pride, that Sarah chose to meet her community service goal to return to Second Mile camp by organizing a fundraiser for the American Cancer Society that raised \$800+! And she was not alone in this achievement. This summer, more than 100 campers were recognized for exemplary community service. Additionally, based upon the behavioral ratings and reports from their referring school counselors, The Second Mile presented 159 campers with Distinguished Achievement medals and certificates, 134 campers with High Achievement certificates, and 274 campers with Achievement certificates as their fellow campers and staff cheered.

In addition to the celebration of camper school-year accomplishments, the sounds of summer also include laughter and shrieks as foster family

members participate in a plethora of recreational and educational activities, thanks to the generosity of our many partners. Amusement parks, baseball fields, swimming pools, picnic grounds, playhouses — our Foster Family Support Program fills the season with fun for children who have experienced abuse or neglect and camaraderie for the foster parents who have opened their hearts and homes. As two Westmoreland County foster parents wrote,

"Thanks so much for the wonderful day our family had yesterday at Idlewild Park! We were thrilled to have the opportunity to spend the day with our children at this great amusement park. Our children range in age from 3 to 22 years old, and everyone had a great time. We stayed until the rides closed and, after a fun-filled day, took our exhausted group home filled with happy memories. Thanks for the special opportunity that we would not have been able to experience but for your generosity."

It is your generosity — our individual, corporate, foundation, organization, and special event donors — that makes all these sounds possible. As we prepare to kick off our academic year programs, we thank you for the opportunities you made possible this summer and invite you to visit our programs during the school year to experience the "sounds" for yourself!

Miles Ahead

Past Second Milers: Where Are They Now?



Thoughts from the President

Every summer I watch our seasonal staff mentor youth who become part of our Challenge Program family. These children come to us as eight year olds and, using the skills they learn from these counselors, earn return trips in successive summers by meeting goals they set while in residence. They strive to earn return trips because our counselors shower them with encouragement and acceptance. The creation of this caring community starts with our full-time staff, dedicated to introducing the significance of the mentor role. One way they introduced that this year was to compose personal letters to staff, portions of which I excerpt here:

"Can I just start by saying what an amazing time I had at training? It's because of your enthusiasm and participation." [Melissa] "Let me also take this opportunity to welcome you to our family. It's big and random, but you will not find a group of more passionate, supportive people on this earth. I'm glad to have found this family and thank you for providing our children and staff with a safe place to be our best selves." [Jeremy] "I could walk you through the ups and downs of my first week as a counselor, but let me leave it at this. As I told my family about my week, I broke into uncontrollable tears. While I had planned to earn 'kid' experience, service hours, and a little money, I ended up with an experience that changed me more than I can ever express." [Brett] "I think the best piece of advice I can add is to take this experience and soak it all up! There is nothing like it. You'll hear from almost every camper, counselor and staffer that this is the most memorable week out of the year." [Crystal] "If you get one thing out of my letter, I hope it's encouragement that you make the experience last the entire year by staying in contact with your group. It will take some work and effort, but the more you put into it, the more the kids will get out of it." [Meghan] "Since there is no magic button to fix the big issues in the world, we need to remember that sometimes the seemingly smallest acts can have a huge impact. Leo Buscaglia said it perfectly: 'Too often we underestimate the power of a touch, a smile, a kind word, a listening ear, an honest compliment, or the smallest act of caring, all of which have the potential to turn a life around.'" [Marc]

I thank our entire Challenge staff for never underestimating that power.

Stephen Entner

Then

Involved with Second Mile programs for six years, Stephen attended Summer Challenge for four years and SMILE for a year and spent his last year in the Leaders Group. He has been a scholarship recipient through The Second Mile's Children's Fund.

Fondest Memory

My fondest memory is of the SMILE program when we slept outside, walked on the wire, climbed the cliff face, canoed, and cooked outside. The best time of all was playing laser tag during Leaders Group.

The Second Mile's Impact

The Second Mile has helped me with my anger issues. It has helped me gain patience and finally helped me be more social.

Now

Stephen is currently attending Trident Technical College, where he is majoring in Culinary Arts. He hopes to own his own restaurant one day and, perhaps, to serve as a Second Mile camp counselor.

Ekaterina "Kat" Yakhnina

Then

Ekaterina was involved in The Second Mile's Friend Fitness program for nearly five years and is a Second Mile scholarship recipient. After participating in high school for three and a half years, she decided to become a mentor upon entering college. She currently mentors a girl named Tyler.

Fondest Memory

Some of my best Second Mile memories are ones of mentoring Tyler. She brings a lot of spirit and energy to workouts. She complains about the exercises she doesn't like, but she still not only does them, but does them with happy energy that's amazing to see.

The Second Mile's Impact

Over the years I spent at Friend Fitness as a 'mentee,' I got stronger physically and psychologically. I became more confident in myself.

Now

As a current Penn State student, I found that self-confidence has been helpful. I served as a Teaching Assistant this past fall, and I needed all the confidence I could get.

Miles To Go

The Second Mile's Southwest Region

Pitt vs. Penn State Golf Coaches Sandusky and Majors with Roger Kingdom.



The 11-county Southwest region is home to one of The Second Mile's largest special events, The Pitt vs. Penn State Golf Challenge, which features former Penn State and Pitt players and more than 210 golfers swinging their clubs to support The Second Mile and charities of Johnny Majors. This event, along with the support of individuals, foundations, and corporations, enables The Second Mile to provide opportunities to thousands of students in the region.

Our three prevention programs are frequently requested by area professionals. During 2006, 226 school counselors received Nittany Lion Tips cards that were then distributed to more than 25,000 students. Another support program, Prevention: Education and Awareness for Kids (PEAK), has been used by 159 facilitators, helping elementary and middle school children develop the skills to deal with negative peer pressure, to improve self-esteem, and to address bullying.

Our third prevention program, The Leadership Institute, is designed for high-school sophomores. Each school staff selects a team of five students to represent a diverse cross-section of their student body. Along with a mentor, these teams attend our conference, designed to develop leadership skills and to promote inter-group harmony. To ensure that the team leads diverse factions of students in working together upon their return home, we task the teams with implementing an action plan for community or school service they designed at the Institute during their junior years. In 2007, ten teams from the Southwest region attended the Institute, and students from Beaver Falls, Blacklick Valley, Chartiers Houston, Elderton, Hempfield, North Allegheny, North Catholic, Portage, Quaker Valley, and Shaler developed project action plans

ranging from the creation of a Diversity Day to a peer tutoring program. These students, now juniors, are currently leading their fellow students in the implementation of those plans.

In the area of early intervention in 2006, 29 youth received scholarships for The Second Mile's Summer Challenge Program, providing a week of overnight skill-building camp and the opportunity to earn return trips to camp in future years based upon goal completion. Additionally, 120 youth participated in the PACK Program, a Johnny Majors charity, which is a day camp offering instruction in a variety of sports and physical activities. While numbers for summer 2007 were not available prior to press time, we anticipate serving more youth in 2007.

Last, but not least, children and families from the Southwest region have also been aided by The Second Mile's community-based programs. The Second Mile's Foster Family Support Program provided 2007 Foster Family Day at Idlewild Park for 250 foster family members. Additionally, the Children's Fund, a Second Mile program designed to help meet children's needs through education or training assistance, provided scholarship support for three area young people.

These programs and services would not be possible without the hard work of the Southwest Golf Committee and many other donors and volunteers. Sponsors, golfers, donors, and volunteers interested in supporting The Second Mile's work with children are always welcome and needed, especially since we have a Southwest Regional Office in our future plans. To learn more, contact Hank Lesch at hank@thesecondmile.org or 814-237-1719.

Special Projects

Creative Ways to Support

Second Mile Youth

While The Second Mile organizes many fundraisers, we are also the benefactor of funds from "special projects" organized by corporations, organizations, or individuals. The projects, reviewed in advance by The Second Mile, are as unique as those creating them. This past year, they included activities such as 50-mile and 5K Run/Walks, motorcycle and bike rides, and meets and tournaments, all with pledges or entry fees donated to The Second Mile. Other projects involved a donation of the proceeds of an event, or a portion thereof, for Second Mile kids, and still others included the implementation of special events or direct "solicitation" for donations.

We thank those who undertook special projects to benefit The Second Mile and invite those interested in special project fundraising to contact our Development staff.

Avalanche Express
Brett Cowan
Brian's Run
Checkers Bistro
Chicos
Cumulus Media
Curves for Women
Garfield's
Ricki Hevner
Houlihan's
Isaac's
Juniata College
Lakemont Park
Lock Haven Cross Country
Lyons' Family
Vinnie Raineri Memorial
Reflections Restaurant
Steve Seltzer Honda
Smeal College Management Assn.
Stauffers of Kissel Hill
Taco Bell
Texas Roadhouse
Turner Construction

NEW ADDRESS: SOUTHEAST OFFICE

588 North Gulph Road
Suite B109
King of Prussia, PA 19406
(610) 491-9440
Fax (610) 491-9441

Miles of Smiles

The Year in Special Events



▲ Lancaster Chapter Spring Celebration



◀ KPMG Celebration of Excellence



▲ Universal Media Celebrity Golf Classic



◀ Berks County Kick-off For Kids



▲ Pitt vs. Penn State Golf Challenge

Art Auction ▶
(chairs at camp)



◀ Chester County Golf Classic



◀ Clinton County Sports Night & Silent Auction

The Golf Classic ▶



Mercedes Benz ▶
Reverse Drawing

◀ The Reverse Drawing



▶ The Sandy Kranich Penn State Celebrity Golf Benefit



▶ Clearfield Chapter Monte Carlo Night

▲ CAI Lehigh Valley Celebrity Banquet

