

Improving Lives...



**ANNUAL
REPORT
2019**

One Stride at a Time

Dear Special Strides Community,

Recently, when we asked our staff to provide us with their personal mission statement for Special Strides, I was enlightened and delighted! Our staff included words like “improving lives, highest standard of professionalism, positive impact, making a difference, passion, strength and discovery.” These were the very words that brought to mind my own of twenty one years ago, when the inspiration of creating Special Strides was actualized. We continue to “begin again” every day, with the shared mission of providing individuals with special needs, families, volunteers, interns, employees and you, our community, with the realization of what “hope” can become.



“Hope” at Special Strides is witnessed every day! Throughout this booklet, you will find quotes from members of our Special Strides family. Our staff, volunteers, interns, clients and donors are our proof that our words in our mission have direct benefit! We produce “hope” towards a common good for all. We look at our community as our harvesters, our valued resource! We celebrate and are grateful for your time, talent, referrals and philanthropy. Together, we make a difference in “improving lives one stride at a time.”

“I can do this!”

– Jake, a young five year old boy with autism and anxiety.

“I have learned so much and it has definitely confirmed my passion!”

– Megan, an Occupational Therapy Intern.

“Everyone leaves Special Strides feeling happier, more positive and more empowered than when they arrived.”

– Monica, a staff member

“Forever grateful for such an awesome opportunity.”

– Heidi, an adult participant in our Centra Strides program for adults with multiple sclerosis

“I found a place that does such good for my soul.”

– Anna, an adult volunteer.

“Special Strides is a beacon of hope.”

– Russ, a parent of a child with autism

“It is an extraordinary place that improves the lives of everyone it touches.”

– Joann, a donor, after a tour.

With appreciation,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Laurie Landy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Laurie Landy, Founder



A Message of Hope from your Executive Director

The year 2019 epitomized how Special Strides harvests hope at all times and for all individuals: clients, staff, and donors. One of the seeds that was allowed to blossom was the identification, prominent display and solidification of our core values: respect, empathy, positivity, possibility, teamwork and knowledge. This step forward cultivates greater unity in the staff with many of our stakeholders participating in the development of our stated values. Another seed was planted and nurtured as Special Strides partnered with CentraState in the creation of CentraStrides for MS . A wellness program incorporating therapy, recreation and education for adults with multiple sclerosis. (It is the talk of the town!) Funded through the Kessler Foundation the program runs through the end of 2020.



Throughout the year change was seen everywhere. Individuals left our staff due to family relocation, pursuit of new careers, and college entry; however, new individuals arrived with new skills, new energy, new ideas, and new excitement. One of the biggest internal changes was ignited by a new volunteer and in collaboration with me, we launched GOOGLE SUITE into our Special Strides world. This network is the electronic string that holds us all together- it brings the schedule in real time to the barn, allows several of us to create and share together, facilitates communication throughout the organization with our new internal website, and promotes the flow of information smoothly enabling everyone to focus on our biggest job of all - improving the lives of the individuals who walk through our doors every day.

I am very proud of our staff. They have stepped outside of their comfort zones on many days (myself included) and continue to HARVEST HOPE for their clients and riders, the organization and themselves.

Thank you for joining us in the cultivation of the many small seeds that are planted every day at Special Strides.

With sincere gratitude to all,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Susie'. The signature is fluid and cursive, written in a professional but personal style.

Susie

Our Mission –

Special Strides is a non-profit organization devoted to improving the lives of individuals with special needs. With a unique combination of therapy, horses, and the natural environment, individuals achieve goals appropriate for therapy, recreation, and education. Special Strides provides all individuals an opportunity to “Improve their lives... one stride at a time” regardless of financial status.

Support Team -

Laurie Landy, OTR/L

Founding Director, Development

Susie Rehr, PT, HPCS

Executive Director

Jane Burrows, PT DPT, HPCS

ESMHL

Carol Ann Rofrano,

Liaison to the Junior Committee of Young Leaders

Beth Miller,

Development Specialist

Charlene Skwara,

Barn Manager and Adaptive Riding Instructor

Lindsay Clark, PT DPT

Meredith Gebel, PT DPT

Deanna Gebele, PT DPT

Maureen Rubin, PT

Sasha Potter, Marketing and Communications

Amanda Sowa, Equine Trainer, Therapeutic Driving and Adaptive Riding Instructor

Dina Parrello, Adaptive Riding Instructor and Equine Specialist in Mental Health and Learning

500+ volunteers including sidewalkers, horse handlers, office assistants and

Junior Committee Leaders and our equine partners: AJ, Barry, Buttercup, Dreamer, Johnny, Juliet, Magic, Milo, Pretzel, Romeo, Snowy, Snuffy, Summer, Sunny, Templeton, Ticonderoga



Board Member Highlight –

Celia Mastbaum –
Founding Board Member

Celia Mastbaum has worn many hats over the past two decades: Special Strides client parent, board member, donor, and volunteer. Looking back, her earliest memory of Special Strides is turning off the main road into the farm and thinking about how long she lived in the area and never knew it existed. To Celia and her son, that was an incredible moment. Recalling that moment, she shared, “it’s helping Matthew get onto a horse.”



Upon reflection, Celia stated that being a part of the Special Strides family has made an undeniable difference in her life. “Nothing is more rewarding than knowing you’re improving the lives of those in need – especially when they’re your neighbors.” She continues to believe that donors are “having a direct positive impact on the local special needs community.”

Board of Directors

Gary Fox
Patricia Gallagher
Daniel Goldstein
Zachary Gross
Neal Herstik
Rob Kash
Laurie Landy
Samuel Landy
Celia Mastbaum
Allison Nagelberg
Susie Rehr
Carol Werthan



Donor Dollar Impact –

The Steven Werthan Memorial Fund provides financial assistance to individuals who cannot afford the services or programs offered at Special Strides. Our annual Fund A Child campaign provides much of this necessary funding. In 2019 the Board of Directors awarded \$156,975 to eighty eight clients. Other contributions raised during Junior Committee Events such as “The Extreme Stride Challenge”, general donations and grants received throughout the year reduce the overall cost of services and programs to the lowest possible amount thereby making our care affordable to all. All donor dollars go directly to financial assistance, horse care, or operational expenses yielding affordable services and programs to all individuals who can benefit from therapy, recreation, and education at Special Strides.



Financials

Income

Revenue Program:	\$337,194
Fundraising:	\$392,775
Contributions:	\$212, 535
Grants:	\$50,000
Total:	\$992,594

Expenses

Program:	\$669,864
G/A:	\$77,189
Development / Marketing:	\$93,734
Total:	\$840,787
Net Income:	\$151, 717



2019 Annual Report Acknowledgement-Donors...

WE couldn't do it without you!!!!

10K Plus

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Mr. Jacob Elkes
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Dr. Jane Burrows
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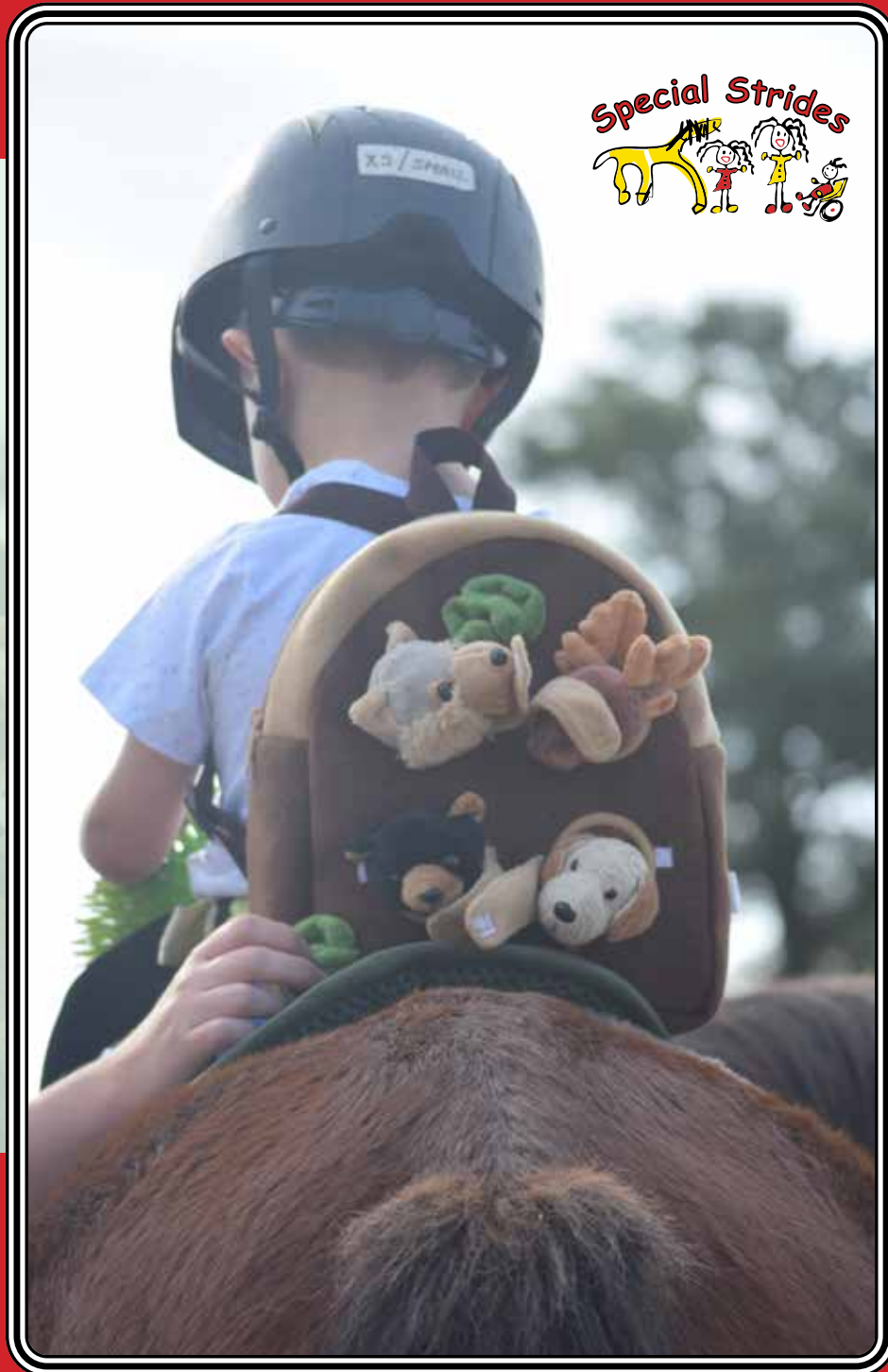
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Please forgive us for any omissions or errors. Please contact development@specialstrides.com to indicate any errors so we can correct them for future publications

Improving Lives... One Stride at a Time



Special Strides | 118 Federal Rd. | Monroe, NJ 08831

To donate or review the financial report, go to www.specialstrides.com

To learn more about Special Strides, please visit our website: www.specialstrides.com

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