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DFRC ANNUAL NEWSLETTER | 2023 ALUMNI, FAMILY, & FRIENDS

FROM CHEERING TO COACHING CARLY'S LASTING FRIENDSHIP WITH ZEKE!

Since its initiation in 1974, the DFRC Hand-in-Hand Program has helped to bring thousands together to encourage acceptance, inclusion, equality, and appreciation for the ABILITIES of all people. Through the Hand-in-Hand Program, high school participants—football players, cheerleaders, band members, and school ambassadors—are offered the opportunity to be matched with

children and young adults with intellectual disABILITIES. This program allows them to get to know one another and, possibly, build relationships that last far beyond the final moments of the big game.

Carly Mutschler has loved being a part of the DFRC Blue-Gold Family since she was selected to represent her high school as a cheerleader in the 2015 DFRC Blue-Gold All★Star Football Game. When she signed up for the Hand-in-Hand Program, she had no idea how great an impact the program and her relationship with her buddy would have on her.

“When we first met, it was a little nerve-wracking—I didn’t anticipate growing so close,” Carly shared, looking back on her experience of being matched with Zeke Banbury, her DFRC Blue-



★ ★ ★

ZEKE & CARLY

have been friends since 2015, when Carly participated in the DFRC Blue-Gold Program as a Blue cheerleader.

Zeke has participated as a Hand-in-Hand Buddy since 2014.

Gold Buddy, during her senior year of high school.

“He’s changed my perspective on a lot of things and opened my eyes to how good a relationship can be.”

Zeke loves participating in the Hand-in-Hand Program and getting to know his high school participants each year. Even with his circle of friends growing with each new Blue-Gold year, he especially loves spending time with Carly, continuing the friendship that started through DFRC seven years ago!



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Kindness Matters!



I am honored to be your 2023 DFRC Blue-Gold All Star Football Game Chair! I am in my 7th year with DFRC Blue-Gold thanks to my Uncle Gary a.k.a. "UG"— a previous DFRC Blue-Gold Game Chair and current DFRC

trustee. During this amazing time that I have spent on the Blue-Gold committee, I have been merchandise chair and, for the past two years, the Game Day chair. I look forward to a great year!

This year's tagline is **Kindness Matters!!** In today's society, we need to show as much kindness as we can to each other. It doesn't matter if you're a football player, cheerleader, band member, ambassador, buddy, committee member, or fan in the stands, we should all be kind to one another. You never know what kind of day the person next to you is having, so just say one kind word to that person— that one word can change a person's entire day! Remember to throw kindness like confetti!

Merlyn Burns, 2023 Game Chair

2023 DFRC Blue-Gold Executive Team:

Merlyn Burns, Tony Glenn, Bill Grant, Mary Lenhoff, Jada Little, Martha McDonough, Gary Mensinger, Sandy Valle, Fiona Walsh

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The 2023 DFRC Alumni, Family & Friends Newsletter is brought to you through the kindness and generosity of the

MOGLIA FAMILY FOUNDATION

The DFRC Family is deeply grateful for their continued support!

Carly & Zeke, Continued from page 1

"It makes me so happy every time we see each other, and we get to do fun things together," Carly said, recalling all of the activities she and Zeke did during the 2015 Blue-Gold year. They enjoyed things like going to Carousel Park, bowling, and attending parties together.

After graduating from high school and the DFRC Hand-in-Hand Program, Carly returned to the DFRC Blue-Gold family as an assistant cheerleading coach in 2018 and has been a part of the coaching staff ever since. As one of the

head Blue cheerleading coaches for the 2023 season, along with fellow alumni cheerleaders Rachel Nowocin (DFRC Blue-Gold '15) and Tara Tresolini Fallers (DFRC Blue-Gold '12), Carly is honored and excited to share the positive impact participating in the Hand-in-Hand Program can have with the current group of Blue-Gold cheerleaders. Zeke even attends some of the cheerleading practices with Carly and gets to make even more friends!

Carly and Zeke's friendship is one

of many born from a connection through the DFRC Hand-in-Hand Program. Zeke helped to inspire Carly and we have now come full circle, allowing Carly to share the spirit of DFRC with countless others as a coach and mentor. Hand-in-Hand, and all of the wonderful stories and relationships that come from it, are the very heart of all that DFRC does, and as we celebrate 49 years of this program, we remain dedicated and loyal to our mission to enrich the lives of people with intellectual disABILITIES.



Mark Your Calendars!

Join us for upcoming DFRC events!
Visit www.dfrc.org for more details!

DFRC Blue-Gold New Castle County Golf Classic

Monday, June 5, 2023

White Clay Creek Country Club - Wilmington, DE
Shotgun start 10 a.m. - Registration opens 8 a.m.

DFRC Blue-Gold Southern Delaware Golf Classic

Friday, September 22, 2023

Maple Dale Country Club - Dover, DE
Shotgun start 12 p.m. - Registration opens 11 a.m.
Contact the DFRC office for registration information

DFRC Blue-Gold All★Star Football Game

Friday, June 16, 2023

University of Delaware Stadium - Newark, DE
Kickoff at 7 p.m. - Parking Opens at 5 p.m.
Tickets available on the DFRC website!

DFRC Blue-Gold Bash

Saturday, November 4, 2023

Grant Hall at St. Elizabeth School - Wilmington, DE
Additional event information coming soon!
Keep an eye on the DFRC website for details.

DFRC THANKS OUR 2023 MAJOR SPONSORS!

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2022 DFRC BENEFICIARIES

In 2022, DFRC provided 9 Delaware agencies & organizations with grants totaling \$50,000. Each year, DFRC distributes proceeds from our fundraising events to nonprofit organizations and agencies that enrich the lives of Delaware citizens with intellectual disABILITIES. We support programs that serve Delawareans in all three counties statewide and through the entire cycle of life, from infancy through adulthood.

The Arc of Delaware
Statewide

Art Therapy Express Program, Inc.
Statewide

Art Works For All
New Castle, Kent County

Delaware Care Plan, Inc
Statewide

Down Syndrome Association of Delaware
Statewide

Embrace Delaware
Statewide

Forward Journey (Formerly C.E.R.T.S.)
New Castle, Kent County

Kent-Sussex Industries
Statewide

Waggies by Maggie and Friends
Statewide



IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Preston Grace

NOVEMBER 22, 1967 - JANUARY 10, 2023

Preston Grace was a bright light in the world. For 35 years, he dedicated himself to his community, coaching student-athletes at Woodbridge High School. Preston served on the DFRC Blue-Gold Athletics Committee and as an assistant director for the DFRC Blue-Gold Football training camp at the University of Delaware for many years. His love and dedication to the Blue-Gold mission and the positive relationships he built with high school players and coaches from all over the state continue to be an inspiration. Preston Grace lived the mission of DFRC, and he will be greatly missed by many.



DFRC BLUE-GOLD ALL STAR FOOTBALL GAME FRIDAY, JUNE 16, 2023

GAME DAY TICKETS AVAILABLE NOW!
SCAN THE QR CODE FOR TICKETS. FOR ADDITIONAL
INFORMATION, VISIT WWW.DFRC.ORG OR
CONTACT OUR OFFICE AT (302) 454-2730.



DFRC BLUE-GOLD eBIKE RAFFLE



Enter to win a 26" Comfort Cruiser Electric Beach Cruiser with 36V 17.5Ah battery From Pedego Electric Bikes in Lewes, Delaware

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THE ALBERO FAMILY TIES RUN DEEP WITH DFRC!

The Albero Family members are no strangers to DFRC and its mission to enrich the lives of Delawareans with intellectual disabilities! Frank Albero joined the DFRC Board of Trustees under the leadership of former DFRC President Jim Keegan. Since then, Frank has been part of the DFRC family, serving in various roles within the organization, including board president and treasurer. Over the years, Frank has shared DFRC's mission with his family and community. This year— more than 30 years since his start with DFRC— two of Frank's grandchildren are participating in the DFRC Blue-Gold All★Star Program, adding to the family's Blue-Gold legacy! Chris Albero, a football player representing Archmere Academy, and his cousin, Adam, a Buddy in this year's Hand-in-Hand Program, are matched for the 2023 season, along with fellow Archmere students Natale Morda, Kieran Udovich, Anna Benner, and Nathaniel Sullivan. "I was in high school when our father started working with DFRC," Michael Albero, one of Frank's sons and Chris' father, said, remembering his own introduction to the organization. "Having two grandsons get to participate in this event... it's a special opportunity for our family as well as a way for us to honor my father's support and

dedication to the organization over the years.”

Adam’s parents, Marc and Stephanie Albero, are very excited for Adam to be a part of the DFRC Hand-in-Hand Program this year, and having Chris matched as one of his participants makes it even more exciting!

“Adam is a happy, fun-loving 16-year-old with a smile that lights up any room he enters. Chris truly enjoys being around Adam, and engages with him on his level,” Marc noted on the relationship the boys have with one another. “He is accepting of his challenges and always makes time for Adam.”

The two boys experienced their first DFRC Blue-Gold event– the Hand-in-Hand Party– together in March. This party brings together Buddies, high school participants, and their families from all over the state of Delaware for a time to celebrate connection, friendship, inclusion, and fun!

“I really loved spending that time with Adam and seeing the smiles on everyone’s faces– not just the Buddies– but everyone in the room had a big smile,” Chris said. “Knowing someone in my

Albero cousins,

ADAM & CHRIS

have a special relationship that will continue to grow as they are matched together for the 2023 DFRC Hand-in-Hand Program!



The Albero Family got their start with DFRC when Frank Albero was invited to join the DFRC Board of Trustees! (From left to right) Frank, Chris, Adam (front), and Marci Albero celebrate Archmere’s football championship win in 2021.

family has been a part of this organization for such a long time put an extra smile on my face.”

Chris regularly attends Adam’s Challenger League baseball games, and Adam loves to cheer for his cousin at Archmere Academy football games. The entire Albero family was there to celebrate with Chris after Archmere won the state championship in 2021. Right after the game, Chris and Adam shared a huge embrace that warmed the hearts of everyone who saw it.

“It’s something I’ll never forget,” Mike said. “It just shows that nothing will take away the joy and love they have for one another.” So many people across the state of Delaware have found similar love, joy, and friendship through the DFRC Hand-in-Hand Program over the past 49 years.

As the DFRC mission remains strong through our 68th year, the DFRC Blue-Gold family continues to grow and spread kindness, acceptance and love for ALL people throughout the state of Delaware and beyond.



MAKE AN IMPACT THAT LASTS A LIFETIME!



DFRC has touched hearts and enriched the lives of Delawareans since 1956. Key to our success has been the DFRC Blue-Gold All★Star Football Game and the Hand-in-Hand Program, which is celebrating its 49th anniversary in 2023.

Your gift of support to DFRC helps create opportunities like the Hand-in-Hand Program, as well as other programs and community services that maximize the potential, independence, and enjoyment of life for Delawareans with intellectual disABILITIES.

Visit the DFRC website - www.dfrc.org - and click the DONATE button to make your gift today!



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