



www.pslstrive.org

# STRIVE Newsletter

VOLUME 16 ISSUE 2

FEBRUARY 2016

## STRIVERocks2016 Dance Marathon is Almost Here!

**STRIVE's biggest fundraiser, the all night Dance Marathon, is just around the corner and we want YOU to be a part of it!**

We have solidified multiple bands, DJs, inflatables, food donators and many new great activities for Dance Day and Dance Marathon. STRIVERocks2016 Dance Marathon theme hours have been decided and can be seen at STRIVERocks.org.

We added some new fundraising levels for the people that go above and beyond! Set your goals high and remember that the top 10 fundraisers get special prizes.



March 12th-13th

**Dance Day**

10am-6pm

**Dance Marathon**

8pm-8am

### Fundraising Goals:

To participate in the overnight marathon:

- \$100 raised by 2/14/16 \*with the code "earlybird"\*
- \$125 raised, including day of registration
- **All-Star** - \$350 or more raised gets you a STRIVERocks2016 long sleeve shirt
- **VIP** - \$500 or more raised gets you a *limited edition* sweatshirt
- **MVP** - \$1000 or more raised gets you a *limited edition* jacket

Its not too late to join the STRIVERocks2016 Dance Marathon planning committee! If you are interested please contact Cameron at [cprovencher@pslservices.org](mailto:cprovencher@pslservices.org) or (207) 774-6278

Start fundraising today! Set up your personal page on FirstGiving by going to [www.STRIVERocks.org](http://www.STRIVERocks.org). Use the code "earlybird" before February 14th to get \$25 off your minimum!

### Mission Statement:

To assist tweens, teens and young adults with intellectual and emotional disabilities in utilizing resources within their community so they can participate as viable members of the community.

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# STRIVE NEWS

## Things are Working Well at STRIVE U

Oh, how we long for the dog days of summer when the chilly, snowy, winter weather bears down on campus. Our students feel the pain, too, but still manage (like the rest of us) to make it to work and earn a paycheck every week. Unlike going to secondary school when classes are more quickly cancelled, work sites and businesses usually keep running and our students learn they, too, have to show up for work. To help them learn and understand what it means to work, our students have paid work internships in the greater Portland area as well as participate in employment goals designed to help them be successful in the workplace. Our students come to STRIVE U from different backgrounds, cities and towns and with varied work and/or volunteer experiences. Some have had jobs and some not. Some have a willingness to try new things and some are more hesitant. Our staff begins by making assessments as soon as the incoming class arrives and continue evaluating and teaching work readiness skills throughout the length of the 24 month program.

Just as with residential goals, students are assigned employment goals. Depending on a particular student's skill set, our staff works each week on building and refining those skills to better enable the students to be employed independently. Each student has a personalized Employment Binder that helps track progress throughout her/his tenure. Employment Goals include all of the essential elements needed to be ready for work including how to search for a job, write a cover letter and resume, prepare for a job interview, write thank-you notes, and select proper attire. Our staff also helps students work on the "soft skills" necessary to maintain workplace success such as communication, enthusiasm and attitude, teamwork, as well as problem solving & critical thinking. In the broader context of life, professionalism is not a single skill or attribute, but a blending and integration of a variety of skills. During our employment goals, we hope our students gain a greater understanding of what it means to be professional and then apply those skills in real-life work settings. So far it seems to be working; they all are making it to work on these cold snowy mornings!

If you or someone you know would like to benefit from the many rewards of working with STRIVE U, or if you have a relationship with a business owner or human resource manager and feel comfortable making an introduction, don't hesitate to call and talk with Dick Leeman, STRIVE U Employment Coordinator. Networking and warm calls often lead to lasting business partnerships and valuable work placement experiences for STRIVE U students.

**To find out how to become a STRIVE U Employment Partner, please contact Dick Leeman: [dleeman@ppls-services.org](mailto:dleeman@ppls-services.org) or call 207-774-6278 ext. 212.**



## Learning New Technology and Cooking Recipes at TOPS



TOPS returned from winter break on January 4<sup>th</sup> and have been hard at work ever since. When they returned from break they were able to start in the new building, transitioning from the "art room" to the brand new TOPS space. Using our new technology, students can stream their recipes or projects from an iPad to the Apple TV located in all of our used spaces including the kitchen. The students have truly embraced this addition and we are finding new ways to use it each day. Another skill that has been a focus since returning from break has been laundry. With the addition of our laundry/training room, the students have ample space to sort, fold and switch laundry.



A major component in TOPS is cooking. At least once a week TOPS is learning a new recipe, or mastering a common one. This month, we are focusing on breaking down each skill, knowing where things are in the kitchen, and focusing on how to use different appliances and tools.

TOPS serves students from the Greater Portland Area School Districts in their 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> year of high school. If you have questions or would like more information about TOPS, please contact Kelly Shufelt, TOPS Transition Specialist, at 207-774-6278 or [kshufelt@ppls-services.org](mailto:kshufelt@ppls-services.org).

## Out and About with Next STEP!

In the month of January, Next STEP has been learning about personal and community safety. Participants learned all about the Metro system and learned how to navigate downtown Portland by using a map. They learned where the police station is and which buildings would be safe options to walk into if they were feeling unsafe in the community. They learned what to be aware of when walking in the city and how to walk safely. They also had a tour of the YMCA Portland. They learned that the YMCA has so much to offer, it's a safe place to go and swim, work out and take classes like yoga, spin, Zumba, and toning. Next STEP also plans to meet with the South Portland Police Department.



The group also learned about personal safety: what is personal space and some situations where it might be particularly important to be aware of personal space, such as in crowded public places. They identified “personal space circles.”

Everyone has personal space circles that are more appropriate for some people and not others. The closest circle is for just yourself and people very close to you.

There are other circles for friends, acquaintances, and strangers, which is the farthest circle.

Next STEP is a great option offering quality curriculum for those who are on a waiting list for other services, in combination with other services or for those who may not qualify for other service. Please contact Betsy Morrison at 207-774-6278 or [bmorrison@pslservices.org](mailto:bmorrison@pslservices.org) if you would like more information regarding Next STEP or would like to schedule a tour. Part-time and full-time options are available.

## Learning About Emergencies at Bayside

STRIVE Bayside has started working on new curriculum that is very important to know when living independently: what to do in various emergency situations. We will cover topics from power outages, broken windows and doors, animal invasions and fires to blocked toilets and burst pipes. We will discuss what to do in various situations, various complications that could arise, shared stories about times we may have experienced an emergency and who to call depending on the emergency. Since everyone's independence is different, it's very interesting to hear what someone who lives at home with their parents should do versus what someone who lives in the own apartment should do. While discussing various emergencies participants have been working on their own “Emergency Contact List” that contains the phone numbers of anyone they might need to contact in a hurry. Lists contain phone numbers for parents, guardians, house staff, plumbers, CMP and more. Once completed the Emergency Contact Lists will be kept at everyone's respective homes, where they can be utilized if an emergency arises!

STRIVE Bayside is a unique community supports program that is dedicated to exploring and increasing independence. We run five days a week, Monday through Friday and have two daily sessions, 9:00-1:00 and 1:00- 5:00. We operate out of an apartment in down town Portland to simulate actual apartment living. We are currently accepting applications. If you are interested in joining STRIVE Bayside, or would simply like more information please contact: Caroline Cole at 899-1725 or [ccole@pslservices.org](mailto:ccole@pslservices.org)



*We are thrilled to be able to offer so many different programs here at STRIVE, but understand the options can be overwhelming and sometimes, confusing. Our staff is willing and ready help you navigate all of your options. If you'd like additional information, please feel free to give us a call at (207)774-6278—we'd love to help!*



STRIVE Night  
February Theme Night:  
Valentines Day!  
February 12th, 6-9pm



Ages:  
15 to 24 years old

Cost: \$10  
with scholarships  
available

During Valentines Day STRIVE Night, we will be having a card making station, cookie decoration table and Advisory Board will be selling carnations.

FMI: Contact Cameron at [cprovencher@pslservices.org](mailto:cprovencher@pslservices.org) or call 207.774.6278

**\*\*New Advisory Board's first meeting will be held on February 5th at 5:30pm.\*\***

February Birthdays

Jessica Luciano  
Ivy Alan  
Arianna Bulger  
Lucy Pederson  
Cody Wood  
Deanna Kelly  
Alexander Cormier  
Linda Donovan  
Consta Granade  
Brittany Williams  
Joshua Monk  
Bryton Maxim  
Candace Johnson  
Shane Saucier  
Emma Campbell

Harrison Snyder  
Kevin Banks  
Abby Spiller  
Paris Nalevansky  
Tricia Penney  
Rebekah Kropp  
Andrew Scott Ryan  
Deschambault  
Zachary Krohn



## Wednesday Night Educational Classes

### Apartment Skills

February 10<sup>th</sup>-24<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
6:00pm-8:00pm



This brand new series will be hosted at STRIVE Bayside's apartment in Portland's Back Bay Tower! The students will become familiar with both the responsibility and fun living independently can bring! Topics that will be covered include- cleaning, organization, responsibilities, and hosting. Apartment Skills will take place at STRIVE Bayside, Back Bay Tower, 401 Cumberland Ave, Portland, ME

### **\*\*Coming Up\*\***

### Healthy Lifestyle

March 9th - 23rd, 2016  
6:00-8:00pm



STRIVE's Wednesday Night Educational Classes are held every Wednesday with a different topic each month.

For more information, contact Peggy Ceresia at [pceresia@pslservices.org](mailto:pceresia@pslservices.org) or call (207)774-6278.

Have a class idea for 2016? Let us know! Contact Peggy Ceresia with your ideas—[pceresia@pslservices.org](mailto:pceresia@pslservices.org) or call (207)774-6278.

**TWEENS Schedule of Events**

*Are you between the ages of 11 and 14? Are you looking to make new friends?  
Join us every Friday afternoon from 3:30 to 5:30pm at STRIVE!*

**\*\*Tweens is FREE to all members between the ages of 11 & 14!\*\***

**February 5th: American Red Cross**

**February 12th: UNUM**

**February 19th: Zumba**

**February 26nd: Game Night**

For more information, contact Peggy Ceresia at pceresia@pslservices.org or call (207)774-6278.

**Thank you to our January Donors!**

**Upcoming Events**

Grand Knight Council #101  
John & Denise Plamer  
Janet Francis  
Shoresh Foundation  
Flatbread Company  
Libra Foundation  
Wendy Bush  
Jeffrey & Alison Nathanson  
Judy Sarapas  
Paul & Peggy Maniscalco  
Carols Montgomery  
Norma Rosa  
Priscilla Vandermast  
Heather Zur  
Joanna Bulger  
Sandra Livingston  
Marc Keffer  
Jeff & Susie Saffer  
David & Donna Banks  
Rita O'Brien  
Carol Niles  
Esther & Paul Pappas  
Brad & Betsy Morrison

Jennifer & James Clair  
John & Jullianne Opperman  
Pete & AnneMarie Brown  
Dan Reardon & Bernadette Woodcock  
Cori Swift & Rafael Adams  
Scott Carisle  
Stephen & Nancy Sawyer  
Mark & Linda Piper  
Michael & Cheryl McCall  
Kathleen & Michael Bouchard  
John McKernan Jr. & Olympia Snowe  
David & Catherine Crockett  
James & Cathy Brown  
Richard & Eliza Stark



**Aktion Club**  
February 3rd, 17th, 3:15pm

**Member Advisory Board Meeting**  
February 5th, 19th, 5:30pm

**Wednesday Night Education Classes:  
Apartment Skills**  
Wednesdays, February 10th –24th  
6:00-8:00pm

**Tweens**  
Every Friday, 3:30—5:30pm

**STRIVE Night**  
Every Friday, 6:00—9:00pm

**\*\*STRIVE will be closed on Monday February 15th.\*\***

**Strive for STRIVE at Anthony's Italian Kitchen!**



Eat at **Anthony's Italian Kitchen** every **Monday and Tuesday** from **4 to 8pm** to benefit **STRIVE!**



*10% of all sales will go directly to our programs.*

Enjoy delicious pizza and subs, beer and wine, and more at their location at 151 Middle St. in Portland.

Learn more at [www.AnthonysItalianKitchen.com](http://www.AnthonysItalianKitchen.com) or call (207)774-8668

**\*\*Handicapped Accessible and Free Parking is Available!\*\***

## Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Grant

### STRIVE received \$25,000 grant from Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation to teach people how to maintain healthy physical activity levels.

We have recently received a \$25,000 grant from the [Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation](#) to help teach our members on how to monitor and maintain healthy physical activity levels.

"STRIVE is thrilled to be partnering with Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation around this exciting and important initiative, said Peter Brown, Associate Director. "Our goal is to provide training and a comprehensive plan for diet and exercise and healthy physical activity levels for all our participants. We look forward to showing tangible results and forming lifelong healthy habits for our participants."

"We are so pleased to work with STRIVE PSL to help kids in Maine maintain healthy physical activity habits," said Dan Corcoran, president and general manager of [Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Maine](#). "This program helps build a solid foundation of learning for kids with developmental disabilities and is at the heart of Anthem's mission to improve the overall health of people and communities across the state."

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), "obesity is 50 percent more common in individuals ages 12 to 17 with developmental disabilities as compared to typically-developing adolescents." This statistic increases to more than double when looking at those with autism. While about 13 percent of kids and teens without developmental disabilities are obese, the study found that nearly 20% of those with intellectual disability and roughly 32% of those with autism are severely overweight.

To combat these alarming statistics, we intend to use this grant to consult with a registered dietitian 3.5 hours per week to create healthy meal choices for our members to cook, in an updated teaching kitchen with new (and safe) cooking equipment. We will also facilitate ongoing group exercise classes, as well as encouraging the exploration of individual options and opportunities, to show that exercise can be fun and accessible for all. We plan to utilize this program for 90+ individuals, based on a rotating program. Program will be tracked by utilizing wearable technology. Physical baselines and health evaluations will be taken by professionals at UMed Gym, a medically oriented gym that will also provide one-on-one oversight and training to program participants, as well as educational resources for our staff. Jaclyn Chadbourne, Principal and Director of Research and Development at United Medical Gym, Inc. and Universal Medical Technology, LLC said, "The impact of chronic diseases can be significant and is rarely a focus in the populations served by organizations such as STRIVE due to lack of funding. The ability to create healthy lifestyle programs for students within STRIVE has the potential to benefit not only the individual, but also the entire family unit. It is an honor to be part of a program such as this and our organization could not be more excited to embark on this exciting partnership between STRIVE and Anthem. Our technology solutions will create a unique platform to collect data, track progress and ensure reproducibility from one year to the next for every student within STRIVE."

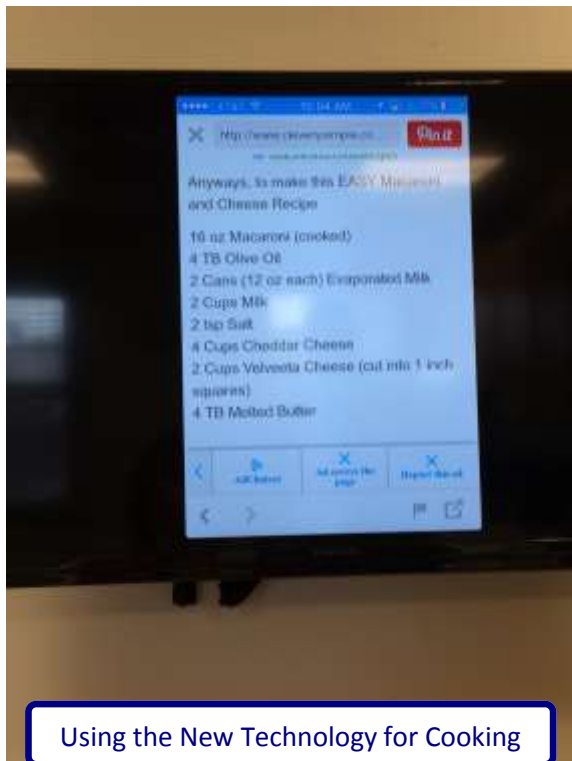
[Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Maine](#) serves over 315,000 members throughout the state of Maine. Through the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation and local commitments, the company gave over \$1.2 million dollars to organizations in 2015 aimed to improve the health and well-being of people across the state.



Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation



# STRIVE Pictures



Using the New Technology for Cooking



Cooking in Next STEP!

Thanks to the Davis Family Foundation, we were able to buy iPads, Apple TVs and flat screen TVs for our technology upgrade in the new space. We are able to project our apple devices to the new TVs to make reading and following recipes much easier (see above).  
On Friday, January 22nd, UPS presented STRIVE with a \$16,670 check to go towards our Capital Campaign! We would like to thank UPS for their donation and continued support for STRIVE and our programs.  
Right now we have just under \$53,000 left to raise to completely pay for the building, renovations, and expansion, making a large impact on our programs. Want to get involved? Know someone who can help? Contact Peter Brown at [pbrown@pssl-services.org](mailto:pbrown@pssl-services.org) or (207)879-0847.

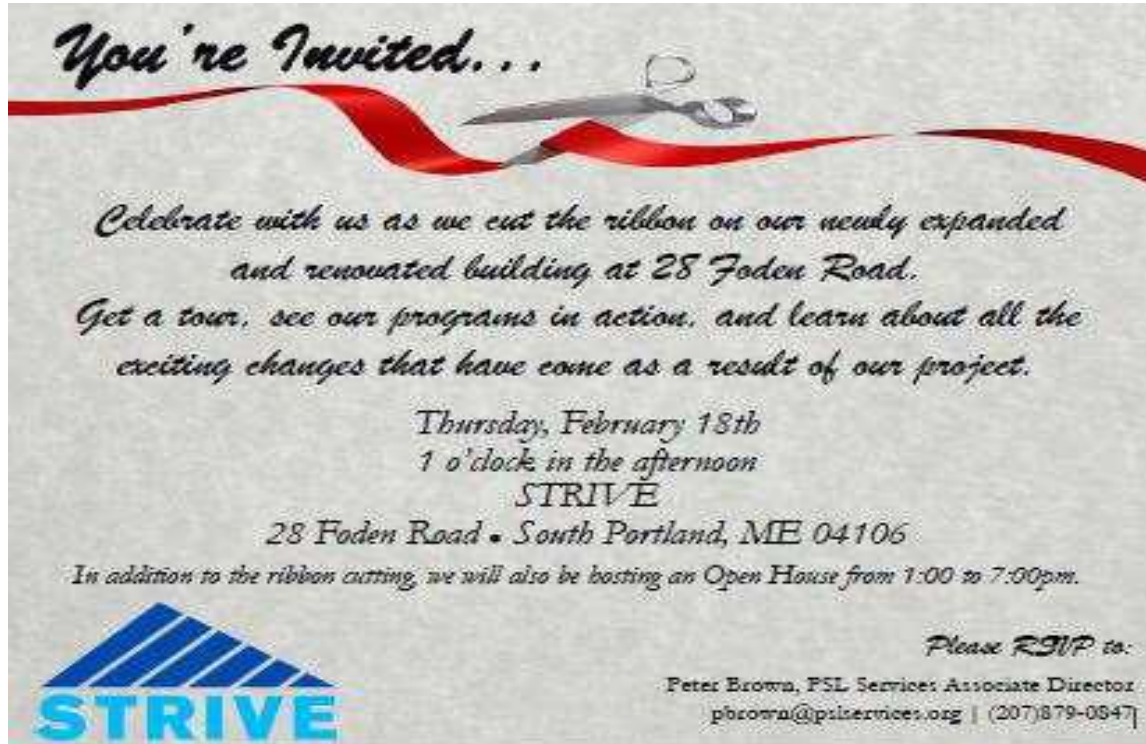






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## Questions, Comments, or Suggestions – Contact Our Staff!

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***We welcome your comments, questions, and feedback  
at [info@pslstrive.org](mailto:info@pslstrive.org).***