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Alaska Sports Hall of Fame /Healthy Futures Newsletter

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Fall 2016

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TEACH•HONOR•INSPIRE

Back in the days of establishing the Alaska Sports Hall of Fame, the founders felt strongly that the organization should be about more than just “putting plaques on a wall”.

The words “Teach, Honor, Inspire” were attached to the ASHOF logo and brand to serve as a constant reminder of our intent to not only honor the significant people, moments and events in Alaska’s sports history, but to provide a meaningful resource to Alaskans of all ages.

Healthy Futures, which became our signature program in 2011, is making a statewide impact nowadays. More than 20,000 elementary and middle school-aged youth from over 200 schools participate in the Healthy Futures Challenge annually, trying to reach and maintain goals for healthy levels of daily physical activity (see page 3). Healthy Futures now also provides support to nearly 100 events around the state that promote a healthy active youth population (page 2).

Some of our new partnerships underscore our program’s priorities for growth. We now regularly travel to communities such as Kotzebue and Unalakleet to increase our presence in rural Alaska. We have also worked to increase support for ALL youth by partnering on events like the Teddy Bear

Picnic to ensure children with disabilities have the opportunity to be physically active.

Our PLAAY (Positive Leadership for Active Alaska Youth) initiative kicked off with the inaugural PLAAY Summit this past February — a two-day conference for leaders of youth to address the multifactorial areas of adolescent health.

The second annual PLAAY Summit in February 2017 will have an exciting addition – PLAAY Day. On February 23, thousands of Alaskan children across the state will participate in a half hour of simultaneous physical activity (page 5).

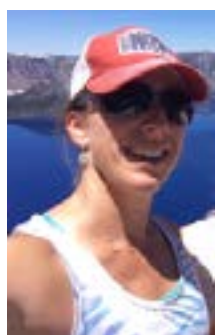
The Alaska Sports Hall of Fame celebrated ten years with two memorable events on July 28 and 29. More than fifty former inductees and current honorees attended a public event at the Alaska Airlines Center and a ceremony banquet at the Ted Stevens Anchorage International Airport (pages 4-5)

Ten years in, there are indeed plaques on the wall. The enshrinement gallery at the airport is first class. But there is so much more.

Teach, Honor, Inspire never felt so true!

Harlow Robinson, Executive Director

Healthy Futures: FEATURED TEACHER JEAN MILLER



This fall’s featured teacher is Jean Miller! She’s a kindergarten teacher at Spring Hill Elementary in Anchorage. She’s been teaching for 7 years and participating in the Healthy Futures Challenge for 4 years. Jean says:

“My heroes are my parents! They are dedicated to each other and are the strong core

of our close, ever expanding family. They also take every opportunity to enjoy the Alaskan outdoors together. Beyond family, they are always looking for ways to give back to their community both locally and abroad. I admire the life choices that my parents have made which make a positive difference daily.

I love to nordic ski, mountain bike, run in the

mountains, or do just about anything outside with my friends and family. As my kids get older and stronger, it is fun to follow them up mountains and bike on the trails together.

I have been inspired more by the actions of the students: Our x-country club practices out on our playground where they have been stuck learning on hard, slippery ice. They fall down 100 times every practice, but just keep getting up and trying again with huge smiles on their faces. Watching their perseverance and positive attitude while learning a challenging new skill has been truly inspiring!

I have found that the easiest way to motivate kids is to provide fun, active opportunities and then to get out there and do the activities with them.”



TEACHING MP FROM 2016

About Us

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HEALTHY FUTURES: EVENT SUPPORT HIGHLIGHTS



Jamboree South Anchorage – Healthy Futures again partnered with the Anchorage School District for the elementary school Running Jamborees attended by more than 3,000 kids combined at events in South Anchorage, North Anchorage and Chugiak. (Photo by Harlow Robinson)



Anchorage RunFest – Healthy Heroes led by Kikkan Randall got kids excited before the Anchorage RunFest 2K at Delaney Park Strip. (Photo by Harlow Robinson)



Teddy Bear Picnic – The inaugural Teddy Bear Picnic at Anchorage's Cuddy Park drew a big crowd and promoted the mission of making public parks accessible to all. (Photo by Naomi Hodawanus/The Arc of Anchorage)

Jamboree Fairbanks – Healthy Futures medals were a hit for this student from Eielson Air Force Base at the Jamboree in Salcha. He is pictured with Healthy Futures Ambassador Aelin Allegood.



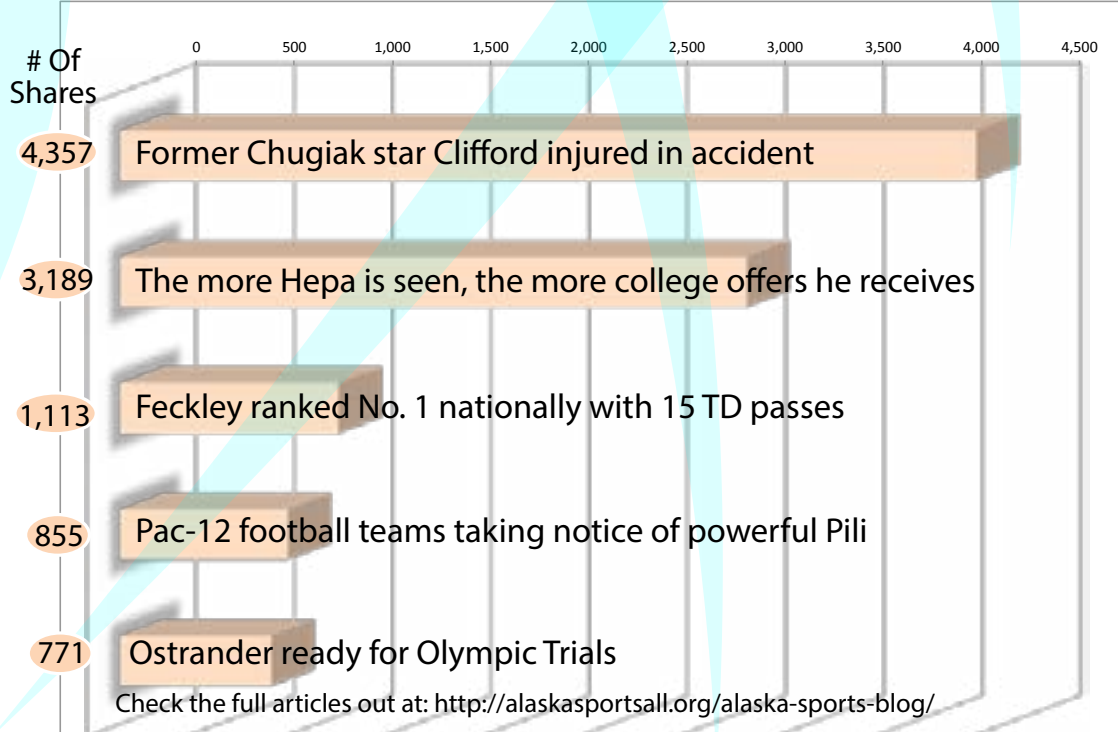
Eagle River Triathlon – The Eagle River Kids Triathlon gets kids swimming, biking and running.



Mighty Bikes – The Mighty Bikes program attracted 300 youth who improved their mountain biking skills. (Photo by Kristi Waythomas)

Trending On the Blog: The Biggest Stories of the Past 6 Months

Alaska Sports Hall of Fame blogger Van Williams is a former Anchorage Daily News Sports Editor and Alaska Press Club award winner. Williams has been with the blog since the beginning and has written more than 2,900 stories on over 500 Alaska athletes.



HEALTHY HEROES SPEAK: VALUES

We asked our Healthy Heroes, "What are the most important values sports have helped you to develop?" Below are some of their responses.

To read about what all 55 of our Healthy Heroes say about adversity, exercise, values, sportsmanship, nutrition, role models, success and a "take home message," visit <http://alaskasportshall.org/inspire/healthy-heroes/>

Jim Shine, Runner —

My college coach taught his athletes that our job as a student-athlete was to first be a good person; second to be a good student; and third to be a good athlete. Achieving athletic success is fleeting; your peers will remember your reputation as a good person forever.

Karen Patten, Champion Bodybuilder —

Perseverance, responsibility, dedication, and patience.

Eric Heil, Arctic Man Legend —

Because of sports I started making the right decisions and stopped surrounding myself with people that were going to prevent me from moving farther in my career. The best athletes, to me, are the ones who are able to overcome setbacks and not let that prevent them from advancing their career.

Ellyn Brown, Masters Athlete —

Never give up, and never stop dreaming. I never dreamed I could balance on a Swiss ball on my knees and at the same time juggle. I never dreamed I'd be able to climb a 30-foot rope. There is always something more to accomplish. Sports have made me a more confident

person, both athletically and as a teacher. It's taught me to have high expectations both of myself, and of those I help coach.



Stan Justice, Equinox Marathon Champion —

The ability to lose and lose with dignity.

Sadie Bjornsen, Olympic Nordic Skier —

My sport has taught me what it means to set goals, and how to work towards achieving them. It has taught me to embrace setbacks, and come away stronger. It has taught me how to approach every day as its own — trying to never miss an opportunity. It has taught me that being active and healthy helps keep me happy.

Marko Cheseto, Inspiring Runner —

The difference between success and failure is that success is all about trying to do and failure is thinking about it without doing.

Pam Dreyer, Olympic Hockey Medalist —

Playing sports prepare people for all life's obstacles: How to interact with teammates who have differing personalities; how to handle triumphs and pitfalls; self-discipline; pushing beyond what you once thought was impossible; learning to have a voice and stand up for what you believe; the ability of people from various backgrounds coming together to achieve a goal together; expecting the unexpected, etc. The list goes on and on!!!

HEALTHY FUTURES ELEMENTARY CHALLENGE UPDATES

By ALYSE LORAN

Record Fall Challenge

The fall Healthy Futures Challenge is off to a running start with a record number of schools around the state registered. 207 schools are registered—up from a previous record of 199 in spring 2016. In addition, we have 16 schools registered that have never participated before. Welcome to the Challenge, Nunapitchuk, Arviq, Selawik, Deering, Dena'ina, Fairhill Christian School, FOCUS Anchorage, FOCUS Fairbanks, Kivalina, Buckland, Qugcuun Memorial School, Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton School, Slana, Stebbins, Rampart, and Whittier!

School Longevity

Last spring we recognized schools for their longevity in the Challenge for the first time. These schools have taken on the Challenge with enthusiasm, and they've truly made

physical activity a part of their school culture, showing their students the importance of developing healthy habits. Congratulations to the 128 schools that have participated in at least five challenges and the 22 schools that have participated in at least ten!



WORK HARD, HAVE FUN, SAVOR THE PROCESS, HALL OF

FAMERS SAY BY VAN WILLIAMS, PHOTOS FROM ASHOF 10-YEAR CELEBRATIONS

It's easy for fans to see the bright lights of success, but being a star athlete has a dark side, too.

Most people don't see the sweat, sacrifice and solitude.

"First and foremost you have to love it, whatever you're doing – baseball, gymnastics, soccer, track and field, football. Whatever it is you have to love it because you're going to do it so much it's going to make you sick sometimes," U.S. Olympian Janay DeLoach of Fairbanks said.

"You have to work really, really hard, all the time. Even on the days you don't want to work when you're tired and you're body feels yucky, those are the days that matter most."

DeLoach, of Eielson High fame, won an Olympic bronze medal at the 2012 Games in London in the women's long jump. She returned to the Summer Games this August in Brazil and finished 13th.



Janay DeLoach gives her induction speech

DeLoach, 30, was one of many Alaska Sports Hall of Fame members on hand July 28 at ASHOF's 10-year celebration party at the Alaska Airlines Center.

What better place to gain perspective on inspiration than from the people who deliver it on a regular basis.

DeLoach was forced to switch her traditional takeoff last year because of injuries. She jumped off her left leg at the 2012 Olympics but switched to her right leg at the 2016 Games.

In doing so she inspired jumpers all over the country that have been forced to switch legs. Rather than giving up, DeLoach taught them to give it a try.

"It's not going to be easy and if you think that's the case, or if you want it easy, this is not the thing you should be doing. I hope am I helping someone out," she said.

Former University of Alaska Fairbanks men's basketball coach Al Sokaitis helped make history in 2002 when the Nanooks became the first NCAA Division 2 team to win a DI tournament at the Top of the World Classic.

He talked about the importance of being a role model.

"I always think talent is something you get on loan. You don't have it forever. What you do when you have it determines what happens with the next generation; so if you take that talent and use it to inspire kids and they see how hard you're working, how important it is to do the right things, then the next group coming up wants to be like you," Sokaitis said.

World-class long jumper David Registe of Palmer is still chasing his Olympic dream. The 28-year-old is a former NCAA D2 national champion for the University of

Alaska Anchorage who now competes professionally for Dominica. He won a bronze medal at the Pan Am Games in 2011 and captured a gold medal at the Central American and Caribbean Games in 2014.

He reminded athletes to make their own decisions.

"Especially in today's world where everybody you talk to has an opinion about your life. You have to filter out those opinions. You have to choose in your life who's opinion matters to you and

who's doesn't, because everybody is going to tell you what to do, where to go; everybody wants to be a part of that," Registe said.

Dimond High hockey coach Dennis Sorenson of Anchorage last season became the first prep hockey coach in Alaska history to win 500 career games.

He promoted the idea of kids playing multiple sports

rather than focusing on just one.

"Actually, Scott Gomez and I were talking a little while ago that too many kids are specialized at too young of an age. We think it's the coaches pushing them, but it's actually the parents pushing them. They need to play multiple sports, do multiple activities, and just be active, healthy and have fun. Maybe at 14, 15, when their bodies develop, that's when you specialize," Sorenson said.

Passion drives success.

"You have to play for the love of the sport," Sorenson said. "Dream all you want, but if you're not playing for the love of the sport you won't go anywhere. You have to enjoy the journey."



Al Sokaitis with Van Williams



Honorees at the banquet

Famed mountain runner and 1988 Olympic cross-country

WORK HARD...
continued from page 4

skier Bill Spencer of Anchorage stressed the importance of finding balance on and off the athletic field.

"I think the main thing that I've learned over the years is you have to keep it fun and you have to keep variety in there," Spencer said. "Hate to see these kids get too specialized too early and that derails them. You see a lot of people burn out because they are training too hard, too focused. Pick a lot of things you like to do and keep it fun.

"There's a time to get serious, but when you're first getting started that's not it."

Kris Thorsness of Anchorage was the first Alaskan to win an Olympic medal when she pocketed a gold medal in



Chris Clark signs autographs at public event

women's rowing at the 1984 Games in Los Angeles. She wants kids to play outside.

"One of the great things about being in Alaska is the outdoors here is so fantastic, there are so many things to do. Get outside and get away from the electronics," Thorsness said.

The Alaska Sports Hall of Fame is an example of what is possible for kids in the 907.

"I met people that were like, 'If she can do it, I could do it,'" Thorsness said. "I think that's a big piece of it is getting us out there to meet kids, to talk with kids, to talk to them about where we come from and the steps we took. A lot of it is hard work, dedication and following your passion because that's really key. You really have to want to do this in order to succeed."



Mark Schlereth gives Keynote at banquet



Positive Leadership for Active Alaska Youth

EDUCATION IS EVERYTHING. LEARN TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

PLAAY is an initiative of the Alaska Sports Hall of Fame. The PLAAY Summit and PLAAY Day will help community leaders better work with Alaska's youth to emphasize physical activity in addressing health and wellness.

PLAAY Day: February 23, 2017

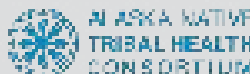
The goal is to get thousands of Alaska children jumping, running, and dancing — all at once. PLAAY Day is Alaska's first simultaneous student physical activity event! #RockTheTundra

PLAAY Summit: February 24-25, 2017

Featuring a slate of field experts from around the state, the PLAAY Summit provides teachers, parents, nurses, coaches, administrators and other leaders of youth with a conference to address the multifactorial areas of adolescent health.

Information & Registration: www.plaay.org

Email PLAAY Director Wally Wilson at wally@alaskasportshall.org or call 907.947.3895



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