

GLIDING STARS OF
CENTRAL FLORIDA

August 2024

WELCOME

PROUDLY PROVIDED THROUGH THE CENTRAL FLORIDA FOUNDATION:
HEINTZELMAN EMPLOYEE CLUB FUND FOR THE TABLETALK MICROGRANT.

Here's what has happened in the last
month and what's to come!

Welcome to Gliding Stars of Central Florida's monthly newsletter! Acting as a showcase for highlights, event news, and important information, this blog post will be the place to stay up to date with all of Gliding Stars recent events and upcoming dates!

We could not do this without our amazing donors and volunteers, whose unending support and aid has helped our team, run (or skate) smoothly. Thank you for your generosity and dedication.

For our first issue, read on to get a recap on some first reactions on the ice, volunteer experiences, and a story on one of Gliding Star's own athletes, Kristian. In addition, we will go over some info regarding our annual Disney on Ice program. Happy reading!

In this newsletter
you can expect:

Monthly
Highlights

Stories of Impact

Volunteer
Spotlight

Event News

Thank you





Stories of Impact

Gliding Stars is undoubtedly an initiative that emboldens athletes and volunteers alike. This fact is exemplified in our very own athlete, Kristian, who has been skating for 14 years. A natural, Kristian not only participates in ice skating, but also surfing, paddle boarding, bowling, swimming, and cycling just to name a few. His mother, Elsa, chose to share his story with Gliding Stars with us. She shares that being enrolled with Gliding Stars has taught Kristian to be disciplined with the sport, explaining “even if he is having fun doing another activity, he knows he needs to come here and he will come.” Seeing Kristian find confidence on the ice, his mother feels like the activity is incredibly important for him. Strengthening his social skills, his ability to follow directions, & his discipline, Gliding Stars has seen Kristian grow in more ways than one. While also being a place for Kristian to make connections, Elsa adds that Gliding Stars has helped her form a support system. “We make good friends with the other parents, its a social thing. It’s a support group too, we share a lot about therapists and schools- its nice to compare notes.” While being involved in so many sports can be overwhelming sometimes, Elsa feels ice skating with Gliding Stars is too important for Kristian to ever take a step back from; and Gliding Stars is all the better with him here!



But just as our organization can empower athletes, it also enables volunteers to make the difference they want to see. We spoke with Ms. Holly Maher, our on-Ice Director, to discuss how Gliding Stars has impacted her. With over 20 years of coaching experience, Maher is joining us to complete her second season with Gliding Stars. “It’s very important in my life to be on the ice with the kids, with the adults- I love seeing them learn a new skill and seeing how their face just lights up! Seeing them so happy, its just so nice to see the progression and how proud they are of themselves-it just makes my heart so happy.” Maher is the skaters biggest fan when they’re out on the ice; a naturally encouraging and motivating coach. “I love helping skaters overcome their little challenges” explains Maher, adding that often by just cheering them on they can learn a new skill without even realizing it. Gliding Stars is lucky to have such enthusiastic support, and we can’t wait to see how amazingly this season will unfold!



Volunteer Spotlight

This month's volunteer is Arielle Hazan. A senior at Lake Mary High, Hazan is a dedicated volunteer at Gliding Stars. Prior to working with us, she participated in competitive figure skating for 8 years. Always ready to lend a helping hand or a word of motivation, Arielle's passion for Gliding Stars is apparent. We asked Hazan about her experience with Gliding Stars over these past 4 years. "It's really rewarding," shares Hazan, "it teaches empathy, patience, and the importance of inclusivity. Seeing [the skaters'] progress and knowing you played a part in it, brings a sense of fulfillment and joy to you. It's about making a positive impact and creating a supportive environment where everyone can thrive." Hazan is confident in our programs ability to empower our volunteers and athletes alike, sharing that the main attraction for her is that it not only impacts others, but it makes her feel like a stronger individual. Being with the program for such an extensive period of time, we asked her how she might approach a challenge or help someone else overcome a personal obstacle. "Each child has unique needs and requires different approaches, which can definitely be demanding, and it's also an emotional challenge to see them struggle with something, but these challenges are outweighed by the rewarding moments and the positive impact you make in their lives. I think the biggest key factor is just really seeing it through & sticking with it." As Hazan enters her 5th season on the ice with us, we applaud her efforts and all that she does for Gliding Stars!



Event News

SAVE THE DATE for our upcoming collaborative BINGO Fundraiser with Best Buddies, Inc!

- Date: October 10, 2024
- Time: Doors Open 5:30pm

Dinner upon entry

BINGO starts sharply at 6pm

- Location: **Forest Lake Seventh Day Adventist Church Youth Center**
515 Harvey Lester Lane Apopka, FL
- All are welcome to participate and volunteer.
- Spaghetti Dinner, Salad and Breadsticks included with 8 games of BINGO.
- Minimum age to play BINGO: 18yrs.
- Activities available for <18

Best Buddies Bingo & Spaghetti Fundraiser benefiting 501(c)(3) organizations Best Buddies and Gliding Stars of Central Florida



Disney On Ice Workshop Spotlight

This month we had the fortunate opportunity to participate in a "Disney on Ice" Workshop held by performers from the "Disney On Ice World Premiere Show" which performed at the Kia Center in Downtown Orlando! Our athletes were mesmerized by the spinning tricks, jumps and social connections they made with the performers on and off the ice. Practicing some of our forward and backward swizzles, forward crossovers, one foot glides and watching as they showed us a partner lift, ballerina spin and different edge techniques was awe inspiring to say the least. We are encouraged that our next month of practice will include a few new skills and build our confidence to work towards similar figure skating skill goals, for each athletes level.

With the support and collaboration of FELD Entertainment our workshop concluded with a fun meet and greet with all of the performers followed by a brief Happy Birthday Celebration for Kristian as he turned 21! Each of our families were also invited to attend the World Premier of "Disney on Ice" at the Kia Center in Downtown Orlando and watch their new found friends perform at such a high level of figure skating that the connection to what we do every week on the ice translated on such a different level that our athletes are even more inspired to focus on beginning to create their solo feature programs for our December Showcase Celebration!

Don't take it from me though, here's what our families said:

"Everyone had an amazing time. Please Thank FELD and Disney for all they do to support this program!"

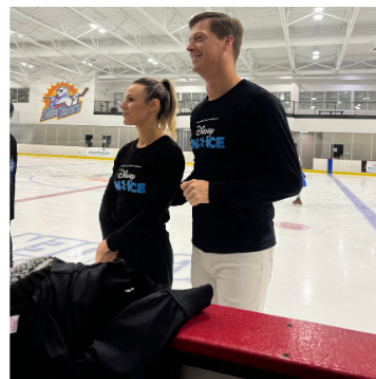
"We thought it was the Best Show we have ever seen! Everyone LOVED it! Christophers favorite was "WISH". Mine was "Moana"!"

"Here's a picture my daughter drew of her skating and this is what she told me:
"This is me skating in a show mom! I'm a flower and sunshine is growing me?"



August 27, 2024

More Event News



Thank
you!

