

Fall/Winter 2020

The Climb

Jacob's Ladder, Inc.®

One rung at a time

JACOB'S LADDER 27th Annual Golf Classic Reinvigorated!



Although this year's Golf Classic was postponed twice due to the pandemic, Jacob's Ladder held its 27th Annual Golf Classic at the Golden Eagle Golf Course on Monday, October 19th. Perhaps it was the perfect weather, or folks had grown tired of isolation and social distancing, or perhaps it was also the culmination of the great work of the "Golf Committee" of our Board of Directors...in truth it was all of these things, and the Golf Classic was a **RESOUNDING SUCCESS!** The Golden Eagle course was nearly full to capacity with eager golfers. In addition to our many wonderful sponsors, the Golden Eagle Cottages Association members donated greens fees for the event, enabling us to raise even more money to support the summer residential enrichment camp and enrichment programs for our Climbers. The results:

FIRST FLIGHT WINNERS

The Monroe Team
Doug Monroe, Jr., Sterling Caudle, Mike Gates, Cole Herrington

SECOND FLIGHT WINNERS

Clay Team
Joe Hudnall, Billy Hudson, Jay Wallin, Gil Zimmerman

THIRD FLIGHT WINNERS

Vaughters Team
Charlie Vaughters, Mike Bowersox, Henry Clifford, Greg Cowart

CONTEST WINNERS

CHIPPING – Chris Cunningham
PUTTING – Leitch Lancaster
CLOSEST TO THE PIN – Michael O'Haire
LONGEST DRIVE – Jeff Brown



An outdoors awards celebration was held at the end of the day. Music was provided by Jumbo Lump Daddy. An early count of \$13,000 was raised. **ALL** net proceeds provide food and safe lodging for 55 intellectually gifted, at-risk children attending the Jacob's Ladder Residential Summer Enrichment Camp in 2021. Room and board for the

month of July costs Jacob's Ladder \$2,952 per child. Thank you...Golfers, Sponsors, Prize Donors, and Volunteers for your loyal support of a worthy cause!

Climber Virtual Field Trips

COVID-19 might prevent us from many of our normal activities, but it hasn't slowed down our service to our Climbers. This fall, we've begun to support our Climbers through ZOOM devotionals, virtual field trips, a trivia game meeting, and even a college application essay writing workshop for our high school Climbers. The expansion of our enrichment programs is currently occurring through virtual meetings, but with the support of our donors, we hope to continue and expand this level of interaction into the future. On October 31, our Climbers attended a virtual field day at Mote Marine Laboratory and Aquarium in Florida. It was an hour-long learning experience about sea life, particularly sharks and shark research. There was a Q&A following the presentation.

"For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord; plans for good and not for evil, to give you a hope and a future." – Jeremiah 29:11

Our New Climbers Are MOTIVATED!

This summer, we welcomed 16 new Climbers to the Jacob's Ladder family. These children hail from the Northern Neck, Mathews, Portsmouth, the greater Richmond area, Buckingham, and Lexington. While they've not yet experienced the powerful influence of the summer enrichment camp, they have surely "stepped up to the plate" in our virtual enrichment programs. Quite often the first people to volunteer to lead groups, answer trivia questions, or ask thoughtful questions during our "field trips," our new Climbers are becoming important group members.

High School Advocate Palmer Castrodale

I'd like to highlight some positives with Jacob's Ladder. Climbers are adapting to new school settings all over Virginia. They are finding ways to be creative, focus on their academics, get active, and safely socialize. Although we cannot be together in-person as much as we would like this year, we meet in new ways – virtual field trips, ZOOM devotions, and text message check-ins. Our 9th – 12th grade Climbers are facing unique challenges, adjusting to high school, and preparing for their futures. As High School Advocate, I continue to communicate with them and provide support for their journeys. In November, we held a workshop in partnership with the University of Richmond on the topics of essay writing and the college application process. We hope to do another virtual event in the spring. As a program, we are intent on providing support and enrichment to our Climbers remotely until we can gather in-person again!

➤ NAP Tax Credits Still Available

Jacob's Ladder has been approved by Virginia's Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) participant for FY 2020-2021. In order for a donation to qualify for NAP tax credits, a minimum donation of \$500 for an individual or \$616 for a business must be received by Jacob's Ladder. A tax credit of 55% will be applied. Make your check payable to Jacob's Ladder, Inc., P. O. Box 555, Urbana, VA 23175. Your NAP forms will be mailed to you. It's just that easy.

In Memory of Chic Silver

It is with great sadness that we announce the death of our long-time friend, Chic Silver, who passed away Sunday, August 30, 2020. We are very appreciative that he has chosen Jacob's Ladder as a recipient for those wishing to make a donation in his memory. His dedication to Jacob's Ladder as a board member is part of his legacy, and your support makes a difference to the intellectually gifted, at-risk children being served by the program. Donations may be made to Jacob's Ladder, Inc., P. O. Box 555, Urbana, VA 23175.

Jacob's Ladder, established in 1991, is a proactive enrichment program serving children who are gifted and at risk.

Climber Home/School Advocacy JoAnne Ruffa

Normally, during this season, I would be traveling the roads, making school visits, conferring with school personnel, and spending quality time with Climbers. Typically, I would hear news about schedules, grades, and extra-curricular activities. I would enjoy hearing about summer camp reflections...favorite classes, clubs, and highlights. These are good catch-up sessions. Normally. Typically. However, 2020 continues to be anything BUT normal and typical. All is new. Our new buzzwords: virtual, hybrid, ZOOM, distancing belie these unprecedented times. My visits and catch-up sessions have been via phone. I still want to hear how school is going, but I ALSO want to know that Climbers and family members are healthy. Adjusting to a new kind of school year has been challenging for many. It has been for me, too. Yet, I am encouraged that our Climbers are still working to DO their best, BE their best, and HOPE for the best in the days ahead.

Dr. David Niebuhr Executive Director

2020 – A Year in Review

As I write this, I'm just beginning my second year at Jacob's Ladder. I arrived last fall eager to learn about this amazing program, expand our outreach and fundraising efforts, start a "planned-giving" program, bolster our evaluation efforts, and help Aubrey Hall, Executive Director Emeritus, realize more of his well-deserved retirement. However, 2020 had other plans. Just as JoAnne Ruffa and I started interviewing potential Climbers, news broke about a strange, new virus. In a period of just 7 days, we went from conducting several interviews a week...to putting interviews on hold...to canceling all remaining meetings. During the lockdown, we canceled our Climber Spring Retreat and prayed for our ability to host the summer residential enrichment camp. By May, we were surveying Climber

families to ask about new ways for Climbers to enjoy enrichment activities (knowing that summer camp was in jeopardy). In June, we learned that our hosts at Christ Church School canceled all summer activities and our summer camp was canceled for 2020. Sadness retreated as we began to climb out of our summer camp canceled woe. We made plans to bring Climbers together for "field day" gatherings at the Watermen's Museum. We invited all Climber graduates to a homecoming celebration, and we welcomed 16 new Climbers for a special "field day." We embraced technology and made plans to gather twice monthly – doubling our annual enrichment efforts for our Climbers. We have conducted these gatherings via ZOOM, but plan to resume in-person enrichment days as soon as we can gather safely. Our Climbers are enduring difficult situations as they balance school and home, but they are always excited to see one another, share their stories, and support one another. We are proud of their efforts. We continue our CLIMB and look forward to the opportunities for growth provided by new challenges. This year has been difficult, as many foundations have shifted funding priorities, but we are eager to share our powerful stories of growth and leadership in hopes that our patrons will continue to support our mission and allow Jacob's Ladder to remain financially strong.

*From all of us at Jacob's Ladder,
Merry Christmas!*



JACOB'S LADDER

Board of Directors – 2020

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