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The Best News

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Making a difference in children & families, one at a time!

BF Welcomes New Coordinator



Laura Hann is the new fulltime Program Coordinator and will be working directly with the children and families enrolled in the program, assisting with recruiting and training mentors, and matching mentors with youth who need a positive role model.

Laura Hann with recruiting and training mentors, and matching mentors with youth who need a positive role model.

"I'm excited to be part of a program focused on the whole community, government, non-profit and business working together to transform the lives of youth," Hann said.

Hann has worked with volunteers in India and with at-risk youth in Vermont, and has personal volunteer service in India and Nicaragua. She holds a bachelor's degree and is completing her master's degree in public administration and governance.

Best Friends participates in a national mentoring coalition funded by the Department of Justice and administered by Public/Private Ventures of Philadelphia. RSVP+ of North Dakota manages the program in the state and offered the position to Best Friends.

Best Friends Awards Two Scholarships

Best Friends awarded two scholarships for the 2011-12 academic year, thanks to the generosity of an anonymous donor. Alyssa Slinn and Damon Fichter were the well-deserving recipients of the scholarships.

Alyssa Slinn is a senior at Dickinson State University, majoring in history education. Originally from Regina, SK, she is also an avid horseback rider and a barrel racer in the DSU Rodeo Club.

She signed up for the Best Friends Mentoring Program in fall of 2009 and was matched with her first Junior Friend in January 2010. She's been a mentor to two girls in the Best Friends program and is currently completing a 240-hour internship of mentoring, office work, and special events help.



Alyssa Slinn

Alyssa became a mentor because she "wanted to make a difference."

"I've been blessed and I wanted to give back," she added. "You gain a lot, and they show you things you didn't know. It's a two way street."

Damon Fichter graduated from Dickinson High School and now attends DSU.

As a high school student, Damon participated in band, chorus, speech, and drama. He has won state level awards in several of these activities and has also excelled academically.



Damon Fichter

Damon became a mentor in his senior year in high school and thought it was an "awesome opportunity!" He loves kids and plans to pursue a career in music education, working with music students of all ages to see where he can make the best use of his talents.

Damon enjoyed working with his junior friend in the 2010-11 school year, and plans to continue working with him throughout his college years. His junior friend is not musical . . . "yet," he added.

The Best Friends Mentoring Program annually awards scholarships to mentors who have completed at least nine months mentoring a child and who are attending higher education or vocational school.

**SPECIAL THANKS TO Fisher Industries,
'Family Fun Day' PRESENTING SPONSOR!**

UPCOMING EVENTS

Take your junior friend to....

- ♦ **Oct. 4:** "Pirates of the Carribean" movie at Badlands Activity Center, 7:30 p.m.; \$2 admission.
- ♦ **Oct. 8:** DSU Homecoming Parade, downtown Dickinson, 10 a.m.

Watch your mailboxes for....

- ♦ **Nov. 1:** Best Friends year-end Friendship Drive annual fund appeal.

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Mentor is fun, positive role model

Riley Wittenberg has always enjoyed recess ball games, but never more than when his "best friend," college student Logan Suter, joins his team.

Logan joins Riley for lunch and recess at school once each week. They've developed a good relationship, and Riley enjoys the time in school and chance encounters with Logan in the community.

Riley's mom, Leigh, signed him up for the Best Friends Program in 2006 to provide him with another adult relationship in his life.

"We did not have extended family in town and I felt Riley could benefit from having a positive non-parental role model who he could talk to about some bullying issues that he was experiencing in sports activities," she explained.

As an education student and athlete at DSU, Logan was well-suited to play the role of big brother on the playground. And he enjoys it too, noting that "it's a great experience for both."



Riley Wittenberg with his Senior Friend Logan Suter.

Don't Toss It, RECYCLE it!

Best Friends' recycling program experienced steady growth as residents become accustomed to dropping off their recyclable and reusable items at the BF offices. The program generated more than \$7,000 for Best Friends Mentoring in 2010, and 2011 looks to be even more promising! Following is a list of recyclable items :

- **Aluminum cans:** Secure in plastic bags and leave in the bins at the Wal-Mart parking lot, the Best Friends parking lot, the parking lot at the West River Community Center, or parking lot at Runnings Farm & Fleet.
- **Cell phones (working or not) and accessories:** Best Friends Mentoring's office, 135 W. Villard St.
- **Used ink cartridges:** Contact Special Olympics at 701-290-8840.

Get involved: Call Best Friends at 701-483-8615 to help with these projects!

**SPECIAL THANKS TO Reichert Armstrong Attorneys
'A Chocolate Affair' PRESENTING SPONSOR!**

Family Fun Day Attracts Record Crowd

A record-breaking crowd of more than 3,000 people enjoyed Family Fun Day on Saturday, July 2 at Jaycee Park.



The annual fund-raising event for Best Friends included horseback riding, a petting zoo, inflatables, and a barrel train on a lovely sunny day with temperatures in the '80s. Hotdogs, brats, chips and beverages provided lunch for many at the after-parade event. An on-site ATM offered an additional convenience for the first time this year.

Also for the first time ever, a disc jockey, Chris Hammond, entertained the children and parents with games and country, rock, and pop music. Our local heroes displayed fire, police and rescue



vehicles and kids met a drug-sniffing dog.

Special thanks to Fisher Industries, this year's presenting sponsor, and more than 15 business contributors who helped to make the event a success.

This event netted more than \$15,000 for Best Friends Mentoring, which will help provide mentoring services to at-risk youth in southwest North Dakota during the current year.



Chocolate Affair a Sweet Success

Nine chocolate desserts and more than 20 wines teased the palates of attendees of the 2nd annual Chocolate Affair in May.

More than 200 guests attended the fundraiser, which took place Mothers' Day weekend at the Ramada Inn. Guests sampled chocolate desserts prepared by local chefs as they sipped wine from a carefully chosen assortment of wines provided by Town & Country Liquor. Gift baskets were raffled through admission tickets, and a mystery wine pull rack was quickly emptied. Live jazz music, provided by the Brick House Jazz Quintet, lent ambience to the setting.

Prizes were awarded to the chefs, with first prize going to the Brick House for their opera torte, second to Cooking Crave for mini chocolate cheesecake, and third to Three Chocolatiers for their *celestas delicies de chololat*.

The presenting sponsor for the event, which netted more than \$11,000 for Best Friends, was Reichert-Armstrong Attorneys. Event sponsors included DLN Consulting, Dan Porter Motors, Dan's Supermarkets & Hershey Chocolate Products, Shirley K. Dukart, DSU Alumni & Foundation, Ramada Inn and Town & Country Liquors.



Volunteers Lindsay Franks & Sarah Holle at the chocolate fountain.

Wacky Fun At June Glow Ball Scramble

The fifth annual Glow Ball Golf Scramble took place last June under a beautiful clear sky after rain earlier in the day passed. Sixteen



teams of four people each converged on the Heart River golf course for a fun evening of golf, food and wacky fun.

Participants in the event played nine holes of golf in the late afternoon, then retreat for a meal of pulled pork sandwiches before returning to the course after dark for the second nine holes using glowing golf balls.

Contests and prizes made the event more fun, with first, fifth, and last place winners receiving prizes. The last place prize received a whale of a trophy and crying towels.



The event netted more than \$11,000 for Best Friends. Special thanks to gold level donors Missouri Basin and Wyoming Casing, meal sponsor Fischer Industries and soft drink sponsor Coca-Cola.



SPECIAL THANKS TO Wyoming Casing & Missouri Basin Well Service 'Glow Ball Golf Scramble' GOLD LEVEL SPONSORS!

Contact Us!

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Best Friends
Mentoring Program

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Volunteer Wish List!

Best Friends' success rests on the good will and dedication of its many volunteers. More help is always needed, and there are many different opportunities for those with a lot or just a little time. Do any of the following work for you?

- ♦ **One time only:** Assist at special fundraising events like Santa pictures (coming up soon!).
- ♦ **Monthly:** Pick up and/or package cell phones.
- ♦ **Weekly:** Bag cans in the recycling bins.
- ♦ **Weekly for a year:** Become a mentor to many children still waiting!