



FACE OFF

with the  **Ritchie**
HockeyFoundation.org

Talented and driven young athletes should only be limited by the size of their dreams and the depth of their commitment, never by the availability of financial resources.

EMPOWERING KIDS...ON AND OFF THE ICE

DECEMBER 2021 ISSUE

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The Jason Ritchie Hockey Foundation is a 501(c)(3) registered nonprofit organization. Your contribution is tax deductible. Our tax ID# is 26-4803477



Bob and Donna Ritchie with their son, Jon.

Dear friends,
Bob and I are so very excited to announce that the Ritchie Hockey Foundation Legends of Sport Weekend is on for 2022! We will host the weekend's events in accordance with all required protocols to keep everyone as safe as possible.

First and foremost, Bob and I hope that you and your loved ones are safe and well. We also want you to know how very much we missed the camaraderie and sense of belonging that come from participating in sports. We so look forward to enjoying the ability to connect with everyone at this year's Goalie Clinic, Golf Tournament and Baseball Clinic, and we're so grateful for your ongoing support.

We so appreciate the generosity of our donors and our incredible celebrity athlete partners who have supported our Foundation throughout the years. In addition to furthering Jason's legacy, you have touched the lives of our scholarship recipients and hundreds of Tampa Bay area youth who have benefitted from our hockey and baseball clinics and mentoring initiatives.

We hope that you'll consider being a sponsor of our annual Golf Tournament – once again, we have a bevy of talented and accomplished athletes who have generously chosen to support our Foundation in our fundraising efforts. If you're not able to be a sponsor, we also welcome any donation you make to help us continue to empower tomorrow's leaders. As you read our newsletter, we hope you feel a sense of pride about what we've accomplished thanks to your gifts and the kindness of all our donors.

Sincerely,
Donna and Bob Ritchie

OUR 2022 SCHOLARS

The Ritchie Hockey Foundation serves student athletes like Jason who play their hearts out. These kids develop strength of character, selflessness, and drive through hockey.



ZOETOW

- Plays for The Winchendon School
- Enjoys spending time with friends in the city and enjoys fashion photography
- Zoe's Mantra: "How hard would you play today if there was no tomorrow?"
- Serves as the captain of the volleyball team



DEVONGOOSEN

- 13 years old
- Learned to love hockey when he was 6 years old
- Likes to observe defense players strategies during NHL games



LOGANHORKEY

- 10 years old
- Favorite goalie is Andrei Vasilevskiy
- His favorite subject is Math
- Hockey to Logan means "Family"

HALL OF FAME

2020 - 2021



HOPE WALINSKI

2020 - 2021



NOLAN MCDOOUGH

2019 - 2020



DANNY CAVANAGH

2018 - 2019



KILEY ROBLES

2017 - 2018



CAM GENDRON

2016 - 2017



HAYDEN DALTON

2016 - 2017



JAYDEN YOUNG

2015 - 2016



JOSHUA GEORGE

2014 - 2015



ADAM LETARTE

2013 - 2014



LAUREN KELLY

2012 - 2013



NICK FOLAND

2011 - 2012



FRÉDÉRIK GIROUX



CREATING STABILITY IN A TIME OF UNCERTAINTY THROUGH MENTAL SKILLS TRAINING

I think it's fair to say that it's been a rough couple of years due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This pandemic showed no favoritism to whom it impacted, and student athletes were no exception. In my profession, I have the privilege of working with student athletes of all ages and in many different sports. Despite their differences, one common trait was exacerbated in many of them during Covid: anxiety. The pandemic led to frustrations, fears, the loss of training, seasons being canceled, and in some cases, the inability to move up or onto the next level in their sport.

Now that sports are back, some athletes are feeling pressured to perform even better to make up for lost time. They are struggling with pre-pandemic issues such as: "What can I do to get stronger or faster?", "How can I stay calm during the big game?", "I was playing well until the college scout showed up!", "How will I ever move up to the next level?" These pressures are being amplified now due to a loss of time, training, or athletic eligibility.

Mental skills training can help student athletes deal with pressure and learn to control their thoughts and fears. The ability to stay in the moment or be mindful is an essential mental skill that can enhance your performance and energize or calm you.

Some key factors of mindfulness are:

- Being present and aware of yourself
- Being aware of your thoughts and feelings
- Taking actions based on an accurate assessment of how you are feeling such as:

- Excitement vs. anxiousness
- Energized vs. fatigued
- Confident vs. scared

The good news is you can develop the skills needed to become more mindful or stay in the moment through regular and ongoing practice, for example:

- When you are working out, focus on how your muscles engage
- Go for a walk and take notice of all your surroundings in detail
- When someone is speaking to you pay close attention (really listen)
- Be aware of how you are breathing



Mental skills training can help student athletes

Did you know that breathing is the only function in our bodies that we can consciously control? During stressful situations or sport competitions, your heart may begin beating rapidly or slowing down. These physiological responses may result in shallow breaths, which restricts the flow of blood to various parts.

As a result, individuals may feel tired, have difficulty concentrating and feeling nervous or anxious. If this happens, try a technique I like to call 4-4-4 breathing, and it looks like this:

- Take a deep breathe inhaling through your nose...Count to 4 (in your head)
- Hold your breath...Count to 4 (in your head)
- Exhale through your mouth...hear yourself exhaling...Count to 4 (in your head)

Make sure your focus is on the breath and the count. The increased oxygen helps calm your brain and provides increased blood flow to your heart and lungs which makes you feel more energized, stronger and less anxious.

The 4-4-4 breathing technique can be practiced every day. After you complete your last 4 count on the exhale, say a word aloud that makes you laugh or smile. I like "Woosahhhhhh" because it reminds me of a funny scene from a movie. The more you use the 4-4-4 breathing technique, the more you will be in more control of your focus and emotions.

Mindfulness and breathing help create a foundation that may increase your ability to focus on internal cues (thoughts/ emotions) and external cues (your environment). Think of focus like a flashlight. Your focus goes to where you shine the light. For example, did a teacher ever tell you to "pay attention"? You were paying attention to something, it just wasn't what the teacher was teaching at that moment. One of the major keys to performance is to shine your flashlight on where you need your focus to be. Focus on factors you can control and not on what might happen.

As student athletes deal with internal and external stressors; mindfulness, breathing, and focus not only help to improve academic and athletic performance, but also when life throws you a curveball.

Just remember, focus on where you shine the flashlight!

MEET A SCHOLAR

DEVON GOOSEN

"Mom, do I have to quit hockey for you guys to be able to pay bills?" Talk about a kick to the gut. Those are the words my thirteen year old son said to me when my husband and I lost our jobs due to COVID-19 and struggled to make ends meet.

My son, Devon, has been playing hockey since he was six years old. His school coach decided to have a field hockey week and Devon instantly fell in love with the sport. Hockey is a healthy outlet for him. When he is stressed or feeling down, he likes to go outside and take shots, rollerblade, or do anything hockey related. He says it makes him feel happy inside.

To think that we were going to have to put Devon's dreams on hold really took a toll on us as parents. As a parent, I know I can't give everything to my children but during this time of crisis and uncertainty, I will do anything that will keep a smile on Devon's face and calm in his heart.

Hockey shows Devon the benefits of commitment, perseverance, and drive. Recently, he and some of his teammates were having trouble lifting the puck and taking hard shots. He started practicing every day, shooting pucks until he was finally doing it with ease, both wrist shots and backhand!

I can't tell you how proud I am of my son. I knew I needed to find a way to keep Devon on the ice! I Googled, and Googled, and Googled for 3 days straight in the middle of the night and that was when I found The Ritchie Hockey Foundation. I submitted our application and met with Donna Ritchie and when I heard that we received the scholarship my whole family cried. Devon had a smile from ear to ear because he knew that he would be able to do what he was passionate about.

We are so happy to be part of The Ritchie Hockey Foundation Family and can't thank them enough for what they have done for my family and what they do for so many more. Thank you, Ritchie Hockey Foundation!



UPCOMING EVENTS

LEGENDS OF SPORT WEEKEND

THURSDAY
JANUARY 20, 2022
YOUTH BASEBALL CLINIC
5 PM START

FRIDAY
JANUARY 21, 2022
CELEBRITY GOLF TOURNAMENT
10 AM SHOTGUN

SATURDAY
JANUARY 22, 2022
YOUTH GOALIE CLINIC
10 AM - 12 PM

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

We welcome support from individuals, businesses and other organizations who want to give back by helping us empower young players to achieve their dreams on and off the ice.

Through your donations, we are able to offer free skill clinics and award scholarships to deserving student athletes who demonstrate outstanding strength and character, selflessness and leadership in their schools and communities.

Donations may be made by
cash, check or credit card.

Please make checks payable to:
The Ritchie Hockey Foundation

Direct Mail:

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