An update from True Friends: Winter 2017

TRUE FRIENDS
Camps. Respite. Programs. Travel.

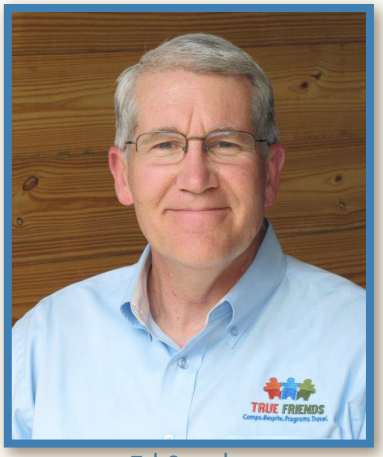
SHARING OUR STORIES

Changing Lives

Ed Stracke to step aside as CEO of True Friends

Ed Stracke, President & CEO of True Friends, recently announced that after more than 33 years leading the organization, he is stepping aside from his role as CEO effective January 1, 2018.

"Guided by his dedication and unwavering support of individuals with disabilities, True Friends has flourished under his leadership," said True Friends Board of Directors Chair John Bredemus. "We are grateful and humbled by Ed's commitment over the years."



Ed Stracke

Ed began his career at True Friends, formerly known as Friendship Ventures, in the summer of 1984. He accepted a three-year commitment to act as Camp Director of Camp Friendship.

By January 1986 he was leading the organization after Camp Friendship

***Stracke** continued on page 2*

Berglund Center Opens

Camp Eden Wood center provides updated amenities to respite, camp participants

Ken and Doris Berglund stand ready to officially open the Berglund Center on June 8, 2017; with the support of Board Members (l-r) David Jones, and wife Julie, John Bredemus, Eden Prairie Mayor Nancy Tyra-Lukens and True Friends CEO Ed Stracke.

Over 100 guests gathered to celebrate the opening of the new Berglund Center at Camp Eden Wood in Eden Prairie, MN. The building will allow True Friends to serve more individuals through a variety of services including, respite, camping and other programs.

Stracke

…continued from cover story

was spun off into a separate nonprofit organization by Arc of Minnesota.

Ed's vision shaped the organization which quickly expanded to offer respite services, travel opportunities, conference and retreat experiences, and team building options in addition to summer and winter camp programs.

In 2012 Ed led Friendship Ventures through an acquisition of Camp Courage in Maple Lake, MN and Camp Courage North in Lake George, MN near Bemidji, formerly operated by Courage Center. The newly expanded organization that emerged was called True Friends.

Today, True Friends serves over 25,000 individuals of all abilities from Minnesota and around the nation.

Ed will retire from his position as CEO, but will remain on staff with the organization in a special ambassador role. True Friends has engaged CohenTaylor to search for a new CEO who will be announced in January 2018.

Ed began his career at True Friends in the summer of 84'. He chuckled as he recalled only signing up for a "three-year commitment". Over 33 years later, Ed will step aside as CEO January 1, 2018.

Providing a Travel 'First'

Ventures Travel adventurer, James, not only recently traveled for the first time, but it was his first time seeing the ocean. Ventures Travel is honored to be part of these traveling "firsts". To learn more about Ventures Travel visit venturestravel.org or call 866.692.7400.

New partnerships, new opportunities

True Friends is pleased to announce a newly formed partnership between True Friends and the Central Minnesota Community Foundation (CMNCF) located in Saint Cloud, Minnesota.

CMNCF has been in existence for more than 30 years serving communities across Central Minnesota by managing more than $115 million through 650 different funds.

The new partnership will tremendously enhance Planned Giving at True Friends by enabling us to offer much more sophisticated charitable estate planning tools such as CGAs (Charitable Gift Annuities), CRTs (Charitable Remainder Trusts) and other Life-income Vehicles that will be established and managed through the expertise of the CMNCF.

More details about the partnership will be provided during the CGA Campaign kicking-off in early-2018.

True Friends in Action event raises over $400,000

On October 3, 2017 more than 160 individuals came together and raised over $400,000 to support the True Friends organization. Sponsored by CAPTRUST Financial Advisors, the event was held at the Oak Ridge Country Club. The event provided a special time to share stories of True friends with people who weren't very familiar with all that the organization does for children and adults with disabilities.

Three families shared personal stories of their journey though True Friends and what a positive impact the organization's programs have had on their child and their family.

From experiencing hippotherapy and therapeutic horseback riding through True Strides, to accessing respite and camping programs that provides relief for care-givers, the stories all shared a similar core message:

True Friends helps people with disabilities discover a reality they never thought possible, while supporting the families in many ways. True Friends is grateful for the board committee who planned the event.

Over 160 individuals joined together to support True Friends on Tuesday, October 3, 2017.

Thank you to all new friends and donors who generously supported True Friends.

Support True Friends, build self-confidence

The children and adults True Friends serve are constantly learning new things about themselves, things they CAN do despite a disability.

They have experiences that positively impact how they look at life. As one parent put it, "my son learned he isn't broken, he isn't different, and he isn't alone."

Children and adults of all abilities need the generous support of true friends like you.

How can your gift make a difference at True Friends? Check out the graphic on the right to learn how a gift of any amount can make an impact at True Friends.

To make a tax deductible, year-end contribution, visit truefriends.org/giving or call 952.852.0101.

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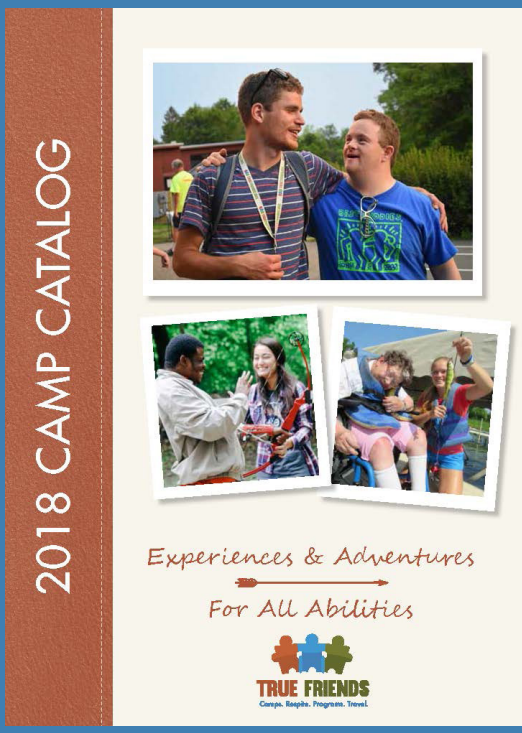
2018 Camp Registration is Now Open!



Camp is only a few months away and we are excited to welcome you for another life-changing summer experience.

True Friends provides campers with the opportunity to explore their interests, build confidence and make connections with individuals who turn into forever friends.

See you this summer!

Learn more at truefriends.org/camp.