



# The Circle

• Together, we can perform miracles • Together, we can perform miracles • Together, we can perform miracles •



## FC Summer Camp - A Mother's WOW!

I was so excited when I got the email. Friendship Circle would be having a camp! What a perfect opportunity for my three-year-old, Matthew, to have his first camp experience. Just like his big brother. Hurray! I wrote back right away to sign him up.

Then came the night before the first day. The doubts began to creep into my mind. What if I had made a mistake? What if he didn't like it? What if he wasn't ready?

I needn't have worried. That first morning, Matthew played in the ball pit. Then he explored the instruments. And went swimming. And played on the teeter totter. And when I came to pick him up, he was singing *VeAhavta* with his incredible new friends. What a wonderful first day!

The rest of that week was equally wonderful. Each morning, my little guy cheerfully waved goodbye to me. (How amazing was it for him to be the one saying goodbye to me! He was so very happy to be hanging out at the J with his Friendship Circle friends.)

On Wednesday, there was a special

treat. The camp got to go on a field trip to one of Matthew's favorite places... The Children's Museum in Seattle! Once again, Matthew said "bye-bye Mommy" and set off on his adventure.



At the end of the week, we were sad for camp to come to an end. "Please make sure Matthew comes to our Sunday Circles during the school year," everyone reminded us. We put the first one on our calendar.

This past Sunday, Matthew went to his first post-camp Sunday Circle, the Rosh Hashanah party. Since it was a party, I was planning on hanging out with him for this one, but Matthew had other ideas. As soon as he saw his Friendship Circle friends, he said, "Bye bye, Mommy." And off he went.

What a sweet new year! Thank you, Friendship Circle!

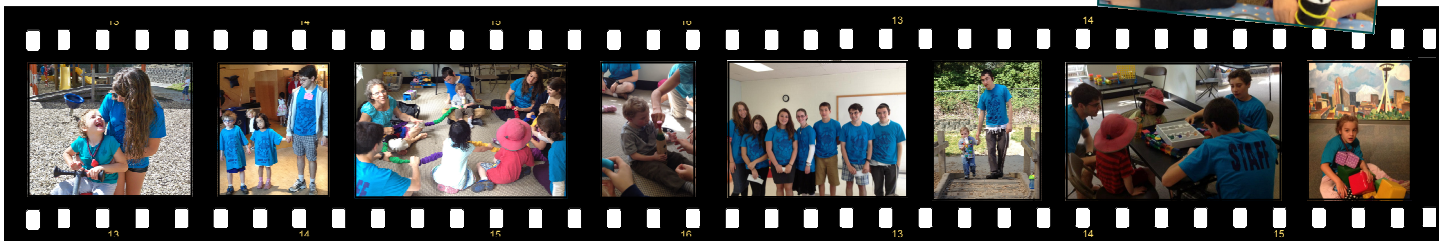
*Mother of special needs child Mathew, Briana Sayres shares her personal experience at the Friendship Circle's Summer Camp 2012*



Friendship Circle kicked off another sweet New Year at our **Rosh Hashanah Celebration!**

A lesson in Shofar making and blowing, a visit from a beekeeper and his bees, and arts and crafts, movement and music, and Kung Fu helped us gear up for another fun and exciting year of Sunday Circles.

We were so happy to see so many amazing families, beautiful children, and dedicated volunteers. We are looking forward to an incredible year ahead!



### INSIDE

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**Join us - Oct. 21st  
Walk With Friendship**



The Mitzvah Volunteer Program (MVP) is a four week sensitivity training series which educates young teens and prepares them to participate as full-fledged Friendship Circle volunteers. Through the course of this program, teens learned how to interact with children who have special needs, appropriate conduct when volunteering, and the importance of volunteerism.

This year 13 teens, many of whom were preparing for their bar or bat Mitzvahs, participated in MVP. These students completed MVP feeling inspired and ready to give themselves to their community and commit to making a difference in the life of a child. Together the MVP graduates and their parents organized a beach party, geared for children with special needs and their families. It was a phenomenal event that the children and their families will not soon forget!

The success of this program was funded in part by a grant from the Jewish Federation of Greater Seattle. We thank them for all their vital support throughout our community!



### Our Program:

- Friends @ Home
- Sunday Circle
- Teen Scene
- Volunteer Club
- Summer Camp
- Winter Fun Day
- MVP
- FC Wraps
- Sib Circle
- Holiday Programs
- JLI Teens
- Mom's Night Out
- Family Programs

### Our Staff:

- Rabbi Elazar Bogomilsky**  
Executive Director
- Esther Bogomilsky**  
Program Director
- Ali Blum**  
Development Assistant
- Chana Kornfeld**  
Volunteer Coordinator
- Meghan Sissom**  
Movement Specialist
- Wendy Zieve**  
Musical Therapist
- Erin Katz**  
Behavioral Advisor
- Jacob Lunon**  
Kung Fu Master



## FC Leadership Club



Dove Alberstone



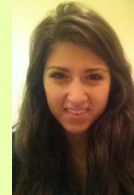
Victoria Anderson



Zev Behar



Nadav Brumer



Sophie Cohanim



Ben Cape



Talia Etsekson



David Kintzer



Yoni Kintzer



Ariella Kleinman



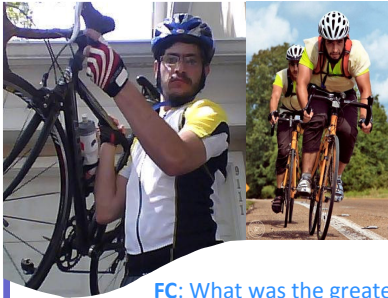
Aliya Korch



Richelle Wilner-Martin

Friendship Circle is so excited to introduce our **2012 Teen Leadership Club!** These twelve amazing teens, not only actively volunteer with the Friendship Circle but they lead, inspire, and they get involved with their community. As invaluable members of the FC team, our Leaders attend programs, recruit other volunteers, organize fundraisers, and act as ambassadors for the Friendship Circle. **Leader Aliya Korch** explains that **"Friendship Circle makes me realize that just a smile can change the life of a child."** It is so incredible to see how great of an impact these teens have made on children with special needs. **Thank you, Leaders for continuing to inspire us and make us proud!**

# FC on the *MOVE*



Friendship Circle caught up with 24 year old Seattle resident **Sruli Heisler** who just completed a cross-country bike ride to in support of the Friendship Circle. Sruli and 7 other riders completed the 3,500 mile journey from Los Angeles, California to Manhattan, New York stopping in dozens of cities and making many connections with special needs communities along the way. After 7 hard weeks of riding and 9 flat tires, Sruli joined us back in Seattle for an interview.

**FC:** What was the greatest highlight from those 7 weeks?

**SH:** There was a specific incident that touched everyone. At the Michigan Friendship Circle, there was a 22 year old woman with cerebral palsy. She spoke to us and said that we should remember that with every pedal we were keeping her alive. She said that without FC she wouldn't be here.

**FC:** What were some of the greatest challenges during your ride?

**SH:** The first 2 weeks were very difficult. We were climbing 10,000 feet some days. After we went over the Colorado Rockies riding became easier. You just push yourself to the next level because you know you're doing it for a good cause.

**FC:** How did you feel when you arrived in Manhattan?

**SH:** Very emotional. It was touching to reflect on the places we saw and all of the inspiring people that we met and to see it all culminate over 3,000 miles from where we started. We were pretty overwhelmed with joy at that moment.

**FC:** Would you recommend this bike ride to support the Friendship Circle to others?

**SH:** Definitely. I am so proud to have represented the Friendship Circle throughout this bike ride. It is a steep hill we are climbing but Friendship Circle's work is amazing and I was so grateful for the opportunity to spread the concept of true friendship and to help demonstrate that we are all one family.



## Running 26 Miles for Team Friendship

In just 50 days, Seattle resident **Caryn Gold** will join other Friendship Circle supporters to run the **New York City Marathon**. As a member of Team Friendship, Caryn will run just over 26 miles to raise awareness and support for children with special needs.

Check out the Friendship Circle's Winter Newsletter for more information about Team Friendship and Caryn's experiences tackling the largest marathon in the world. Good luck Caryn and Team Friendship!

## Walk With Your



Families are just beginning to settle into their routines after the start of the school year but the Friendship Circle is in full swing preparing for our first annual **Walk With Friendship** event, taking place in downtown Mercer Island!

Even though we still have 5 weeks until the big day, Walk With Friendship is already creating a buzz all around Mercer Island and the greater Seattle area. FC supporters are busy creating teams and raising money and awareness to support children with special needs and our incredible teen volunteers. Thanks to the dedication of our amazing walkers and generous sponsors, we are well on our way to reaching our **\$85,000 goal**.

Come October, we expect that **over 500 walkers** will attend **Walk With Friendship** and will crunch their way through fallen leaves to complete either the **family 1K walk or the 5K loop**. To relax and celebrate the day's joys and successes, FC and the walkers will gather in Mercerdale Park for an afternoon filled with live entertainment, music, face painting, bouncy house, food, booths and more...fun for the whole family.

If you haven't already registered to be a team leader or a walker, you can do so on our website [www.WalkWithFriendship.com](http://www.WalkWithFriendship.com). Not going to be in Seattle on October 21<sup>st</sup>? No problem! Sign-up as a virtual walker or sponsor your loved ones as they raise awareness for children with special needs. Together we can make a difference and form a seamless circle of friendship!

**SUNDAY** RAIN or SHINE  
**OCT 21ST**  
**12:30 - 4:30 PM**  
Mercerdale Park  
77th SE & SE 32nd  
Mercer Island, WA 98040

"Walk with your Heart...and help families and children with special needs!"

# WALK WITH FRIENDSHIP



**The Friendship Circle**  
2737 77th Ave. SE Suite 101  
Mercer Island, WA 98040

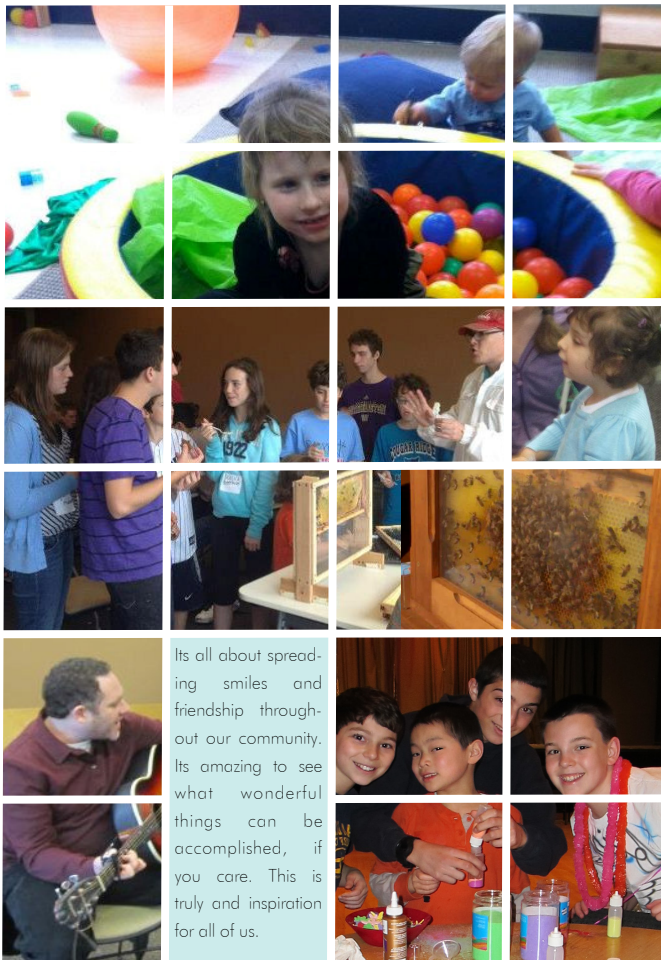
TEL: 206- FRIENDS (374-3637)  
www.FriendshipCircleWA.org



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## WHAT IS THE FRIENDSHIP CIRCLE?

The Friendship Circle is a unique organization with a refreshing approach to helping families of children with special needs. Our innovative programming and creative activities redesigned to foster a relationship between community teenagers and the children by drawing on the love, boundless energy and dynamism of our teenage population.



## DO SOMETHING BIG... VOLUNTEER!

Rolling out the New Year:  
Volunteer Kickoff Party and Training Event



Teen girls  
and boys  
8<sup>th</sup> grade  
and up.

**FOR NEW AND OLD  
VOLUNTEERS**

Bring a friend who may be interested  
in joining the Friendship Circle!  
Separate training for new and current volunteers.

**Awesome  
Sushi  
Making  
Party!**

Join our fan page.  
Facebook.com/  
friendshipcircleWA

@ Mercerview Community Center  
RSVP 206.641.5625 or chana@friendshipcirclewa.org