



History

- **Stand Among Friends(SAF)** was formed in 1997 to build awareness, educate the community, and provide needed resources for individuals with disabilities.
- In 2006 SAF formed a partnership with Florida Atlantic University (FAU).
- Stand Among Friends is located on the campus of FAU, Boca Raton, in the Christine E.
 Lynn College of Nursing, which is a "leadership in Energy and Environmental Design"
 (LEED) certified building.
- In 2008 SAF designed and launched an employment program to address the need for
 essential technology skills training, vocational comprehensive, and situational worksite
 evaluation to determine skills, interest and aptitude to effectively prepare and place
 individuals in employment.
- Since 2008 **SAF** has placed over 460 individuals in employment and over 1,200 people have sought services.
- Over 60% of SAF clients have achieved a college degree.
- Because of their success in the Greater Boca Raton area, SAF has been able to raise the
 necessary funds and is proud to announce the opening of their new full-service center
 located on the FAU Port St Lucie campus. The facility is now open and career services
 are available to college students and adults ranging from Jupiter to Fort Pierce.



Who We Are

Stand Among Friends (SAF) stands apart from many other programs of its kind in that it not only raises money and awareness, but also places its members in a wide range of careers, from hourly employment to high-paid executive positions, allowing people with disabilities to live a life without limits and experience the highest degree of independence and success in their communities. Shawn Friedkin created and directed the program, which provides services to over 600 people with disabilities annually, having placed over 440 people with disabilities into productive employment in the past 42 months.

- **Stand Among Friends** is a non-profit organization that helps college students and adults with disabilities prepare for, find, and secure active employment.
- Comprehensive programs include: employment services, assistive technology,
 vocational evaluations, pre-placement training, community outreach, and mentoring reinforce client's talents, interests, and education.
- Work with clients to set achievable goals and guide them through the entire employment search:
 - Developing essential skills
 - Providing tools to begin job search
 - Identifying the right opportunity/ landing the interview
 - Support clients after they secure employment by providing the necessary assistance to ensure a successful experience.







Shawn Freidken, Founder and President

Boca Raton resident, **Shawn Friedkin** is the founder and president of Stand Among Friends. Twenty years ago, Shawn had it all- he was newly married, excited to start a family, and had a promising future in a successful financial career.

Two weeks before his 28th birthday, Shawn's world came crashing down when he was involved in a horrific car crash, which left him paralyzed from the chest down. After learning he'd be wheelchair ridden for the rest of his life, Shawn could have given up and spiraled down a

destructive path of self-pity, losing any motivation to go forward. Instead, he decided his new disability was not going to define him as a person.

As he began to rebuild his life, he realized there were few resources for people in his situation. Frustrated, he founded **Stand Among Friends**(www.standamongfriends.org), a 501(c)3nonprofit and opened the namesake disability center located on Boca Raton's Florida Atlantic University's campus.





Shawn has received much recognition for his work in helping to improve the lives of people with disabilities nationwide over the years including:

- Florida Atlantic University President's Distinguish Service Medallion (December 2011)
- LEAH Pillar of the Community Award (2008).
- Tiffany Co. Outstanding Service Award (2010).
- "Men With Caring Hearts" award recipient (2010).
- Founding member of END (End Neurological Disorders)
- Participated in high-level meetings at the White House and organized hearings before the US Senate Appropriations Committee (1993 1996).



Who We Help

In 2003: 49.7 million people with some type of long lasting condition or disability

- o Represented 19.3% of the 257.2 million people aged 5 and older
- o 9.3 million (3.6%) with a sensory disability involving sight or hearing
- 21.2 million (8.2%) with a condition limiting basic physical activity
- 12.4 million (4.8%) with physical, mental or emotional condition causing difficulty in learning, remembering or concentrating
- 18.2 million (aged 16 and above) with a condition that made it difficult to go
 outside the home to shop or visit a doctor
- 2010: 11.9% of US Civilians living in the community with some kind of disability. (36,354,712 people)

Locations:

777 Glades Road, BLDG NU84, Suite 120, Boca Raton, FL 33431 500 Northwest California Boulevard, Port St. Lucie, FL

Contact:

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Events



On Sunday, February 26, 2012, over 1,500 individuals came together to celebrate their abilities at Stand Among Friends' 2nd Annual **emb(race)**®, our all-inclusive family fun event that featured a 5k & 10k walk/run and one mile family walk.

emb(race)

The emb(race)® was held on the

campus of Florida Atlantic University, participants ran, walked, strolled, and rolled, used a wheelchair or hand cycle – and enjoyed an event that celebrates our entire community. **Emb(race)**® is a message of hope – and a historic day that showcases everyone's abilities. The race began outside the Stand Among Friends Disability Center located on the FAU campus in Boca Raton. The event was fun for the entire family and included games, activities, food, fun and more. This year over \$135,000 was raised.







Ability Explosion and **Stand Among Friends** have joined forces to bring a series of events to the community. Ability Explosion has a vision for not only enriching the lives of disabled people, but also

the lives of people everywhere. These events will raise money to help people with disabilities of all kinds lead more independent and more enriched lives.



Press





The Palm Beach Post NEWS



News Channel 5 (WPTV news)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jEWGVguJ8DI&feature=relmfu



News Channel 5 (WPTV news)

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Boca man refuses to let disability define him, reaches out to others

BOCA RATON — One minute Shawn Friedkin was a zealous bike rider and avid tennis player. An instant later, a horrendous car accident left him paralyzed from the chest down.

He spent his 28th birthday clinging to life in the intensive care unit of a Miami hospital.

"It was a shock, but I am a positive person by nature so I didn't take a lot of time to feel sorry for myself. I had a wife and a daughter and I had to get back to my responsibilities," says Friedkin, who was determined his disability wasn't going to define him as a person.

But the Syracuse University graduate soon discovered there weren't many resources for people in his situation. So in 1997 he founded Stand Among Friends (www.standamongfriends.org), a nonprofit organization that advocates for and helps people with all kinds of disabilities learn technology, find jobs, navigate the insurance maze and be more independent.

The organization partnered with Florida Atlantic University, opening a resource center at its Boca Raton campus in 2006. And, on Sunday, Feb. 26, it will hold the second annual emb(race), a 5K and 10K walk/run and 1-mile family walk on the FAU campus.

"It's a message of hope and a historic day that showcases everyone's abilities," explains Friedkin, who is 47 and lives in Boca Raton with his wife and two daughters. "It isn't enough to help people with disabilities. We wanted to look at the bigger picture, to change people's perceptions, bring more attention to the cause and engage the community. Our hope is to get as many people as we can to focus on peoples' abilities, not their disabilities."

Participants can run, walk, use walkers, canes, service dogs, wheelchairs, etc. in the event.





www.SpartanRace.com/MudRunEvents

Handicapped Help: Scooter

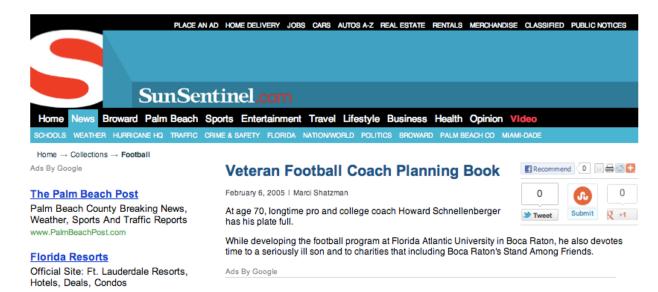
We're more than Mobility. Your Life is our Passion and Responsibility!

Chris Holcomb and Shawn Friedkin shared similar sentiments when the second annual Stand Among Friends Emb(race) Our Differences event took place on Feb. 26 at the Disability Center on the Boca Raton campus of Florida Atlantic University.

For the two physically challenged friends, the point of the 10K, 5K and 1 Mile Family Walk race wasn't about competition. It was about taking the "dis" out of disability and making everyone a part of the team.

http://articles.sun-sentinel.com/2012-02-29/news/fl-brf-holcomb-0229-20120229 1 emb-achilles-international-chris-holcomb





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Stand Among Friends Finds Many At Boca Raton Event



BOCA RATON, FL (BocaNewsNow.com) - We are thrilled to share photos that were just sent our way from the Stand Among Friends event held at FAU on Sunday, February 26th. More than 1500 people came out to support the organization that provides career and employment assistance for the disabled

community, allowing them to live an independent and fulfilling life.

SAF founder Shawn Friedkin started the non-profit after suffering a horrible car accident that left him paralyzed and wheelchair bound at age 28.

Years later, the organization provides services to over 600 disabled local citizens

each year thanks to fundraising efforts like this event.

For more, visit StandAmongFriends.org.



This entry was posted on March 8, 2012 10:56 am at 10:56 AM and is filed under FAU, News. You can follow any responses to this entry through the RSS 2.0 feed.

Stand Among Friends 5k Finish Line

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http://bocanewsnow.com/2012/03/08/stand-among-friends-finds-many-at-boca-raton-event/







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Weekend Walk In Boca To Draw Huge Crowd, Benefit **Impaired**

By BocaNewsNow.com Staff

February 23, 2012 6:58 am



BOCA RATON, FL (BocaNewsNow.com) - An estimated 1000 people will participate in Boca Raton-based Stand Among Friends' second annual walk and run at Florida Atlantic University this Sunday. But this is no ordinary run/walk. And Stand Among Friends founder, Shawn Friedkin, is no ordinary activist.

Schools

Twenty years ago Friedkin was married, had a two year old daughter and a promising future in finance. Then two weeks before his 28th birthday, he was involved in a horrific car crash which left him paralyzed from the chest down.

Friedkin says he could have spiraled down a destructive path of self-pity, but chose to not let his disability define him. In rebuilding his life, however, he realized there were few resources for people in his situation.

Frustrated, he founded in 1997 Stand Among Friends (www.standamongfriends.org). He subsequently opened acenter on FAU's main campus to provide workforce skills for the hearing, mobility, sight and cognitive impaired. More than 600 people a vear benefit.

"Through our programs, we are making a difference in the lives of thousands of people living with disabilities by helping them to live as independently as possible," Friedkin said.

"They help people get real jobs," said Boca Home Care CEO Joseph Bensmihen, a member of the SAF board. "They teach the skills to be employable."

The center also makes employers aware of the ability of the so-called disabled. And Friedkin personally advocates research for breakthrough medical discoveries, including spinal injuries.

The SAF "emb(race)" event this year will feature a 5K, 10K and one-mile family walk and is open to people of all ages and abilities. More than 1,200 people witnessed almost 800 entrants participate in the 2011 inaugural event, and Friedkin believes 1,000 will participate this year.

Organizers are calling the event an emb(race), to "embrace" and not segregate individuals with disabilities. Whether participants run, walk, stroll, roll, use a wheelchair or hand cycle, anyone is welcome to enter. Registration is available on line.

There will be games for children, live music, food, prizes, raffles, awards and many other fun activities. Net proceeds will benefit Stand Among Friends. FAU President Mary Jane Saunders is the honorary event chair. There are close to 40 event sponsors including FAU, Boca Home Care, and the E.M. Lynn Foundation.

(Photo: Boca Raton's Shawn Friedken).





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Stand Among Friends fundraiser doubles last year's event

South Florida leaders support Boca-based non-profit

SouthFloridaSunrise.com Staff report

March 8-Stand Among Friends held its second annual emb(rece) fundraising event on Sunday, February 26th on Florida Atlantic University's campus in Boca Raton.

Over 1,000 attendees ran, walked, strolled, or rolled in wheelchairs and hand-cycles in one or more of the day's events, which included a 10K, a 5K and a one mile family fun walk. Touted as the 'all inclusive' race, the emb(race) event welcomed those with any type of disability.

AMONG FRIENDS

This year's event saw a crowd of over 1,500 which included many famous local faces. US
Congressmen Allen West and Ted Deutch, Boca Raton City Council Member Constance Scott,
Vice Mayor of Boca Raton Susan Haynie, FAU President MJ Saunders, Christine Lynn, NBC Channel 5's Keli Fulton, FOX 29's Rachel
Leigh, and Olympic Gold Medalist Boxer Howard Davis Jr. all got up bright and early to participate.

Nearly \$140,000 was raised, far exceeding the organization's monetary goal and nearly doubling last year's amount of \$72,000.



SAF founder Shaw Friedkin with Congressman Ted Deutch, and FAU President M.J. Saunders



WPTV Newschannel 5's Keli Fulton alongside Congressman Allen West.

http://www.southfloridasunrise.com/article/stand-among-friends-fundraiser-doubles-last-years-event







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FEBRUARY 26, 2011

Stand Among Friends Race, Sunday, Feb.27/Alliance Vendor Fair Successful

> Posted by Mort Mazor at 9:55 AM

Stand Among Friends is conducting the First Annual emb(race) on Sunday, February 27, 2011 on a course located at the Disability Center at Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton, Florida. This is an opportunity for the community to come together to learn about each other and emb(race) our differences as individuals. The day will focus on everyone's abilities and celebrate the uniqueness of us all. Check in time is 6am. 10K run at 7:15am; 5K run, 7:20am and the 1 mile Family Walk 8:30am—rain or shine.

At the Stand Among Friends website, www.standamongfriends.org, whether people want to run, walk, stroll or roll, they can register to participate in the emb(race), or support someone already participating. People can also create or join a team. For those who want to help get the word out and make the emb(race) an amazing experience, they can send emails to friends and family asking them to help you raise money to support the emb(race). Tel. 561-297-4400; Email: events@standamongfriends.org.

For all serious runners, the 10k and 5k are on courses certified by local running icon Gene Witkowski and the scoring will be handled by Accuchip Timing.

http://blogs.trb.com/news/local/community/westdelray/2011/02/

