



Meet the Mentor

Charlie Dear • Adams Middle School

By Wendy Renz

Charlie Dear is a busy man who juggles a commute from Guilford to his Investment advisement firm in Greenwich, family time with his wife and three children, board obligations, sports, hobbies and volunteer commitments. Upon meeting him, you immediately get the sense that he's not one to sit still for long. It's also readily apparent that he enjoys working with kids and is passionate about sharing his knowledge and the interests that have shaped his life.

Asked to join the mentoring program in 2009, Charlie didn't hesitate since he feels he has more time now that he has sent his two oldest children off to college. Being involved with youth has always been a big part of his life, especially when it comes to lacrosse and sailing. An avid lacrosse player, he competed from the time he was in the sixth grade through his freshman year at the University of New Hampshire. When his sons were old enough after their move to Guilford in 1993, Charlie wanted to introduce them to the sport and volunteered as a coach for Guilford Youth Lacrosse for 19 years – way beyond the time his kids were involved. He was also Guilford's first 5th and 6th grade coach and eventually Guilford High School's freshman boy's lacrosse coach.

When not on the field, yacht sailing is also a life long family passion and they all take

to the water at the Sachem Head Yacht Club. Paddle tennis is another favorite athletic pursuit and Charlie keeps fit practicing at the Essex Paddle Club and playing in tournaments when time permits.

Charlie and his wife, a librarian at Baldwin, are active in the Guilford Congregational Church where they sing in the choir. No stranger to the stage, Charlie and a group of friends started the A Cappella group while at UNH in 1982 and now he has reconnected with high school friends to form "The Con Artists", a group who entertains listeners at concerts throughout the area.

One of Charlie's current board commitments is for an organization in New Haven called Friends Center For Children that is sponsored by the Quaker Church. The multi-cultural co-op daycare's mission is to offer affordable care based on peace and cooperation. Charlie is involved in a fundraising effort to raise money for a new building that could house six times as many children.

It's no surprise that Charlie hopes he's making an impact on the young boy he's mentoring at Adams Middle School. Sometimes they might just spend time chatting and Charlie feels that he provides an outlet for his mentee to speak what's on his mind so that eventually he'll be more communicative and engaged. They've also set up a hypothetical stock portfolio that they track on the computer for some interactive learning during their time together.

Once a week visits might not seem like enough time to make a difference in a child's life, but it's people like Charlie that believe it's worth the effort to show someone you care enough to make them a part of your day.