

# Charlie Dieteman hopes cerebral palsy fundraiser raises awareness & funds for cause

BY LISA BIELMEIER

Public Relations Director  
Orleans/Niagara BOCES

Charlie Dieteman hopes his senior year at Niagara Career and Technical Education Center (NCTEC) and Lewiston-Porter High School ends on a high note with his

annual cerebral palsy fundraiser. He is selling green rubber bracelets for a dollar for an organization known as Empower. Empower is a premier service provider in Western New York that offers diverse programming and individualized care and support to make people's lives better. Green represents cerebral palsy awareness.

Charlie, pictured, has cerebral palsy and his mission for years has been to inspire and help others just like him who live with disabilities.

"I don't let it hold me back from what I want to do in life and I want other kids to do the same thing," he says.

His conservation teacher at Orleans/Niagara BOCES, Paul Dewey, says Charlie is an amazing student and person.

"On a scale from 1 to 10, Charlie is a 10," Dewey says. "He is a natural leader and extremely charismatic. He has no limitations and doesn't let anything slow him down. He is a joy to have in class. You can have the worst day and he will just lift you right up. I jokingly told him I am failing him so I can keep him another year. Just an amazing young man."

For his efforts, Charlie has been honored with the following awards: 2019 NYS Senate Commendation Award, President's Gold Award for Volunteer Service (2018); Empower's Junior Leading Luminary Award (2016); and Cerebral Palsy Associations of New York's Charles Koenig Award (2017)

Charlie is also a member of the



SkillsUSA Leadership team and is a chapter officer at NCTEC.

SkillsUSA is a partnership of students, teachers and industry working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce. It helps each student to excel by empowering them to become world-class workers, leaders and responsible American citizens.

His SkillsUSA adviser, Julie Roloff, says when he approached her and the team about selling the bracelets to raise money for his cause, it was a no-brainer.

"We thought it was a great idea and we wanted to do this for him, so we have started the campaign for the month of March since that is Cerebral Palsy Awareness

Month," she says. "March 25 is Cerebral Palsy Day and we are asking all the students here to wear green to promote Charlie's cause."

Charlie says, "This is my last fundraiser as a high school senior and I hope it is big. I like to think of myself as approachable. I am open to answering questions from my classmates and community members about cerebral palsy and show people it is OK to talk about my disability. It's very important to me to help others."

Charlie, with his determination and philanthropic nature, will continue his efforts at Niagara University this fall where he will be in the Academic Exploration Program.

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## Niagara Wheatfield 2021 swim team celebrates successful season

BY MICHAEL DEPIETRO  
Tribune Editor

The Niagara Wheatfield Boys Swimming and Diving team is celebrating a successful 2020-21 season. In a campaign shortened by COVID-19, the boys finished with a 4-1 record, their lone loss being 94-92 to Lewiston-Porter.

The team finished the season ranked eighth in Western New York. Every member of the team hit personal best performances during the season.

In the Sectional Championships, the team lost a hard-fought battle against the Lockport Lions—a team it had beaten the week before.

Among the highlights of the season was in the final meet of the year. The 200-free relay team (seniors: Ryan Wagoner, Chris Congi and Cole Scofield with sophomore Paul Wissel) broke the Niagara Wheatfield pool record in 1:32.18, which was also tops in the NFL this year.

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