

Middlebury's Stride Orthotics a worldwide innovator in foot care

By Steve Bigham

For more than three decades, Roberta Nole has been helping patients walk, run, and move with greater comfort and confidence. As owner of Stride Orthotic & Pedorthic Center and Nolaro24, located in Middlebury, she has dedicated her career to evaluating, treating, and preventing foot and gait-related conditions — all while improving overall body alignment and function. Nole has also become known as an innovator in the field, developing patented systems and teaching others how to advance patient care in orthotics.

“At the core of everything we do is a mission to improve movement, reduce pain, and help people stay active,” Nole said. “Whether through custom solutions in our clinic or scalable products used by healthcare providers around the world, we want to make a difference.”

Stride operates out of a 10,000-square-foot facility at 80 Turnpike Drive, where patients of all ages receive comprehensive evaluations for biomechanical foot and gait abnormalities. For complex cases, the team designs and fabricates handcrafted custom foot orthotics entirely in-house, keeping every step of the process under one roof. The clinic also offers therapeutic footwear and is expanding its retail shoe store to provide properly fitted, supportive shoes for the community.

Innovative Systems

Beyond the clinic, Nole oversees Nolaro24, which manufactures and distributes a line of patented prefabricated orthotic systems, including QuadraSTEP®, littleSTEPS®, and TriSTEP®. All products are developed and fabricated in-house at the Middlebury facility, bridging the gap between over-the-counter inserts and fully custom orthotics, and providing medical-grade support at a more accessible price point. The prefabricated orthotics are also available to patients seen at Stride, ensuring individualized care that fits a variety of needs.

A cornerstone of this innovation is Nole's patented 24-foot-type classification system, which allows for precise matching of orthotic design to a patient's unique foot structure. This system enables the creation of custom or semi-custom orthotics, providing the benefits of personalized support at a fraction of the cost of fully bespoke solutions.

Stride also partners with Waterbury's own Carpin Manufacturing, which produces the injection-molded QuadraSTEP and littleSTEPS orthotics locally.

“Our products are made right here in the greater Waterbury community,” Nole said, highlighting the combination of innovation, quality, and local economic impact.

Kids' Foot Care

Pediatric foot care remains a key focus. Nole is developing



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John Olin, a certified orthotist at Stride Orthotic and Pedorthic Center, is seen making a custom-fitted brace for a pediatric patient with spina bifida.

the NOLE-BOB10 pediatric screening and classification program, which aims to identify early foot dysfunction, educate pediatricians and parents, and support proactive intervention strategies. She is pursuing grant funding to bring the program into schools, modeled after scoliosis screenings.

Most recently, Nole was honored with the 2025 Women of Innovation® Award in the Entrepreneurial Innovation and Leadership category, a recognition of her commitment to advancing both clinical care and product innovation.

Growing Team

Nole's expertise doesn't stop at her Middlebury clinic. She partners with a Massachusetts podiatrist, and together,



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Roberta Nole of Stride Orthotic and Pedorthic Center of Middlebury is pictured alongside her patented 24 foot-type assessment model, which she first established 30 years ago.

they travel internationally to share insights on foot care, bio mechanics, and orthotic innovation. Through lectures and workshops, they educate other healthcare providers on her patented system and best practices.

Joining the team in 2022, John Olin, a certified orthotist, brings decades of experience in both pediatric and adult orthotic care. He works directly in the Stride shop to craft braces for a range of conditions, including complex pediatric cases. One recent project included creating a brace for a young boy with spina bifida.

Olin's partnership with Nole ~ combining clinical expertise and advanced custom solutions in a single practice ~ created something of a “super team”

Supporting the clinic are

specialists like Heather Chapman, CFTS, who leads the shoe fitting program, ensuring patients receive footwear that improves comfort, stability, and compatibility with orthotic devices, and Roland Schuster, a Certified Pedorthist with expertise in diabetic footwear and functional orthotics. Both provide additional layers of specialized care for patients across the age spectrum.

Whether through custom orthotics, prefabricated products, or hands-on patient care, Stride Orthotic & Pedorthic Center exemplifies a holistic, patient-centered approach. With a skilled team, everything centralized under one roof in Middlebury, and innovative solutions, they are improving mobility, reducing pain, and giving patients the confidence to take each step forward.