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AND ITS CHAPTER NETWORK

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Since she was a little girl, Carrie Davis knew she was unique. Born without her left arm, she often wondered “Why me?” She longed to be known for her contributions, not what she was missing.

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Making Your Dreams Your Reality

This edition of Challenge has many stories and profiles that inspire and challenge us all to live life to its fullest through sports. Here are a few examples for you to enjoy:

“That dream has become my reality and I hope that my reality has become someone else’s dream.”

Lonnie Bedwell (pg. 15) gave this answer when discussing the successful 226-mile Colorado River kayaking journey he and Erik Weihenmayer, fellow visually-impaired athlete, completed this summer through the Grand Canyon. The trip was a follow-up to Lonnie’s successful run last year where, as a member of Team River Runner’s (TRR) all disabled veteran team, he became the first-ever completely blind kayaker to complete this very difficult section of the Colorado River.

Lonnie and Erik’s accomplishment echoed Team USA’s successes at the Sochi Paralympic Games this year. As part of the largest American winter Paralympic team ever, Team USA brought home its second consecutive gold medal in sled hockey from Sochi, Russia, beating the Russian team in the finals. Aired on NBC nationally, Team USA’s victory inspired hundreds of people to participate in sled hockey, a fast-paced, exciting sport (pg. 16).

More dreams will become reality in 2015 as our expanded partnership with the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs will allow Disabled Sports USA/Warfighter Sports to continue introducing adaptive sports programs (pg. 12) and training grants (pg. 14) to hundreds of the most severely wounded veterans and active duty service members returning from war.

On a personal note, my dream of joining a team of severely wounded veterans to attempt the summit of another big mountain becomes reality in January when we embark upon a climb up Aconcagua. Located in Argentina, Aconcagua is the highest mountain in the world outside Asia at almost 23,000 feet. At age 66, I continue to be inspired by the men and women injured in war who encourage me to “make dreams a reality.” As I know from my own experience, the long, arduous process of rehabilitation is very similar to climbing mountains as both require taking thousands of steps, “one step at a time,” to reach the goal. Follow our journey at disabledsportsusa.org/aconcagua.

So, what are your dreams? Let Disabled Sports USA’s nationwide chapter network (pg. 20) become the first step in making them come true.

Kirk Bauer, JD
Executive Director, Disabled Sports USA
U.S. Army (Retired)

I hope you will remember Disabled Sports USA in your 2014 giving plans. You can donate online at www.disabledsportsusa.org. For federal workers, Combined Federal Campaign #10151.
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New Opportunities in Iowa, Missouri & New Jersey

Disabled Sports USA is proud to announce three new chapters have joined our nationwide network of adaptive sports providers. To find a chapter in your area, please visit our full chapter listing on pg. 20 and 21.

Adaptive Sports Iowa

Adaptive Sports Iowa wants to help people enjoy the activities they’re passionate about, providing a sense of independence rather than isolation. Programs include beep baseball, power soccer, goalball, wheelchair basketball, cycling and other regional and national events.

To find a full list of programs available, visit www.adaptivesportsiowa.org.

Disabled Sports USA South Jersey

Disabled Sports USA South Jersey plans to provide golf instruction for wounded veterans in New Jersey.

To learn more, contact Ed Afanador at phantom177@comcast.net.

Midwest Adaptive Sports

Midwest Adaptive Sports (MAS) is a therapeutic recreational and competitive ski program for individuals with disabilities based out of Dearborn, Mo. Our objective is to have fun, build independence, self-esteem, confidence, physical development and socialization. Year-round programs include soccer, baseball, sled hockey and skiing.

To find a full calendar of programs available, visit www.midwestadaptivesports.org.

Meet Program Specialists Bre and Kelly

Bre Podgorski joined the DSUSA team in August of 2013 as an intern and never looked back. A 2013 graduate of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign with a degree in Recreation, Sport, and Tourism, Podgorski found her love of providing opportunities for people with disabilities through working as a camp counselor and managing the wheelchair basketball team. She is an avid Cubs fan from the South Side of Chicago and spends her free time at baseball games, trying to catch an Illini football or basketball game, or participating in one of her many recreational sports leagues.

Kelly O’Donnell joined DSUSA as a Warfighter Sports Program Specialist in 2014 after spending two years in youth sports and non-profit/government work. She earned her B.A. in Communication with a focus in Public Relations from the University of Maryland in 2012, after which she completed her M.P.S. in Sports Industry Management at Georgetown University. A lifelong athlete, O’Donnell’s an outdoor sports fanatic, a lover of all-things-Maryland-Terrapins, and an avid New York sports fan. When she’s not outdoors or on the field, you’ll find her with a strong coffee and a good book.
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www.fillauer.com
Trying a winter sport is easy with Warfighter Sports. The events on this page are provided free of charge to veterans and active duty service members with permanent physical disabilities. If you see a program you’re interested in, visit the website listed to register! If you do not see a program near you, please look to our full chapter listing on page 20 and contact your local chapter to find more winter opportunities.

California
December-March
United States Adaptive Recreation Center (USARC)
Winter Ski & Snowboard Lessons
Alpine Skiing, Snowboarding, & Snowshoeing
Big Bear Lake
usarc.org

Colorado
Dec. 7-12
Challenge Aspen
5th Annual Women’s Mountain Retreat
Alpine Skiing, Snowboarding, & Yoga
Aspen
challengeaspen.org/military

Jan. 21-26
Challenge Aspen
8th Annual Operation X Camp
Alpine Skiing & Snowboarding
Aspen
challengeaspen.org/military

Jan. 24-Feb. 8
Steamboat Adaptive Recreational Sports (STARS)
STARS & Stripes Military Programs
Alpine Skiing, Nordic Skiing, Snowboarding, Ski Biking, Snowshoeing, & Yoga
Steamboat Springs
steamboasta.com

January-March
Adaptive Sports Association-Durango
2015 Winter Military Ski Program
Alpine Skiing, Snowboarding, & Ski Biking
Durango
adosdurango.org

January-March
Ignite Adaptive Sports
Veterans Winter Program
Alpine Skiing, Nordic Skiing, Snowboarding, & Snowshoeing
Alexandria, VA
igniteadaptivesports.org

Feb. 1-7
The Adaptive Sports Center
Winter Warfighter Sports Week
Alpine Skiing, Snowboarding, & Ice Climbing
Crested Butte
adaptivesports.org

Cuba
Feb. 12-19
Soldiers Undertaking Disabled Scuba
Open Water Diving Certification/Scuba
Guantanamo Bay
sudsdiving.org

Idaho
Jan. 22-23
Adaptive Wilderness Sports of McCall
Visually-Impaired Warfighter Clinic
Alpine Skiing & Snowboarding
McCall
awesomeidaho.org

Feb. 21-22
Adaptive Wilderness Sports of McCall
Warfighter Skills Camp
Alpine Skiing & Snowboarding
McCall
awesomeidaho.org

Maine
Jan. 31-Feb. 2
Maine Adaptive Sports & Recreation
Veterans No Boundaries
Alpine Skiing, Nordic Skiing, Snowboarding, Snowshoeing, Swimming, Shooting, & Snowmobiling
Newry
maineadaptive.org

Maryland
January-March
Baltimore Adapted Recreation and Sports
Ski MASH and Roundtop
Alpine Skiing & Snowboarding
Wisp Resort, Md., and Roundtop Resort, Pa.
barsinfo.org

Minnesota
Feb. 24-27
Courage Kenny Rehabilitation Institute
Great Lakes Monoski and Race Camp
Alpine Skiing
Duluth
couragecenter.org

New Hampshire
Jan. 12-15
New England Handicapped Sports Association
18th Annual Winter Sports Clinic for Disabled Veterans
Alpine Skiing, Nordic Skiing,
Kayaking, Sled Hockey, Wheelchair Basketball, Yoga, & Air Rifle
Newbury
nehsa.org

Feb. 2-4
New England Disabled Sports
2015 Disabled Veterans Winter Camp
Alpine Skiing & Snowboarding
Loon Mountain
nedisabledsports.org

March 12-15
Waterville Valley Adaptive Sports
WWAS Snowboard Camp
Alpine Skiing, Snowboarding, Nordic Skiing, & Snowshoeing
Waterville Valley
watervilleadaptive.com

March 18-22
Weterville Valley Adaptive Sports
NEASC Winter Sports Weekend
Alpine Skiing, Snowboarding, Nordic Skiing, & Snowshoeing
Bretton Woods, Franconia & Lincoln
watervilleadaptive.com

New York
March 5-9
STRIDE Adaptive Sports
Wounded Warrior Snow Fest
Alpine Skiing, Snowboarding, & Snowshoeing
Rensselaer
stride.org

North Carolina
Jan. 19-23
SPARC
34th DSUSA-SPARC Beech Mt. Learn to Ski/Snowboard Clinic
Alpine Skiing & Snowboarding
Beech Mountain
beechmountainresort.com

Oregon
Jan. 24-26
Oregon Adaptive Sports
Heroes in Sisters
Alpine Skiing
Sisters
oregonadaptivesports.org

Texas
November-April
Operation Comfort
Rampage Sled Hockey
Sled Hockey
San Antonio
operationcomfort.org

Utah
January-March
Common Ground Outdoor Adventures
Warfighter Winter Programming
Alpine Skiing, Snowshoeing, & Sled Hockey
Logan
cgadventures.org

Washington
January-February
Outdoors for All Foundation
Ongoing Winter Military Programs
Alpine Skiing, Snowboarding, Nordic Skiing, & Snowshoeing
Seattle
outdoorsforall.org

West Virginia
Feb. 26-March 2
Challenged Athletes of West Virginia
Warfighter Sports Family Ski Camp
Alpine Skiing, Snowboarding, & Snowmobiling
Snowshoe
cawsoports.org

Wisconsin
November-April
Great Lakes Adaptive Sports Association
GLASA Military Sled Hockey Program
Sled Hockey
Milwaukee
glasa.org

Wyoming
Feb. 19-March 1
Teton Adaptive Sports
Wyoming Adaptive Ski Experience
Alpine Skiing
Jackson
tetonadaptivesports.com

Various Locations
Soldier’s Undertaking Disabled Scuba
Advanced and Instructor Certification
Scuba
sudsdiving.org

This program was funded in part by a grant from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs. The opinions, findings and conclusions stated herein are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect those of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.
Training Grants Available to Warfighters for Spring/Summer 2015

Are you a Warfighter interested in trying a new adaptive sport? Do you need funds to assist with individual coaching fees, travel to a training opportunity or classification?

If so, you can submit an application for funding through Disabled Sports USA’s Warfighter Sports Individual Training Grant program. Grants of up to $1,000 will be awarded to Warfighters with permanent physical disabilities to assist with covering costs associated with adaptive sports participation such as coaching, event fees, transportation, lodging and meals. Applications for adaptive equipment not covered through the VA will also be considered.

Funding is available for summer sports and applicants that live in an area where there is not currently an adaptive program offering the sport they are participating in. To apply for a grant, visit disabledsportsusa.org/grants. For questions, contact Claire Duffy at cduffy@dsusa.org.

Warrior Games Showcase

Warrior Games Showcase: Military Spirit


Events included: archery, cycling, wheelchair basketball, sitting volleyball, shooting, track and field, and swimming.

Each service nominated competitors for the Ultimate Champion, a pentathlon-style event in which service members and veterans competed against each other in a variety of disciplines. Competition took place at the U.S. Olympic Training Center, Fort Carson, and the Garry Barry Stadium at Wasson High School.

Highlights included:

- Army wins 29 medals in track and field.
- Four of Army’s medals were won by 1st Lt. Kelly Elmlinger, of Attica, Ohio. Elmlinger was the only woman competing in the mixed wheelchair 100, 200, 400 and 1500-meter finals and won four silver medals.
- Marines win gold in wheelchair basketball action, beating Army in the finals 42-21.
- Navy took gold in the sitting volleyball tournament.

At the conclusion of the Games, the Army led the pack with 71 total medals to claim the Chairman’s Cup, with the Marine Corps finishing second with 54. The Air Force was a close third with 48.
First Blind Kayaker to Complete Colorado River Journey Does it Again!

Lonnie Bedwell, a former Navy Petty Officer 1st Class, was injured in a hunting accident that took his sight instantly. Thirteen years later he got into adaptive sports. In 2013, through Team River Runner, a chapter of Disabled Sports USA, Bedwell was the first totally blind kayaker to complete the entire 226-mile stretch of Colorado River through the Grand Canyon, considered one of the toughest stretches of river in the country. Earlier this summer, Bedwell returned to the Colorado River with Erik Weihenmayer, another visually-impaired athlete, and completed the feat again. In this interview, Lonnie discusses his trips and his reason for participating in adaptive sports.

When did you get involved with Team River Runner?
In 2012 I attended the VA Winter Sports Clinic and Team River Runner was there with a bunch of kayaks in a heated pool and so I played around in the pool for a while. Then they contacted me last summer and asked if I would like to go to their Out of Sight clinic in Montana for visually-impaired kayakers. I went and would paddle for a while, then flip upside down. Team River Runner would rescue me and we’d do it all over again.

Joe Mornini, the founder of Team River Runner, took me to the airport after the Out of Sight clinic and asked if I would want to go on one of their Grand Canyon trips. ‘Would you want to do it in a raft?’ he asked. ‘No, I want to do it in a kayak.’ He mentioned that I might be the first visually-impaired person to kayak the entire section of the river. I think we both imagined it would be three or four years down the road, but that gave me a goal to shoot for; it gave me something to strive for.

How did you go about preparing for the trip?
At that time I’d only been in the water a total of about five days. I’d never done a roll so Joe had set a goal of 1,000 rolls before he would even let me consider going. When I got up to 1,500, Joe brought me back to the Out of Sight Clinic and they had me intentionally flipping in the rapids to make sure I could roll in them.

The rapids on this stretch of river are considered some of the trickiest in the country. Can you tell us a little about them?
The trip took 16 days and covered 226 miles. At the first rapid, House Rock, we stopped and scouted; I was given directions to stay to the left. Somehow I got pushed to the right beside a huge pillow wave and it sucked me in. But I got right up on top, paddled the rest of the way and got through it. It was a good thing, because I felt the complete power of the river. It made me realize that I could hear the guys and they could guide me and we were going to be able to do this.

A bit later, they were guiding me and saying, ‘Whatever you do, don’t get turned sideways, don’t flip.’ And what does Lonnie do? He flips. But I ended up in a straight line, which just goes to show that a little bit of luck is always good too.

[One day] the water slapped me so hard it broke my glasses. I just came up laughing. When you can find humor in your own life, it makes it much, much easier:

What was your favorite part of that first trip?
The whole group, from nine other vets to the six support people. All of the veterans were OIF/OEF veterans who had spent some time at Walter Reed. I can’t quite put it into words, but somebody always had my back. That last mile, the guys put a flag in my back and I let out this loud cry, ‘We did it,’ and I really meant WE did it. It took the entire group of 16 people.

What was most challenging for you?
I think just paddling the water in general. It was so powerful, more powerful than anything I’d ever experienced, especially with lateral waves and not knowing when they’re coming. A sighted kayaker would be able to lean into them, whereas I just had to react once they hit me. I rolled more than anyone else: probably 30 or 40 times. You wouldn’t roll if you could see it coming.

What is it about these extreme challenges that you really enjoy?
First, it’s fun, and I enjoy it, so why not? Second, I keep meeting these guys and gals who have come back from wars and it’s a way that I can help pay them back for the sacrifices they’ve made for me. I say to myself, ‘You’ve got to show them that it can be done.’ I told Joe once, ‘You had a dream and that dream has become my reality. I hope and pray that my reality has become someone else’s dream.’

What is your best advice for other adaptive athletes looking to get into kayaking?
Do it. I tell people we have the option of living in fear and pity and going nowhere or just living, so just live. Fear is just false reality. Adaptive sports opens the door and guides you through it to this world you thought no longer existed. We just need a little help, and it’s amazing what we can accomplish – and that’s true for every human being.
What is Sled Hockey?

Sled hockey (sledge hockey in Canada and Europe) is a sit-down version of ice hockey for players whose disability prevents them from playing stand-up hockey.

How Is It Played?

There is little difference in sled hockey and stand-up hockey. The goal is still to put the puck in the net. Sled hockey players use their arms to power themselves around the ice and their hips to move side-to-side. There are six players for each team – three forwards, two defensemen, and a goalie. Substitutes may be made when play is stopped, or on the fly. Previously, periods were 15 minutes in length, but now are increased to 20 minutes, the same as stand-up hockey. Play is on a regulation sized ice rink with standard size nets and puck. Checking and high-speed slapshots are common features of the sport. Players and spectators alike experience the same thrills as stand-up hockey. Two able-bodied referees call the game.

Who Can Play?

Sled hockey is played by a wide range of players with a variety of mobility limitations: amputees, spinal cord injuries, spina bifida, along with anyone who has a permanent disability that limits participation in stand up hockey. In addition, with the exception of the highest level of competition, non-disabled players are encouraged to participate.

Paralympic Team Wins Back-to-Back Gold

With its game-winning goal by U.S. Marine Corps veteran Josh Sweeney, Team USA became the first team to win back-to-back gold medals in the Paralympic Winter Games in sled hockey. The gold medal is the third for the U.S. in sled hockey since 2002.

U.S. Paralympics 2014 Sled Hockey Team:
Goaltenders Steve Cash, and Jen Lee; forwards Declan Farmer, Taylor Lipsett, Dan McCoy, Kevin McKee, Adam Page, Brody Roybal, Paul Schaus, Greg Shaw, and Josh Sweeney; defensemen Tyler Carron, Taylor Chace, Nikko Landeros, Andy Yohe, Josh Pauls, and Rico Roman. Head coach was Jeff Sauer and assistant coach was Guy Gosselin.

Sled hockey was first demonstrated at the Paralympic Winter Games in Örnsköldsvik, Sweden, in 1976 and then again in Innsbruck 1988. Since the Lillehammer 1994 Paralympic Games, Ice Sled Hockey has been a part of the Paralympic program.
Sled hockey is a great form of exercise and fitness. It increases strength and coordination and also conditions the upper body. The balance used to propel, play the puck, and turn and stop gives arms, back and abdominal muscles a workout. Those who play regularly quickly notice an increase in overall strength and balance both on and off the ice.

**What Equipment Is Needed?**

Sleds are usually made of light-gauge aluminum, consisting of a customized bucket to sit in. A backrest can be used depending on the ability of the athlete. A frame supports the bucket, legs and feet, and is mounted on two skate blades attached under the bucket. Straps keep the player secure in the sled.

Athletes with double lower-limb loss tend to have an advantage here, since they can use shorter sleds with no leg supports, resulting in a smaller turn radius.

Instead of one hockey stick, players use two for propulsion, passing and shooting. The sticks may be up to 100 cm long (roughly 3 feet) but are usually between 75-95 cm and can be wood, aluminum, or composite materials. The sticks have metal picks on one end for players to propel themselves. Those with limited grip can have sticks secured to their hands allowing them to participate.

Players are outfitted with a hockey helmet with face mask, gloves, and body protection including shoulder pads, shin guards, elbow pads, neck guard, and hockey gloves.

Goalies wear basically the same equipment but do make modifications to the glove; metal picks are attached to the backside allowing the goalie to maneuver.

Sled hockey has a relatively small number of equipment suppliers to provide the sleds, sticks and picks that are unique to sled hockey. All other hockey equipment that is necessary such as helmets, gloves, etc. can be bought from any other stand-up hockey equipment supplier.

Want to learn more about sled hockey? Visit www.disabledsportsusa.org/sled-hockey.

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**USA Hockey Sled Lending Program**

USA Disabled Hockey has a program called “One Kid… One Sled…One Shot…A Hockey Player for Life!” that is designed to help bring new players into the sport of sled hockey by initiating a loaner sled program for rinks and organizations who want to conduct learn-to-play clinics but are prevented from doing so due to the lack of sleds and sticks needed to conduct such introductory clinics. Sleds and sticks are shipped directly to the rink conducting the clinic three days prior. You are then required to ship the sleds back within three days after the conclusion of the clinic. All shipping charges will be paid by USA Hockey. Applications can be found on the USA Hockey website, http://www.usahockey.com/sledlendingprogram.

USA Hockey is the national governing body for sled hockey in the United States.
WANT TO FIND A TEAM? CONTACT THESE CHAPTERS

Adaptive Adventures
Chicago
Joel Berman
(303) 679-2770
info@adaptiveadventures.org
adaptiveadventures.org

Bay Area Outreach & Recreation Program
Berkeley, Calif.
Rick Smith
(510) 849-4663
rick@borp.org
borp.org

Bridge II Sports
Durham, N.C.
Ashley Thomas
(866) 880-2742
ashley@bridge2sports.org
bridge2sports.org

Challenge Alaska
Anchorage, Ala.
Jeff Dick, CTRS
(907) 344-7270
jeff@challengealaska.org
challengealaska.org

Courage Kenney Rehabilitation Institute
Twin Cities area, Minn.
JR Mamea
(763) 520-0558
jr.mamea@couragecenter.org
couragecenter.org

Disabled Athlete Sports Association
St. Peters, Mo.
Kelly Behlmann
(636) 477-0716
kellyb@dasasports.org
dasasports.org

Eagle Mount Great Falls
Great Falls, Mont.
Jill Van Son
(406) 454-1449
jill_vanson04@eaglemount.net
eaglemount.net

Great Lakes Adaptive Sports Association (GLASA)
Lake Forest, Ill.
Cindy Housner
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chousner@glasa.org
glasa.org

Higher Ground Sun Valley
Ketchum, Idaho
Rich Cardillo
(208) 726-9298 ext. 109
rich@highergroundsv.org
highergroundsv.org

National Ability Center
Park City, Utah
Ellen Adams
(435) 200-0995
ellenadiscovernac.org
discovernac.org

Northeast Disabled Athletic Association
Burlington, Vt.
Patrick Standen
(802) 862-6322
contactNDAA@disabledathletics.org
disabledathletics.org

Northeast Passage
Durham, N.H.
Jill Gravink
(603) 862-0070
northeast.passage@unh.edu

Pennsylvania Center for Adapted Sports
Philadelphia
Jeff McGinnis
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jeff.mcginnis@centeronline.com
centeronline.com

Sports Association of Gaylord Hospital
Wallingford, Conn.
Katie Joly
(203) 284-2772
kjoly@gaylord.org
gaylord.org

STRIDE
Rensselaer, N.Y.
Mary Ellen Whitney
(518) 598-1279
mwhitney@stride.org
stride.org

Turnstone
Fort Wayne, Ind.
Tina Acosta
(260) 483-2100
tina@turnstone.org
turnstone.org

Register for the 5th Annual Silver Stick Sled Hockey Finals in Fort Wayne

Since 2011, Fort Wayne has been the designated host city for the final Silver Stick tournament in the sled hockey division. Teams from New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and Colorado have attended past tournaments.

The 5th Annual Silver Stick (Youth) Sled Hockey Finals in conjunction with the 7th Annual Bob Chase Frostbite Championship, will be Feb. 7-8 at the SportOne/Parkview Icehouse, 2869 Ice Way, Fort Wayne.

Games are played in a state-of-the-art, three-sheet facility including a full-service restaurant and bar, full-service pro shop and party rooms. The rink is located close to numerous hotels, shopping malls, restaurants and entertainment. To register, contact Kevin Hughes at kevin@turnstone.org or at (260) 483-2100.

Turnstone is a U.S. Paralympic sport club in northeast Indiana that thrives to empower individuals with physical disabilities. Not only does Turnstone assist with providing adaptive sports and recreation experiences, members can also take advantage of a fully accessible wellness center, physical, occupational, speech and aquatic therapies. Turnstone’s sports and recreation features wheelchair basketball, power soccer, sled hockey, tennis, kayaking and many other sports.

DESTINATION PROSTHETICS
A Journey to Get You Back to Mobility at the Prosthetic Care Facility of Virginia

Destination Prosthetics is a special program designed for amputees like you who want to achieve mobility, but are unable to receive the rehabilitation care you need in your own community or from your own prosthetist. Destination Prosthetics is a means for you to receive intensive one-on-one treatment with no interruptions at the Prosthetic Care Facility of Virginia. We are a full-service clinical practice providing state-of-the-art technology for customized fittings of body-powered and bionic prostheses. Hard-to-fit cases are our specialty.

With a call to (703) 723-2803 or email to mhattingh@newlink.com, you can find out if you qualify for this unique program and assistance with travel and accommodation expenses.

John Hattingh, CP, LPO, CPO(SA) is an educator and leader in prosthetics. His attitude towards his patient is “No prosthetic issue cannot be solved.”

To be considered for Destination Prosthetics, you must live more than 100 miles from Leesburg, Va. Please note we cannot accept Medicare/Medicaid patients.

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www.facebook.com/prostheticcarefacility
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www.fillauer.com/motionfootmx
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<th>Email</th>
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<td>Alabama</td>
<td>Lakeshore Foundation</td>
<td>Birmingham, AL</td>
<td>251-313-7400</td>
<td><a href="mailto:info@lakeshore.org">info@lakeshore.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Alaska</td>
<td>Alpine Alternatives, Inc.</td>
<td>Anchorage, AK</td>
<td>99507</td>
<td><a href="mailto:alpinealternatives@arctic.net">alpinealternatives@arctic.net</a></td>
<td>907-561-6655</td>
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<td>Arizona</td>
<td>Arizona Disabled Sports USA</td>
<td>Mesa, AZ 85210</td>
<td>480-833-6273</td>
<td>arizona.disabledsports.com</td>
<td><a href="mailto:larel@arizonadosports.com">larel@arizonadosports.com</a></td>
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<td><a href="mailto:rgsk@avsports.org">rgsk@avsports.org</a></td>
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<td>Idaho</td>
<td>McCall, ID 83638</td>
<td></td>
<td>awesomeidaho.org</td>
<td>208-315-4275</td>
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<td>Illinois</td>
<td>Wilmette, IL 60091</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:joel@adaptiveadventures.org">joel@adaptiveadventures.org</a></td>
<td>847-251-8445</td>
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<td>Michigan</td>
<td>Amherst, OH 43501</td>
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<td><a href="mailto:mickboone@adaptaiveadventures.org">mickboone@adaptaiveadventures.org</a></td>
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<td>Baltimore, MD 21240</td>
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<td>mikesports.org</td>
<td>410-626-0273</td>
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**Note:** This list is not exhaustive and includes contact information for various adaptive sports organizations across the United States. For a complete list, please refer to the source provided.
**STARS Fun in the Snow**

STARS (Steamboat Adaptive Recreational Sports) offers alpine and Nordic skiing, snowboarding, ski biking, and snowshoeing. Highlights include the 10th annual All Mountain Ski & Ride Camp, featuring a day of backcountry skiing with Steamboat Powdercats; the 7th annual STARS of Tomorrow Kids Camp; and the 3rd annual STARS & Stripes Heroes Camp for injured veterans.

New this season is the Cowboy-Up Camp, designed for injured members of the Pro Rodeo Circuit who also wish to participate in the 40th annual Bud Light Cowboy Downhill. Participants will ski and ride for three days with experienced staff and volunteers to work on their skills before competing in the Cowboy Downhill on the fourth day.

For more information, visit steamboatstars.com/index.php/winter-camps.

**Kayaking, Rock Climbing and More at NSCD**

The National Sports Center for the Disabled (NSCD) Kayak School is dedicated to providing a therapeutic and fun experience with customizable kayak progressions for all ability levels. ACA-certified educators will review the key information the client has provided prior to the class start and will conduct an on-site assessment before placing the participant in one of three Learning Tracks. Classes are every Wednesday at Carmody Recreation Center in Lakewood, Colo., from 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.

Rock Climbing School, for every ability level, provides fun and skills instrumental to being a successful climber with a custom curriculum. Our climbing progression is very similar to our kayaking progression: three classes that the participant can start any time. Classes are Fridays from 4 p.m.-7 p.m. at PALS (Denver Police Activities League).

NSCD Moves! includes various movement therapies for all ages and ability levels. In some classes, our instructors help participants move through a series of obstacles “Ninja Warrior” style! Others will focus on yoga positions, dance, or classic calisthenics. This program has a heavy focus on movement therapy, functional strength, physical conditioning, balance, creativity, fluidity, control, precision, and spatial awareness.

For all the above classes, participants must register two weeks prior to activity. Group classes are $10 per person; private one-on-one training is $30.

**Winter Sports Sampler Camps**

A blend of adventure and traditional sports in a five half-day progression. Sports include kayaking, rock climbing, basketball, lacrosse, tennis, baseball, Nordic skiing, snowshoeing. Price per participant is $125.

**Custom Trips**

Custom group trips in the Denver Metro area can be arranged by contacting Joshua Thurmond, program manager at jthurmond@nscd.org.

**Mountain Programs**

NSCD alpine, cross-country and snowboard programs are available at Winter Park Resort. Visit nscd.org/programs/winter/mountain for details. Daily lessons, weekly programs and custom programs are available.

**Virtual Archery**

...and much more!

**Winter Fun With CGOA**

Daily activities at Common Ground include: alpine skiing and snowboarding, Jan 17-March 28; sled hockey, March 1-June 1; snowshoeing and cross-country skiing, Jan. 1 – April 30; and rock climbing year-round.

A Beaver Yurt Camping Trip will be March 3-4. Enjoy alpine skiing, snowboarding, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing all while returning to a cozy yurt nestled in gorgeous Logan Canyon. All transportation (from Northern Utah), food, and other expenses included.

A dogsledding trip to Jackson, Wyo., will be Feb. 27-29. Stay at the comfortable dorms at Teton Science Center, explore downtown Jackson, go snowshoeing, and enjoy a once-in-a-lifetime experience, dogsledding, just like the Iditarod!

Contact Bryce Patten, program director, at (435) 713-0288 or programs@cgadventures.org to register for any activity!
NAC’s 2014/15 Winter Programs

The National Ability Center, Park City, Utah, offers a wide range of winter programs for individuals, families and groups of all abilities. Winter programming includes alpine skiing and snowboarding, Nordic skiing, horseback riding, equine-facilitated activities, hippotherapy, aquatics, indoor climbing and sled hockey. Participation can range from single or a series of session lessons to a multi-day stay in our onsite lodge with a customized schedule for you or your group. For complete information, including registration materials and scholarship applications, or to book a group or custom program, call (435) 649-3991 or visit DiscoverNAC.org.

Ski and snowboard lessons are offered at Park City Mountain Resort, Deer Valley (ski only), Canyons Resort and Brighton Resort, beginning Nov. 22 through April 12. Two-hour, half-day and full-day options are available.

Nordic and biathlon lessons are offered all season long at the NAC, White Pine Touring and Soldier Hollow. Adaptive horseback riding, hippotherapy and equine-facilitated learning (EFL) are offered year-round. Sled hockey and indoor climbing by request.

Winter camps include: Holiday Family Camp: Dec.19–22 Designed for families that have a member with a disability; MLK Day Camp: Jan 17–19 Youth ages 8–18; Action Overnight Camp: Feb 14–18 Youth ages 10–17 with a physical disability; Paralympic Sport focused Spring Break Day Camp: April 6–10 Youth ages 8–18.

For information about Paralympic-level training and competition opportunities in alpine skiing, snowboard, Nordic and biathlon, please contact Jess Roising, Jessr@DiscoverNAC.org or (435) 608-0117.

Military Programs: From individual activities to week-long retreats, the National Ability Center offers a number of individual and group programs for servicemen and women and their families. These programs are designed to develop and encourage independence, and general health and wellness consistent with a balanced and physically active lifestyle. Contact Jeremy Houskeeper, Jeremyh@DiscoverNAC.org or (435) 200-0991 for more information.

NAC Hosts Paratriathlon Camp

The National Ability Center, Park City, Utah, was selected by USA Triathlon to host an introductory paratriathlon camp this past September. The camp was attended by seven athletes with various abilities, learning skills required to be successful in swim, bike or run. Many adaptive athletes also need to determine what adaptive equipment works best with their specific needs. Adaptive equipment can be in the form of a tandem or handcycle, push rim chair or various prosthetics.

Other components of the camp focused on each discipline in paratriathlon, as well as provided transition and goal-setting seminars. Many of the athletes over the course of the camp challenged themselves, tried new techniques and equipment, increased skill and knowledge, and in the super-sprint triathlon at the conclusion of the camp, exceeded even their own expectations.

For more information on paratriathlon visit triathlon.org/paratriathlon.

Photos courtesy of Jess Hilton Roising/NAC

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Challenge Aspen Winter REC Programs

Challenge Aspen offers a variety of winter programs through its REC (Recreational Educational and Cultural) divisions.

Mono-Ski Camp, Jan. 18-23, offers instruction on how to carve the perfect turn, ski bumps and improve racing skills with instruction from PSIA instructors.

VI Ski Fest, Feb. 8-15. For all levels of skiers and snowboarders with visual impairments to improve skiing or riding skills.

The Challenge Autism (ChAMP) camps for children and young adults with autism spectrum disorder includes skiing, snowboarding and a range of cultural activities, such as group dinners, to encourage social development. ChAMP camps are March 16-20 and March 23-27.

For more information about programs and camps offered at Challenge Aspen this winter, visit challengeaspen.org or call (970) 923-0578.

Challenge Aspen offers a variety of winter programs through C.A.M.O. (Challenge Aspen Military Opportunities).

C.A.M.O. offers full scholarships to injured servicemen and women and their families. Focusing on rehabilitation and re-establishing family ties, C.A.M.O. offers a couples’ retreat where one (or both) individuals have been injured during their military service. Using skiing/snowboarding to promote physical and mental health, our facilitators will provide sessions to build and strengthen relationships. This camp is offered Jan. 6-10 and is open to seven couples.

For more information about these programs and others, visit challengeaspen.org or call (970) 923-0578.

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BOEC Skiing and Wilderness Programs

For more than 38 years, the Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center (BOEC) has been providing empowering outdoor experiences to people of all abilities. Core programs include:

Adaptive Ski Program – Accessible downhill and cross-country skiing and snowboarding based out of Breckenridge and Keystone Ski Resorts.

Wilderness Program – Accessible white-water rafting, canoeing, camping, backpacking, adaptive cycling, snowshoeing, ropes course, climbing wall, and team initiatives. Courses are based out of our 39-acre Breckenridge program site and also travel to scenic outdoor areas in Colorado and Utah.

BOEC also offers programs for the military. Over 100 military members along with family members participate annually. Offerings include downhill skiing and snowboarding and year-round, multi-day retreats for vets and family members, including white-water rafting, adaptive cycling and rock climbing. We bring wounded veterans back into outdoor activities that they may have participated in prior to their injury, helping foster a healthy readjustment.

Visit boec.org or BOEC on Facebook for more information on 2015 programs.

Learn to Ski for Free in Durango

The Adaptive Sports Association (ASA) offers instruction in traditional 2-track skiing, 3- and 4-track skiing, snowboarding, mono-skiing, bi-skiing, ski biking, and more at the Durango (Colo.) Mountain Resort. Learn to Ski Scholarship Weeks include transportation, lodging, meals, lift tickets, lessons and equipment rentals. The typical scholarship recipient stays for six days with four days of snow sport instruction. Ideal candidates are people with a physical disability and/or progressive disease who are new to adaptive skiing, and are able to travel to Durango. ASA also has programs designed specifically for injured service members.

For more information on Learn to Ski scholarships, individual lessons and/or groups, contact Ann Marie Meighan at annmarie@asadurango.com or (970)-259-0374. More information about specific programs can be found on asadurango.org.

Western Colorado Mountain Fun

Powderhorn Winter Resort is the winter home of Colorado Discover Ability, which is now gearing up for another awesome ski season, including preparing and training volunteer ski instructors so they can teach children, adults, disabled veterans and others with special needs how to enjoy outdoor winter activities. Volunteers are welcome to become adaptive instructors. It is our goal to make sure that anyone who would like to enjoy these activities, regardless of their ability level, gets a chance. It's a lot of hard work, but it's also a lot of fun! For more information, call our office at (970) 257-1222.
Adaptive Adventures Midwest Ski and Ride Program

Entering its fifth season, the Adaptive Adventures Midwest Ski and Ride Program is the largest in the region. The program offers sessions every Tuesday and Thursday beginning in January at Wilmot Mountain and/or Alpine Valley in southeast Wisconsin.

In addition, four 2-day camps at Cascade Mountain (Portage, Wis.) will be offered in 2015, including a Stars of Tomorrow Kids Camp and a special 2.5-day clinic at Seven Oaks in Boone, Iowa, which includes a train-the-trainer clinic. One of the unique features of the program is the ability to offer night skiing at Wilmot and Alpine Valley.

With the increased demand in the Midwest and the growth of the Midwest Ski and Ride Program, the goal is to introduce skiing or snowboarding to people with disabilities in the region so they gain confidence and independence and may eventually venture out West to experience skiing in the Rocky Mountains. Adaptive Adventures will host signature ski camps out west, including the Steamboat All Mountain Ski and Ride Camp Jan. 11-16 (with Steamboat Stars), the Snofest Military Ski and Ride Camp Jan. 21-25 (with Keystone Adaptive) and the Steep and Deep Camp in Jackson Hole, Wyo., Feb. 24-28 (with Teton Adaptive).

More information on these and other winter camps and events can be found at adaptiveadventures.org, or contact Linda Tomsevics (414) 640-3756, email Linda@adaptiveadventures.org.

Ski and Ride dates include:
Wilmot – Jan. 6, 8, 15, 22, 27, & 29; Feb. 10, 12, 17, 19, 26, and March 3, 5;
Cascade – Jan. 10, 11; Feb. 7, 8, 21, 22;
Boone, Iowa, – Feb. 5-6.

Schedule subject to change

12th Annual Great Lakes Mono-Ski and Race Camp

The Great Lakes Mono-Ski and Race Camp, Feb. 24-27, is the largest mono-ski camp in the Midwest for youth and adults with disabilities. Held at Spirit Mountain, Duluth, Minn., the focus is for a skier to gain confidence to become an independent skier. Skiers work with instructors on personal ski development and race techniques. Skiers will be filmed by a professional videographer for a thorough movement analysis. Skiers and instructors will analyze the film and discuss their ski style and performance.

“One of my favorite mono-ski camps in the nation; it’s been fun to be a part of it for the last 10+ years. This camp has something for everyone…youth, adults, vets all come and have a great experience,” said Matt Feeney, outreach director/co-founder, Adaptive Adventures.

“I am amazed at how quickly my son gained knowledge and skill on the mono-ski,” said a parent of a participant. “We came for skiing but left with so much more; being around other people that we could relate to and making new friendships was priceless.”

For more information or to register, contact Mark Hanna, Mark.hanna@allina.com, 218-726-4834 ext. 1, or visit http://wellness.allinahealth.org/events/7036.

GLASA’s Twilight 5K Run, Walk & Roll

It’s not too early to mark your calendars for GLASA’s (Great Lakes Adaptive Sports Association) 2015 Twilight 5K Run, Walk & Roll, always held the Saturday after Labor Day.

Participants with disabilities throughout northern Illinois and southern Wisconsin come to compete in racing chair, manual chair, visually impaired/blind runner, ambulatory runner with a mobility impairment, handcycling division and the various age categories of able-bodied runners.

GLASA volunteers provide extra support on the course for those beginner cyclists and wheelchair racers. Guides are provided for those needing partners on the course and new athletes are able to use handcycles and sports chairs from GLASA’s equipment lending program.

The event also serves as a great recruitment tool, as members of the track, field, swim, sled hockey, and power soccer teams all are promoting their sports.

The Twilight 5K is only an hour from the Milwaukee airport and 30 minutes from Chicago O’Hare. Contact Cindy Housner at chousner@glasa.org or (847) 283-0908, or glasa.org for further information.
**Name Change for Ski Apache**

Ski Apache Disabled Skiers Program has changed its name to Ski Apache Adaptive Sports, replacing the word disabled with adaptive, calling attention to what the organization does rather than labeling its participants. Ski Apache offers skiing and snowboarding and may expand its programming to summer sports in the future.

Ski Apache Adaptive Sports is located at Ski Apache in the heart of the Sacramento Mountains, in central New Mexico, open from Thanksgiving till the closing date of Ski Apache, which typically falls in mid-March. One-on-one lessons are offered to anyone with a permanent disability regardless of severity or extent of disability or financial limitations.

For more information, visit skiapachedaptivesports.com or (575) 464-3193.

**Adventure Amputee Winter Camp in Virginia**

In January 2015, Adventure Amputee Camp will host its second annual winter camp at the Wintergreen Resort in Virginia.

For four days, ten children ages 10-16, with an amputation or limb difference, will learn to, or improve on, skiing and snowboarding, and participate in additional activities such as ice skating, tubing and indoor swimming. Activities at the winter camp will be modified as necessary to meet the ability and interest level of each camper to provide an experience that was previously untried, unobtainable, or unimaginable.

The camp provides an opportunity for these children to be in the majority, and promotes an environment that fosters friendships. On the last day of camp, family members will be invited to join campers on the slopes and the children will have the opportunity to show what they have learned.

Camp Directors Kelly McGaughey and Karen Hall, along with winter camp volunteers (with and without amputations), will serve as role models of adults who are living productive and fulfilled lives. The goal of the winter camp is to encourage these children to stretch their potential and imagination, and explore all that is possible.

**Celebrate the 25th Annual SPORTSABILITY**

Celebrate the 25th anniversary of SportsAbility and the Americans with Disabilities Act April 9-11 in Tallahassee, Fla. SportsAbility, is the premier event of the Florida Disabled Outdoors Association (FDOA), encouraging participation regardless of age or ability level.

The program starts with baseball, lawn games, and sports drills. Attendees can also try indoor sports including martial arts, basketball, tennis, and more. Outdoor activities include sit water-skiing, pontoon boat rides, horseback riding, kayaking, sailing, rock climbing, scuba and more.

“What really got to me was seeing how everybody, despite their abilities or disabilities are able to go enjoy nature, are able to be active and that the sky is the limit. SportsAbility was the beginning of a new approach to life for me. I still grieve for what I have lost, but I am no longer doing it alone in the confines of the safety of my house. I am once again living,” said participant Pernille Urban.

For more information, visit fdoa.org or call (850) 201-2944.
Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra’s Paralympic Sport Camps

Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra/Paralympic Sport Mammoth Lakes offers a full roster of Paralympic Sport Camps for athletes of all ages with any physical or visual disability. Campers can learn a new sport or refine skills and become competitive in a winter Paralympic sport.

Nordic skiers have two camp opportunities this winter: Nordic Ski & Race Camp, Jan. 16-18, and Biathlon Camp, March 18-22. The January Nordic Camp features both classic and skate skiing (two different types of cross-country skiing) for beginners to skilled athletes. The camp includes skills, drills, and touring of the Lakes Basin at Tamarack Cross Country Ski Area. Biathlon Camp builds on the skills learned in the Nordic Camp, and incorporates fitness, endurance, and shooting skills in preparation for race day. The camp coincides with the Mammoth Lakes Biathlon, one of the biggest biathlons in the country. Camp registration includes entry into this challenging competition.

DSES Alpine Ski & Race Camp will be Feb. 4-8 and Mono Ski Madness Feb. 27-March 1. Both camps will be coached by PSIA-certified instructors, USSA-certified coaches. Mono Ski Madness will feature Paralympic medalist Bill Bowness. The Alpine Ski & Race Camp mixes the skills, drills and gate training required of successful racers with free skiing and exploration of the mountain.

Space is limited. To apply or for more information, contact Maggie Palchak (760) 934-0791 or mpalchak@disabledsportseasternsierra.org.

The Unrecables Ski Mammoth

The Unrecables ski trip dates to Mammoth are: Jan. 23-25, Feb. 20-22, March 20-22, April 17-19, and May 15-17. Those interested in joining should email info@unrecables.com. Monthly socials are held on the second Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. at the IHOP Restaurant in Marina Del Rey, followed by our Board of Directors Meeting.

For more information, email info@unrecables.com, or visit www.unrecables.org.

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Warfighters’ Snake River Adventure

Adaptive Wilderness Sports of McCall (AWeSOMe!) held its first summer Warfighter Sports Event. Five disabled veterans from the Pacific Northwest joined Hells Canyon Raft for a trip along the Snake River through the deepest gorge in North America. Teamwork was crucial as the group paddled their 16-foot rafts through rapids that ranged up to class 4. They also had an opportunity to row the rafts and paddle inflatable kayaks.

U.S. Navy veteran Robert White, who lost his vision in 1993 exclaimed, “Getting up enough courage to get into a kayak (on his own) and go down the rapids was a freeing and amazing experience.”

The group also had an opportunity to hike along the river to see Indian petroglyphs and abundant wildlife. Participants also fished for trout, bass, and sturgeon combining action-packed white water with the calming effects of fishing – that is until White landed a giant sturgeon!

“Watching Robert drop his walking stick and literally run down the rocky path at almost full speed at Salt Creek was not only a bit scary, but also quite impressive,” said the raft guide. “Watching his face as he was reeling in a seven-foot sturgeon was pretty comparable to watching a five-year-old open presents at Christmas. Besides the sturgeon, it was pretty awesome to watch the group of veterans come out of their shell as the trip went on. It felt like they were all able to relax and simply enjoy where they were and what they were doing. I hope that this experience will be something that they can use in their everyday lives.”

Joanne Grecco, a U.S. Air Force veteran, also loved the trip. She said it was “right up there with some of the things I’ve done in my 21 years of military service including laying in the belly of a tanker while doing an in-flight refueling – what a trip!”

Both White and Grecco paddle with Team River Runner, a chapter of Disabled Sports USA. To find a TRR chapter in your area to volunteer or participate, visit www.teamriverrunner.org/ chapter.

For more information on AWeSOMe!, McCall, Idaho, visit awesomeidaho.org.
Leaps of Faith
Snow Ski Instruction

Leaps of Faith (LOF) Adaptive Skiers, Sandy Hook, Conn., offers beginner to advanced snow ski instruction in partnership with NEHSA at Mount Southington. Ski lessons are taught by certified instructors and all equipment is included. Three of the snow ski clinics will be for sit skiers only and three for stand-up skiers.

Programs are free of charge to children and adults and include instruction, food, refreshments and equipment. A $25, fully-refundable deposit is required to secure your registration. Advance registration required (same-day registration not available).

For more information, contact Joel Zeisler at info@lofadaptiveskiers.org or (203) 426-0666.

Connecticut Paratriathlon Club Finishes Strong

The Sports Association of Gaylord Hospital’s Paratriathlon Training Program finished the season with seven athletes competing in the Dave Parcells Madison Triathlon on Sept 6.

Athletes completed a 15-week training program, which included coaching, group training sessions, individual training sessions, clinics, a three-month YMCA membership, use of adaptive equipment and race entry fees. Goals ranged from completing a triathlon for the first time to improving their time from last year.

This year’s competing athletes from Connecticut included: David Alejandro of Naugatuck; Anthony Allegretti of New Milford; Tom Branchaud of West Simsbury; Geoffrey Matesky of New Milford; Shane Mosko of Southington; Brett Sloan of West Simsbury; and Darrell Rider of Wells, Maine. Stacia Cardillo, a USAT, Level 1 Triathlon Coach from the Wheeler YMCA, Plainville, coached.

For athletes interested in joining the program next year, contact Katie Joly, Sports Association Program Manager at (203) 284-2772 or kjoly@gaylord.org. Additional information is also available at gaylord.org or Facebook (Sports Association, Gaylord Hospital).

Sports Activities on Cape Cod

CAPEable Adventures on Cape Cod is adding new sports to their offerings this winter, including wheelchair basketball, bocce, and archery among others. Additional drumming and rhythm events also are being scheduled. Contact capeableadventures.org or call (508) 566-3298.

On the Slopes in Southern Vermont with the Bart Adaptive Sports Center

The Bart J. Ruggiere Adaptive Sports Center at Bromley Ski Resort offers ski lessons daily; adaptive equipment provided and reservations required. Race training is a new program, held mid-week for intermediate and advanced skiers who want to enhance their racing skills.

A Ski-A-Thon will be held during the Annual Luau March 7 for teams of four. Costumes are suggested.

Reservations are strongly recommended for all programs. Call (802) 824-5522 ext 430, email bartcenter@comcast.net, or visit bartcenter.com.

NEHSA’s Special Winter Events

New England Handicapped Sports Association (NEHSA) Located at Mount Sunapee Resort in Newbury, N.H., has skiing and riding programs seven days a week throughout the season. Special events include the 30th Annual Ski & Ride-A-Thon Feb. 7 and the 29th Annual Corporate Challenge March 7.

Visit nehsa.org, call (603) 763-9158, or email info@nehsa.org for more information on these events, as well as some special editions to our calendar that are coming soon!
STRIDE

Adaptive Instructors Think ‘Inside the Box’

YOUR ‘TOOL BOX’ SHOULD BE FULL OF CREATIVE IDEAS TO DRAW FROM

By Mary Ellen Whitney

What is it that makes a ski or snowboard lesson memorable for your student? Safety, fun or learning? Any student will tell you that it was the fun that they remember. Of course, the fun must be created within a safe and educational environment, but the student may not realize that…

A few years ago, an instructor suggested that I make a “Tool Box” for instructors to access before lessons go out. This box would contain some fun ideas to take to the hill to present a more imaginative and innovative lesson for the students. Upon this suggestion, I gathered various items and put them in a box with a sign that read: “Look Inside the Box!” The contents were an assortment of “tools” that would help make the lesson entertaining and amusing, even for those students who might require a little more prompting than their typical peers.

- Pocket race course – Use 10-12 drinking straws with blue and red survey tape secured to one end (looking like a flag). Stick into the snow, to develop a mini race course for your student.
- Clown nose – (Red sponge) on your face can instantly change the temperament of a student having a tough time.
- PECS ring – A small ring of Pictorial Exchange Communication System icons - can assist in communicating with your non-verbal students.
- Half tennis balls – Laid on the trail in a sequence can help develop a pattern for developing the turn shape that you desire your student to have.
- Red light/green light double-sided flashcard – a game every child knows. This adds a visual cue to the game and makes it more fun with you skiing in front, forcing the student to watch for the color change.
- Frisbee – Becomes a steering wheel of a race car, or fire-truck, or anything driven, to be held out in front of the student to promote a taller stance.
- Squishy toys – Students with sensory issues enjoy feeling squishy sensory toys, on the lift or carried in a lesson. It can save a behavioral issue due to sensory overload.
- Prize box – A milk crate filled with dollar store toys and prizes to reward the student who works for points or uses a contract for good behavior.
- Social story flash cards – Created at your ski area with photos of the lesson process, from ski rental shop to lesson terrain and lifts, to rejoining parents at the end of the lesson.
- Edgy wedgy – A small tip-clamp device to hold ski-tips together for promoting a certain movement pattern that can be called a two-headed snake that bites your ski tips together.
- Zombie flash card – A visual image of a zombie with arms outreached standing tall, to promote tall stance and hands forward…the skiing “dead!”
- Cowbell or whistle – An auditory cue for when to turn, or stop. Let your student do it for you, too!
- Smartphone apps – Can also add dimension to your lesson, and there are just too many to mention…that’s a whole other article!

These are just a sampling of the ideas you can use to create a “Tool Box of Fun” for your students with special needs. Fill your own box – and remember to share your ideas with others to bring the FUN back into our adaptive lessons. The more fun you make it, the more learning takes place, leading to independent skiers and riders! What’s inside your box?

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