

Congressional Charity Golf Classic Benefits WWDSP

The First Annual Congressional Charity Golf Classic benefiting the Wounded Warrior Disabled Sports Project (WWDSP) was held Monday, July 14, at the Army Navy Country Club, Arlington, Va. This marked the first time in its 37-year history that the annual congressional golf game benefited a charity.

The day's activities included a clinic by PGA of America Professionals and demonstrations by Wounded Warriors followed by 18 holes of golf and dinner.

"It's a great opportunity to showcase the fine qualities of our wounded service men and women," said Kirk Bauer, executive director of DS/USA.

More than 20 current members and 30 former members of Congress participated including House Majority Leader Steny H. Hoyer (D-Md.) and Minority Leader John A. Boehner (R-Ohio).

Sponsors of the event included AIG, CROWE PARADIS LLC, Genatt



Sitting: Pfc. Alex Knapp; Standing left to right: Congressman John Murtha (D-PA); James Ball, Tee It Up for the Troops; Congressman Chet Edwards (D-TX); and Former Member of Congress Lou Frey (R-FL).



Photos courtesy of Keith Jewell

Left to right: Judy Alvarez, golf professional; Joe Steranka, CEO of The PGA of America; Sarah Williams; Lance Cpl. Tim Lang; Brian Whitcomb, president of The PGA of America; Congressman John Murtha (D-PA); and Congressman Chet Edwards (D-TX).

Associates Inc., Bank of America, Robert Trent Jones Golf Club Charitable Foundation, TEE IT UP FOR THE TROOPS Inc., GE, American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons, The United States Association of Former Members of Congress, National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, National Beer Wholesalers Association, PING, AHCA, Fannie Mae, Pfizer, Duke Energy, NASDAQ, and American Council for Excellence & Opportunity.

Wounded Warriors Take to the Water at Annual Festival

The 4th Annual New York Adaptive Water Sports Festival was held July 10-13, 2008 in Rockaway Point, Queens, New York. Attending this year's event were 60 Wounded Warriors and their family members. Eight service members from the United Kingdom and the British Limbless Ex-Service Members Association (BLESMA) were part of the group.

"This is a fantastic event and a fun setting to help our Wounded Warriors learn they can overcome a disability through the challenge and joy of sports," said Kirk Bauer, executive director of Disabled Sports USA. "It's great to see them with a smile on their face and their confidence returning."

As in previous years, festivities began with a parade to welcome Wounded Warriors followed by dinner at the Belle Harbor Yacht Club.

Weekend sport and recreation activities included waterskiing, sailing, scuba, fishing and kayaking. Waterskiing and sailing clinics



Photos courtesy of Ken Watson



were conducted by DS/USA chapters Lakeshore Foundation, Adaptive Aquatics, and S.T.R.I.D.E. Inc.

"This event allows Wounded Warriors like me to push ourselves physically without injury," said Staff Sgt. John A. Borders. "There is so much to do that we didn't want to leave."

A fishing charter for service members and firefighters was held in memory of firefighter Michael E. Roberts, from FDNY/Engine 204, who was killed on 9/11. Friday evening's dinner cruise on the luxury yacht Atlantis was held in memory of Navy Seal Lt. Michael Murphy.

The event was presented by DS/USA, Wounded Warrior Project, Graybeards, AIG, BGC Partners, Inc., HUB Financial Charities, Genatt

Associates, Non Commissioned Officers Association, plus the countless organizations and companies in the Rockaway Breezy Point community.

Chapters Receive Grants to Advance Programming, Encourage Membership

Disabled Sports USA (DS/USA) has awarded grants to 65 chapters and disability organizations that are developing and expanding programs in three areas: the Wounded Warrior Disabled Sports Project (WWDSP), the AIG SummerFest Tour, and the Youth Sports Mentoring Program.

“These programs target different groups in the disability community, but they all have one thing in common. That is to promote health and independence, through sports and fitness,” said Kirk Bauer, executive director, DS/USA. “Through generous funding sources, and the efforts of many professionals and volunteers, adaptive sports programs with trained instructors and adaptive equipment have evolved and become available to an ever expanding number of communities nationwide.”

The Wounded Warrior Disabled Sports Project

Thirty-seven years of experience has shown early intervention with active sports results in successful rehabilitation, leading to employment. The “Wounded Warriors” and their family members are provided these opportunities free of charge, including transportation, lodging, adaptive equipment and individualized instruction in over a dozen different winter and summer sports. Programs take place at sites throughout the United States of America offering Wounded Warriors the opportunity to integrate as participants and mentors in their home communities.

DS/USA awarded grants to 31 chapters for programs specifically for Wounded Warriors and their families. Chapters receiving grants included:

Ability Plus/WMASS/Bretton Woods Winter
Adaptive Adventures
Adaptive Sports Association
Adaptive Sports Center of Crested Butte
Adaptive Sports Foundation
Arizona Disabled Sports
Bart Ruggiere Adaptive Sports Center
Blue Ridge Adapted Snow Sports
Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center
Cape Ability Outrigger Ohana
Challenge Aspen
Challenged Athletes of West Virginia
DS/USA Far West
DS/USA New England
Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra
Greek Peak Adaptive Snow Sports
Happy Trails Riding Center
Lakeshore Foundation

Lakeside Chapter DS/USA
Maine Handicapped Skiing
New England Handicapped Sports Association
North Country Access Cycling
National Sports Center for the Disabled
San Diego Adaptive Sports Foundation
Soldiers Undertaking Disabled SCUBA
S.T.R.I.D.E. Inc.
Team River Runner
Telluride Adaptive Sports
The Adaptive Adventure Sports Coalition (TAASC)
UCO Disabled Sports and Events
Wintergreen Adaptive Skiing



AIG SummerFest Tour

The AIG SummerFest Tour is comprised of national and local programs across the U.S. from the spring through the fall months. The goal is to provide a centralized resource for participants, competitors, parents, coaches and anyone with an interest in disability sport. There are now more than 35 sports and recreational activities from the traditional golf, cycling, and tennis to the more extreme skateboarding, wind-surfing, rafting, and scuba diving. Most activities are offered by a chapter of DS/USA, at various sites across the country and can include a variety of instruction and participation opportunities including competitive events, learning clinics, recreational opportunities as well as symposiums and education for coaches and instructors.

DS/USA's AIG SummerFest Tour program awarded grants to 20 chapters and disability organizations to further develop their adaptive summer sports activities. They included:

Adaptive Adventures
Adaptive Sports Foundation
Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center
Common Ground Outdoor Adventures
DS/USA Far West
Disabled Athlete Sports Association
Footloose Sailing Association
Happy Trails Riding Center
North East Disabled Athletic Association
Northeast Passage Sports & Recreation
San Diego Adaptive Sports Foundation
Sports, Art and Recreation of Chattanooga
S.T.R.I.D.E. Inc.

The Adaptive Adventure Sports Coalition (TAASC)
UCO Disabled Sports and Events
U.S. Adaptive Recreation Center
U.S. Handcycling Association
United States Association of Blind Athletes
Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports
Western New York Adaptive Water Sports

Similar grants are available for the AIG Ski Tour.

Youth Sports Mentoring Program

The DS/USA Youth Sports Mentoring Program is a nationwide initiative conducted in partnership with its chapters to increase youth sports involvement and to foster social interaction between people of all abilities.

Mentoring through sports & physical activity not only promotes the development of athletic skills and encourages healthy active lifestyles, but it also supports the development of independent living and social skills among youth with disabilities. Through sports, mentors and mentees can work together to identify and accomplish measurable goals such as the Presidential Active Lifestyle Award. Success in sports builds self-confidence and greater motivation to succeed.

DS/USA awarded grants to 14 chapters to expand the youth mentoring program. Chapters receiving grants included:

Adaptive Sports Center of Crested Butte
Challenge Alaska
Common Ground Outdoor Adventures
Disabled Athlete Sports Association
Greek Peak Adaptive Snow Sports
National Ability Center
National Sports Center for the Disabled
Northeast Passage Sports & Recreation
Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago
San Diego Adaptive Sports Foundation
University of Central Oklahoma Disabled Sports & Events
Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports
White Mountain Adaptive Snow Sports
Wintergreen Adaptive Skiing

