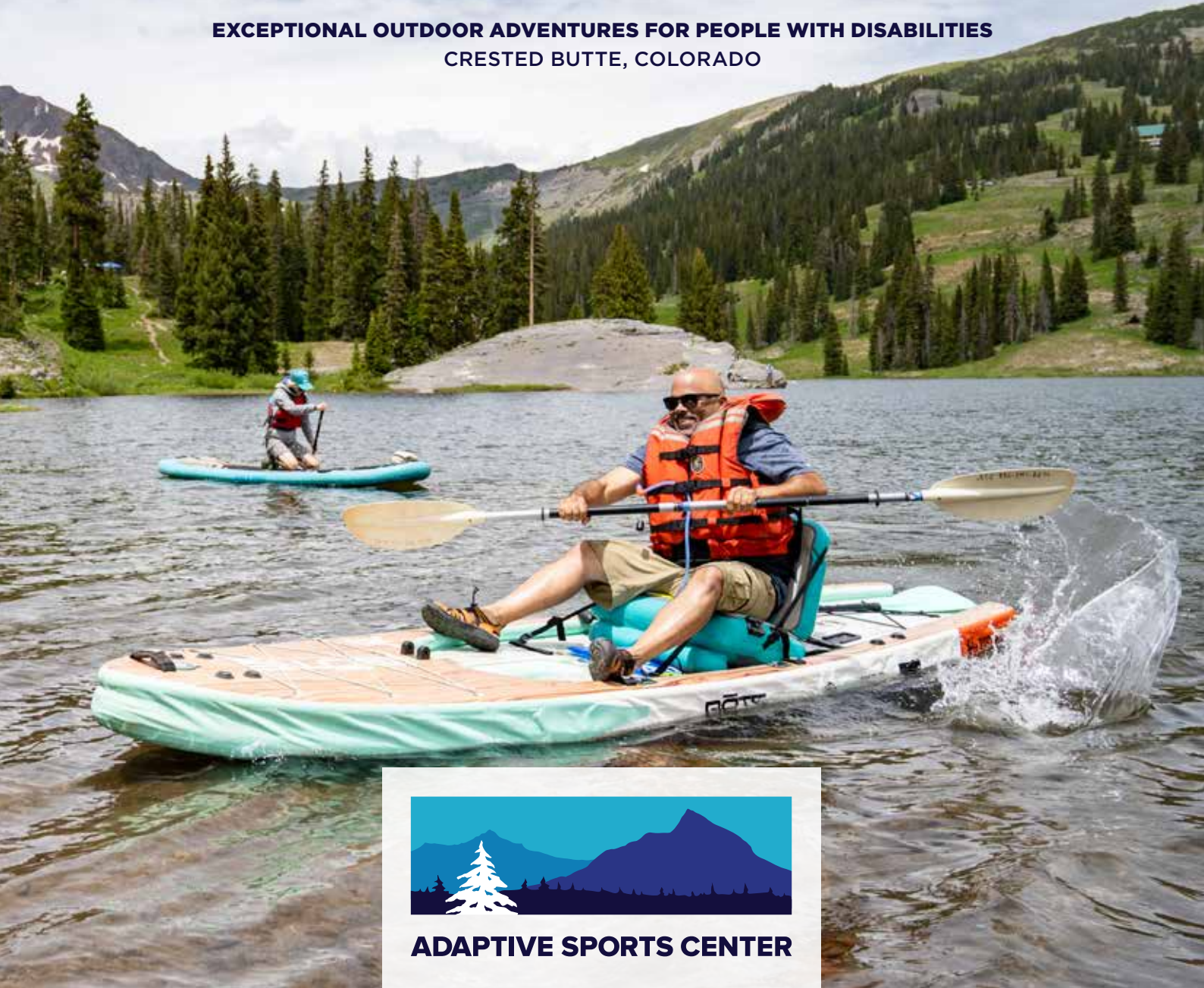


SPRING UPDATE

2024

EXCEPTIONAL OUTDOOR ADVENTURES FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
CRESTED BUTTE, COLORADO



ADAPTIVE SPORTS CENTER

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

Spring is often referred to as the season of rebirth, rejuvenation, renewal, and regrowth. This feels particularly poignant this year as we reflect on a winter season filled with moments of great joy but also great loss. Our small valley community lost several people far too soon, including two great men who were part of our Adaptive Sports Center family, Ron Earl and Jim Harlan. Ron was a luminous member of our community, a compassionate human, a dedicated volunteer, a talented singer, and loved by all who knew him. Jim was a huge part of the ASC in the 90's and early 2000's. He was a formidable athlete, a rebel of sorts, who loved to push boundaries, a long-time CBMR ski patroller, and an all-around great person. Jim helped us with establishing adaptive programs in Argentina and was a crowd favorite when participating in the Al Johnson.

As we process and grieve these losses, we are reminded that life is short and that tomorrow is not guaranteed. At the Adaptive Sports Center, we honor Jim and Ron and all lives by helping people of all abilities live life to the fullest. To us, that means getting outside to make memories, build friendships, expand boundaries, take chances, conquer fears, and experience great joy and lots of belly laughs. We are truly blessed and honored to do what we do. From the people we serve, to the families we meet, to the staff we entrust, to the volunteers we value, and to the donors we depend upon, our

lives are enriched by you, and we are grateful for your dedication to our mission. Your support fuels our passion and drives us forward, ensuring that individuals of all abilities can experience the thrill and beauty of the natural world.

Summer brings with it light and growth and we look forward to another season of exhilarating rides down the mountain and rafts on the rivers, meandering hikes and bikes among the wildflowers, challenging climbs at Hartman Rocks, and relaxing floats at Lake Irwin. Whether you are a seasoned outdoor enthusiast or new to the world of adaptive adventure, there is no better time to join us than now. With our Access for All pricing (\$95/day for everything) space is filling up quickly. Early registration is the best way to ensure that you get out "amongst it" with us this summer.

In the meantime, carpe diem! Wishing you all a wonderful spring and summer filled with friends, family, adventure, laughter, and moments of pure joy.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Christopher Hensley". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Christopher Hensley
Executive Director
Adaptive Sports Center



MISSION MOMENTS

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A man with a visual impairment learned to ski again while on a ski trip with his close friends.

A husband and wife were able to go on a ski vacation together for the first time since his injury.

A family from London was able to embark on an epic international ski trip to Colorado.

Harsh Thakkar linking turns on a mono-ski during his trip with National Rehabilitation Hospital.

Photo by Alison White Photography.

WINTER 2023-2024 REWIND

VISITING GROUPS & CAMPS

DECEMBER

Operation BASH (National*)
Veterans with visual impairments

Move Mountains (CO)
Youth at-risk

Shirley Ryan AbilityLab (IL)
Adults with spinal cord injuries

JANUARY

Roger Pepper Adventure Camp
(National*)
Teen burn survivors

Fort Carson (National*)
Soldiers and veterans with disabilities

Serendipity (TX)
Youth with learning differences

Rehabilitation Hospital of Indiana (IN)
Veterans with disabilities

Texas Shredders (TX, CO)
Adults with physical disabilities

Semper Fi & Americans
(National*)
Veterans with disabilities

FEBRUARY

Wounded Warrior Project
(National*)
Veterans with mental health concerns

Vets Outdoors (National*)
Veterans with disabilities

Craig Hospital (National*)
Adults with spinal cord injuries and traumatic brain injuries

Texas Scottish Rite Children's Hospital (TX)
Teens with amputations and limb differences

Mountain Mobility (CO)
Teens with visual impairments

Powered to Move (TX)
Adults with spinal cord injuries and other neurological disabilities

Northern Suburban Special Recreation Association (IL)
Adults with intellectual disabilities

Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind (CO)
Children with visual impairments

MARCH

Baylor Scott & White Institute for Rehabilitation (TX)
Adults with spinal cord injuries

Ladies Session (National*)
Women with physical disabilities

National Rehabilitation Hospital
(National*)
Adults with cognitive disabilities

International Neurorehabilitation Institute (National)
Adults with multiple sclerosis and other neurological disabilities

*States include AR, CA, CO, CT, GA, HI, IL, IN, LA, MD, NE, NM, NY, RI, SC, SD, TX, UT, VA, WA, & WY.

89

Winter Program
Volunteers

5,211

Volunteer
Hours



VOLUNTEERS

We'd like to recognize our Volunteer of the Season, Jim Lorence! We are forever grateful for his help and dedication.

INDIVIDUALS & FAMILIES

The individuals and families who visit the ASC are just as varied as the groups we serve. Our program encourages time together for families and provides exceptional fun for everyone!

VETERANS

The Adaptive Sports Center's Operation Rise and Conquer program offers a \$50 discounted rate for veterans & first responders with disabilities, along with their families and close friends. We also offer scholarships for those who need additional help.

SUMMER 2024 PREVIEW

JUNE

Operation BASH #1 (National)
Veterans with visual impairments

Roger Pepper Adventure Camp
(National)
Teen burn survivors

Servicemembers Undertaking Disabled Sports (SUDS) (TX)
Veterans with amputations and visual impairments

Move Mountains (CO)
Youth at-risk

Ladies Session #1 (National)
Women with physical disabilities

JULY

Texas Scottish Rite Children's Hospital (TX)
Youth with cerebral palsy

29 Acres (TX)
Adults with developmental disabilities

Mountain Mobility (CO)
Teens with visual impairments

Fort Carson (CO)
Soldiers and veterans with disabilities

AUGUST

Paralyzed Veterans of America
(DC)
Veterans with spinal cord injuries and other physical disabilities

Colorado's Ride (National)
Adults with physical disabilities

National Rehabilitation Hospital
(DC)
Adults with physical disabilities

Unconquered Foundation
(Ukraine)
Ukrainian veterans with amputations

SEPTEMBER

Ladies Session #2 (National)
Women with physical disabilities

Operation BASH #2 (National)
Veterans with visual impairments

Vets Outdoors (AR)
Veterans with disabilities

Chapel Haven (CT)
Adults with intellectual disabilities

DC Firefighters Burn Foundation
(DC)
Adult burn survivors

Photo by Petar Dopchev Visuals







Photos (top left to right): (1) Stephanie and Lo had a great time together on the lift ride up. (2) Lewis with Shirley Ryan AbilityLab saw snow for the first time and learned to independently ski in one week. (3) Ruthie Mae had a blast out on the slopes. (4) Johnny dressed up in his best closing weekend costume for a Six Points Nordic skiing day. (5) Sam received some ski tips from former professional skier, Angel Collinson. (6) Coco and Dylan laughed during their epic snowball fight. (7) Harsh nailed his solo mono-ski turns. (8) National Rehabilitation Hospital while they shredded the slopes together. (9) Rachel was stoked to be out skiing in the Colorado sunshine. (10) The Ingram family skied together as a family for the first time. (11) Dakota gained confidence to ski independently.

Photos taken by Nolan Blunck, Carly Donk, Jessica Taylor, and Alison White.



BREAKING BARRIERS

MEET THE ANDERSON FAMILY

The Anderson family is a testament to resilience, perseverance, and the transformative power of inclusivity. Meet Jim and Kim Anderson, devoted parents, and their two daughters, Zoe and Raina, whose story showcases the impact of access to adaptive recreation, particularly through their experience at the Adaptive Sports Center (ASC) in Crested Butte.

Zoe, the younger of the two sisters, navigates life with learning and neurological differences, including ADHD and a nerve disorder. Her delayed developmental milestones require specialized schooling and occupational and physical therapy sessions twice a week. For Kim, this journey meant leaving her job to devote herself to Zoe's care, striving to provide her daughter with every opportunity to overcome physical limitations.

When the Anderson family discovered the ASC, they were enticed by the program's promise of inclusivity, support, and affordability. Jim and Kim knew they had to provide this life-changing experience for their daughters, and the Access for All \$95 daily lesson rate was like a breath of fresh air for them, knowing they didn't have to take on another major bill on top of Zoe's existing medical costs. This kind of affordability is crucial, as many families face similar challenges without the necessary financial support.

"It takes a big burden off to be able to have your kids be able to do something and have access to everything and it's not one more massive bill."

- Kim Anderson, mother

“

“When they have the right tools, they can do all the things; they just need the right tools and support.”

”

Kim Anderson, mother



A drawing by Zoe Anderson of her and her ASC instructor.

Advocating for equal access to outdoor recreation activities for people with disabilities is core to our mission. The ASC’s true cost for one full-day lesson is over \$900, but with the help of grants and donations, we only charge \$95 for participants and their families.

Upon arrival, the family was greeted by a sense of belonging they had never experienced before. Zoe found solace in the camaraderie of fellow participants and the unwavering support of the staff. For once, she didn’t feel different; she felt like everyone else. Zoe’s sister, Raina, also thrived in this environment, receiving equal attention and recognition for her abilities.

Zoe and Raina now possess a skill that allows them to be included and participate with their friends and community, which has boosted their self-esteem and instilled a newfound confidence in their abilities. Their experience at the ASC reinforced a valuable lesson:

when equipped with the right tools and supported by a nurturing community, there are no limits to what they can achieve.

Looking ahead, the family is filled with gratitude and plans to return next winter to build on the skills they learned this winter. Their story serves as a reminder of how important it is to create access to outdoor recreation and provide opportunities for people to experience life-changing adventures.

Our Access for All Initiative is crucial in ensuring that individuals with disabilities have access to exceptional outdoor recreation. Please consider donating to the Access for All Initiative. Your contribution to this initiative enables us to maintain reduced-price lessons of just \$95, enabling more people to enjoy the benefits of outdoor adventures.

SEPTEMBER 8

BRIDGES *of the* BUTTE



THE MOST FUN YOU'LL HAVE ON WHEELS

JOIN US IN CRESTED BUTTE FOR THE TOWNIE TOUR!
SEPTEMBER 8 — 12:00 - 4:00 pm

Bridges of the Butte is a peer-to-peer fundraiser for the Adaptive Sports Center. During this 4-hour townie tour riders (in their craziest costumes) meander across all the bridges in Crested Butte to help raise funds to provide affordable lessons, state-of-the-art equipment, and highly trained instructors in many disciplines and disability adaptations.

**LEARN
MORE**



ADAPTIVESPORTS.ORG/BRIDGES

MICHAEL BLUNCK'S 230-MILE RIDE

For the 20th annual Bridges of the Butte, Michael Blunck will be attempting a remarkable feat of riding his bike, the Dragon Wagon, from Craig Hospital in Denver to the Bridges of the Butte base camp on Elk Avenue just in time for the townie tour.

Michael rides each year and raises an average of \$10,000 annually to support the cause. To celebrate the 20th year of the event and this historic ride, Michael hopes to raise \$100,000 this year! If you'd like to support him and the ASC, scan the QR code or visit give.adaptivesports.org.

**SUPPORT
MICHAEL**



2023-2024 GRANTS



A MESSAGE FROM OUR GRANTS MANAGER, AIMEE HOYT

As the Grants Manager for the Adaptive Sports Center, I write about every aspect of the organization, from programming and equipment to outreach and budgeting. Funders want to know the intricacies of the nonprofits they're investing in, and I explain how our mission aligns with their priorities. Sharing stories of ASC participants helps me paint a picture of what we do and who we serve for grant reviewers who might be unfamiliar with disabilities.

The VA's Adaptive Sports Grant provides funding for programming, travel, and equipment for disabled veterans. This winter, Marine Corps veteran Mike Gooler and his family traveled to Crested Butte from South Carolina to ski with the ASC. "As a military veteran, ski therapy has been instrumental in helping me navigate through my experiences and injuries," Mike shared after his visit. "Skiing provides me with a sense of freedom and empowerment ... and having my family by my side, witnessing my progress and sharing the joy of skiing, was truly special."

Families of people with disabilities face barriers that make recreating and vacationing together difficult, and grants like Colorado Parks and Wildlife's Outdoor Equity Program recognize the importance of providing inclusive opportunities for the entire family. "If it weren't for your program, my husband and our other kids wouldn't be able to ski," Crystalyn Johnson explained. "We appreciate [the ASC] for making a difference ... It's people like y'all that make this world a better place."

At this winter's Parents' Nights Out, kids rock climbed and ate pizza while grownups enjoyed a night on the town that included childcare and a dinner stipend. Disabling Barriers supports southern Colorado youth with intellectual and developmental disabilities and awarded a grant that funds these respite nights, as well as travel stipends, new paddleboards, and subsidized programming. After a date night with her husband, Erica Rasmussen wrote, "Parents' Night Out was a great way to introduce our kids to Adaptive which now has a very special place in their hearts! It was a really welcomed night out ... We are truly grateful!"

Locally, the MetRec, Towns of Mt. Crested Butte and Crested Butte, Community Foundation of the Gunnison Valley, and Eleven Experience award grants that support community programs, Access for All, marketing, and our general operating fund. This year, local grants funded over 35 percent of all community programming, enabling us to offer affordable rates and collaborate with valley organizations like the Gunnison Watershed School District and Six Points.

"It's places like [the Adaptive Sports Center] that are the light in the dark, a beacon for all of us facing struggles in a world designed without us in mind," writes participant Lauren Van Loo, who lives with a spinal cord injury. With specialized pieces of equipment like sit-skis often costing over \$10,000, a grant from the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation enables us to maintain a fleet of state-of-the-art equipment to accommodate all our participants, regardless of ability, and give instructors options to try different models that allow participants to progress in their skills over time.

FY 2023-2024 GRANTS

VA Adaptive Sports Grant

Craig H. Neilsen Foundation Creating Opportunity & Independence

Chick-fil-A True Inspiration Awards

Disabling Barriers

Colorado Parks and Wildlife Outdoor Equity Grant

Gunnison Met Rec Multi-Year Community Grant

Town of Mt. Crested Butte Admissions Tax Grants

Town of Mt. Crested Butte Community Grant

Ethel S. Abbott Charitable Foundation

Community Foundation of the Gunnison Valley
Multi-Year Community Grant

Town of Crested Butte Community Grants

Delta Gamma Foundation Service for Sight

Eleven Experience Charitable Giving

People often ask me, “Do you like being a grant writer?” I smile and think about participants like Mike and Lauren and families like the Johnsons and Rasmussens. I think about my own son, who lives with a disability and is an ASC participant and volunteer. I understand the enormous difference a grant award can make to folks who treasure the impact the Adaptive Sports Center has made on their children, spouses, friends, and themselves. I think back to Lauren’s letter and these words that she wrote: “The world often tells us no, you can’t, it’s impossible. But here there is a different message, one that says, ‘You are strong, you are capable, we are here, you are home.’”

And then I reply, “I love being a grant writer.”

Group photo of Vets Outdoors, a group that benefits from the VA Adaptive Sports Grant.



ACCESS FOR ALL

WE BELIEVE EVERYONE SHOULD HAVE ACCESS TO THE OUTDOORS

Advocating for equal access to outdoor recreation activities for people with disabilities is core to our mission. Since our inception in 1987, we have accomplished this by offering adaptive adventures at a reduced cost.

\$95 FULL DAY LESSONS

The Access for All Initiative reduces the ASC's existing subsidized full-day rate to only \$95. We recognize that the cost to enjoy the great outdoors is commonly a barrier to participation, considering the added requirement of specialized equipment and professional instruction. If additional assistance is needed, we have an amazing scholarship fund.

HELP SUSTAIN ACCESS FOR ALL

A typical adaptive full-day lesson costs the ASC \$900. We charge \$95 and subsidize the remainder through grants and donations. Those who are able to contribute above the lesson fee can add a tax-deductible donation to their payment.

This peer-to-peer show of support helps fellow adventurers with disabilities and their loved ones experience the therapeutic value of outdoor adventures with the ASC. If you'd like to join in your support, please scan the QR code below or visit our website.

AdaptiveSports.Org/access-for-all



I love what ASC is doing to create equity in sports that already are expensive. Thank you!



ASC participant



SUMMER EVENTS



CRESTED BUTTE OPEN GALA AND GOLF TOURNAMENT PRESENTED BY CAROLYN & DAVID MILLER, KATY & KYLE MILLER, AND MEREDITH & KYLE BEBEE

August 4 & 5, 2024

This 29-year tradition directly affects the lives of over 1,000 participants and their families each year. Funds raised through the CB Open help provide affordable lessons, scholarship funds, and state-of-the-art adaptive sports equipment for people with disabilities.

If you can't attend, you can still participate in the Silent Auction and help support the program by bidding on some fantastic items. Learn more at AdaptiveSports.Org/cbo

ADAPTIVE MOUNTAIN BIKING WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS

August 16 - 18, 2024

Riders from around the country gather for three days of riding and racing. Cheer on the racers during this multi-stage, multi-discipline race with advanced to recreational categories. Learn more at AdaptiveSports.Org/worlds

BRIDGES OF THE BUTTE TOWNIE TOUR

September 8, 2024

Join us in Crested Butte for the 20th annual townie tour in your best costume with your family and friends! Sign up and learn more at AdaptiveSports.Org/bridges

Volunteers make these great events successful! If you are interested in helping, please contact Gabe Walker at gabe@adaptivesports.org





REGISTER NOW! SUMMER PROGRAMMING STARTS JUNE 8TH!

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ADAPTIVE SPORTS CENTER

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Learn more