

PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT

Continuing The Long Tradition Of Helping Veterans Through Goalball

You're in the Army with a very active, physical lifestyle. You're preparing for deployment. Then, out of the blue, you lose your eyesight. This was the unthinkable position facing Colby Morgan in 2009.

Colby was preparing in Georgia for military deployment when he suffered a severe vaccine reaction. He started losing his vision the night after receiving a set of eight vaccines and lost 90 per cent of his eyesight in five days. He spent the next year at a Department of Veterans Affairs Blind Rehabilitation Center in Augusta, Georgia before returning to his home state of Idaho.

Colby, who previously played soccer and basketball, learned about Goalball at the Georgia center. "It was the first time I heard about it," he says. Goalball was created in 1946 in Europe to help World War II veterans who had lost their eyesight. In 1976, it was introduced to the Paralympics in Toronto. More than 60 years later, the sport is played competitively in more than 100 countries.

With the Support of NWABA, the Boise Blaze Fires Up!

After moving back to Boise, Colby tried to start a Goalball program but didn't have the funding needed to support a program. Then he found NWABA.

"It was a dream come true," he says. "Billy Henry came down from NWABA and explained the game. He brought the equipment and rule books and, once we found a gym, NWABA helped us get the gym set up and on our feet until we could get enough donations to pay for gym."



"We are extremely excited to be able to provide our life-changing programs to blinded veterans in Boise. Our goal is to continue to enhance and expand programs for Veterans who are blind and visually impaired across the region," says Billy Henry. "We provide the funding, equipment and oversight to support Goalball teams as part of our Sports Teams Program to provide ongoing fitness opportunities for both youth and adults with visual impairments."

Colby has found new energy through Goalball. "I love it!" he says. "Being competitive is definitely a passion of mine and it is really awesome to be part of a team again." The Boise Blaze team has four regular team members with vision impairments including another veteran plus others who play when available. "It definitely encouraged me to be a lot more active than I have been," says Colby, who is team captain and now a student at Boise State University.

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Thank You!

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Hinds Photography, Aevum Images

Executive Director’s Report

Dear Friends,

I am pleased to report that we have had a busy start to 2013. February 2nd marked our fourth annual Benefit Dinner and Auction, Going the Distance. It was our most successful fundraiser yet, netting over \$60,000 to provide life-changing programs to visually impaired individuals of ages and abilities.

We expect to have our busiest spring in the organization’s history. Hundreds of individuals will participate in Paralympic experiences, clinics, school visits, sport adaptations, and other events and services.

I am also excited to welcome Teresa Lawwill, Community Relations Director with the Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce, to our Board of Directors. Teresa will work with our other dedicated board members and volunteers to continue enhancing and expanding programs for people who are blind and visually impaired.

Thank you for your continued support of our programs. If you are interested in learning more about our mission and what we do, please feel free to contact me anytime.

Sincerely,

Billy Henry

Billy Henry
Executive Director
Northwest Association for Blind Athletes



Billy Henry

LET’S STAY IN TOUCH

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Connect:

.com/nwblindathletes
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The Importance of Sports in Rehabilitation

When Colby moved to Boise, his rehabilitation continued with local programs. They understood the value of sports in the rehab process. “Sports help both mental and physical health,” says Dana Ard, Senior Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor for the Idaho Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired. “First, it’s important for people who are preparing to go to work to be as physically, as well as mentally, healthy as possible.”

“It’s such a positive thing,” she says. “You can go out there and compete. I feel so strongly about getting out there and moving. Often blind people tend to be more sedentary. And you not only have the sports benefits but you build relationships and often they extend beyond the team.”

Goalball also helps build professional skills. “In work situation most often you are working in a team environment,” says Dana, who has been a vocational rehab counselor for 34 years. “On the job you have to work out solutions and working on a Goalball team is a great way to start to develop those skills.”

Ready for Competition

The Boise Blaze is ready for competition. With NWABA support, they will be competing against other Goalball teams in the region including the Portland Avalanche, which NWABA has assisted. NWABA will host the National Goalball Championship tournament in Vancouver, WA in June 20-22, 2013. The best teams from around the country, usually 12 men’s teams and eight women’s teams, will compete.

With Goalball players like Colby Morgan and other vets, the Boise Blaze and NWABA are ensuring that veterans with visual impairments are active, strong and part of a team. Welcome, Boise Blaze!

“

PARTICIPANTS,
TEACHERS AND
VOLUNTEERS
EXPERIENCE SPORT AT
THE NWABA/MSDB 2013
SPRING GOALBALL
ENRICHMENT
WEEKEND.

”



Benefit Dinner and Auction Raises more than \$60,000!

On February 2nd, nearly 300 community members gathered at the Pearson Air Museum in Vancouver, WA to help raise \$60,000 in net proceeds to support Northwest Association for Blind Athlete's programs. Thank you to everyone who generously supported this event!

GOLD SPONSOR:



MEDIA SPONSORS:



SILVER SPONSORS:



CS & Angela Sheffield

SPECIAL THANKS:



SAVE THE DATE!

February 1st, 2014
Benefit Dinner & Auction

Hilton Vancouver,
Washington



Oregon Goalball State Championship Heats Up Canby

On March 1st, the Northwest Association for Blind Athletes partnered with Northwest Regional Education Service District (NWRES D) and the Blind and Visually Impaired Student Fund to host the Oregon Goalball State Championship Tournament at Baker Prairie Middle School in Canby, OR. Goalball is a Paralympic sport played by individuals who are blind and visually impaired. Developed after WWII as a way to keep blinded veterans physically active, it has become one of the premiere team sports for people who are blind and visually impaired. Played competitively by men and women, it is a very fast paced, physically challenging, strategic and overall exciting game to watch. Teams traveled from across Oregon to compete for the coveted Champion's Cup. The competition was heated throughout the day, but in the end, the team from NWRES D took home the 2013 championship title.

Each team practiced for months leading up to the tournament. These types of events provide students the opportunity to have fun, build confidence, increase overall physical fitness and strive towards a goal. We would like to thank all of the participants, coaches, and volunteers for an amazing event.

RESULTS

1st Northwest Regional ESD
Scorpions

2nd Columbia Regional Program
The Darkness

3rd Willamette Regional Program
Royal Rebels



SUMMER OF OPPORTUNITIES

“Since he is really athletic naturally and his buddies now play football, basketball and soccer, this gives him something athletic to do. He is doing wrestling and Goalball. He gets lots of confidence from sports.”
- Julie, mother of a blind 10-year-old

Dear Friend,
YOU are the gift that keeps on giving. Your volunteerism, encouragement and financial support make it possible for us to begin our sixth year. NWABA will serve over 1,000 individuals with visual impairments this year! Since our inception, our programs have grown each year. However, we have seen the largest growth in our summer programs. This year, we are hoping to provide nearly 20 events for individuals who are blind and visually impaired to participate in sports and physical fitness, a 30% increase over last year. Without our specialized summer programs, people who are blind would not experience physical activities such as tandem cycling, fishing, goalball, judo, adaptive golf and many other recreational activities

Our programs help people who are blind and visually impaired build the confidence they need to be successful. Most students come into our programs with little or no experience participating in sports; they gain the tools and self-assurance they need to work harder in school, achieve success at work and get involved in their community. They leave behind sedentary, isolated lives and they gain skills, confidence and joy.

Our goal is to raise \$7,500 this year to partially fund the cost of our life-changing summer programs. Your generosity ensures our ability to provide enriching programs that empower blind and visually impaired individuals for a lifetime.

- \$3,000** – Supports one outreach clinic to help 10-15 blind students experience sport.
- \$1,200** – Allows eight athletes to attend a local or regional competition.
- \$600** – Provides adaptive equipment for three students to experience sport for the first time.
- \$300** – Provides a school visit to allow a student to experience sport and physical activity.
- \$100** – Provides a scholarship to allow an athlete to achieve his or her dream.
- \$50** – Provides basic adaptive physical education equipment for a blind child.

Please consider a gift so we can provide a Summer of Opportunities to people who are blind. Thank you for helping us change lives!

NWABA Board of Directors



THANK YOU DONORS

This list reflects donations received as of April 1st, 2013

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(\$10,000+)

Meyer Memorial Trust
Ray Hickey Foundation

VISION (\$5,000-9,999)

OCF Nike Employee Grant Fund
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(\$2,500 - 4,999)

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INCLUSION (\$1,000-2,499)

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Wesley & Arlinda Munger

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Scott & Jody Campbell
Shannon & Divina Tomasini
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(\$250-499)

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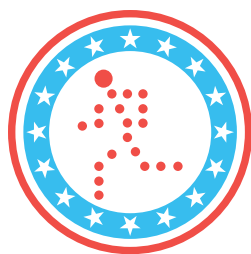
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NW ASSOCIATION
FOR
BLIND
ATHLETES

P.O. Box 65265 | Vancouver, WA 98665-0009

Will you consider joining the E.Y.E Give Program in 2013 with a monthly gift?

By making a recurring donation to support our programs, you are providing life-changing opportunities for people who are blind and visually impaired. Each month, because of generous community support, our programs provide the opportunity for individuals of all ages and ability levels to build confidence, self-esteem, physical fitness, and the inspiration to succeed in other areas of life. Your support will provide a sustainable source of revenue, enabling NWABA to continue enhancing and expanding our critical programs for people with visual impairments. Generosity like yours will make a difference for a lifetime. Please consider joining the E.Y.E. Give Program today.

E.Y.E GIVE

Envision Your Experience Monthly Giving Program

YOUR GIFTS CHANGE LIVES:

\$10 per month = \$120 per year

Provides a scholarship to allow an athlete to achieve his or her dream.

\$25 per month = \$300 per year

Provides a school visit to allow a student to experience sport and physical activity.

\$50 per month = \$600 per year

Provides adaptive equipment to allow three students to experience sport for the first time.

\$100 per month = \$1,200 per year

Allows eight athletes to attend a local or regional competition.

\$250 per month = \$3,000 per year

Supports one outreach clinic to help 10-15 blind students experience sport.

\$500 per month = \$6,000 per year

Supports one outreach clinic to help 15-30 blind students experience sport.

WAYS TO GET INVOLVED:

- ☐ **Invoice me.** We will invoice you the first of every month.
- ☐ **Sign-up online** at www.nwaba.org.
- ☐ **Return the enclosed envelope.**
- ☐ **Sign-up by phone.** Call 360-448-7254.