

Re: Eagle Scout Project Video

To Whom It May Concern:

In this packet, you will find a DVD, We Are Athletes showcasing the Children's Lightning Wheels Paralympic Sport Club, along with a response card that I would like you to complete and return after viewing the DVD. This is an Eagle Scout project and is near and dear to me in many ways.

The reason why I have decided to create this video is to draw attention to Paralympic Sports. Personally, I am invested in this team and through this program I am well on my way to becoming a Paralympic Athlete. When most people think of sports for the disabled, they think of the Special Olympics. While this program is notable and worthy of praise, it is mainly for individuals with a diagnosis of Down Syndrome or head injury. Paralympic Sport is different in that it involves athletes primarily with physical disabilities i.e. spinal cord injury, amputations, etc.

Often times parents of children with physical disabilities believe that there is no way for their child to participate in sport or be active in any way – and that is simply not the case! The main focus and goal of this project is to raise awareness about an amazing program that is out there, one of New Jersey's "best kept secrets".

I hope that you enjoy this video and learn something about Paralympic Sport. I encourage you, the reader, to pass this DVD on to people who may benefit from seeing it. I also ask: If you are not the correct person or if this did not make it to the correct site, please forward this package on to your collegues or the site best suited for this project. Please send us your comments on the video and request more information. Thank you for your time.

Yours in Scouting,

Stephen R. Koziel Eagle Scout Candidate

Enc.

DVD Comment Card









Re: More Information

To Whom It May Concern:

Thank you for your interest in our team! In this packet, you will find copies of our previous newsletters and a brochure about the Lightning Wheels. I am so pleased that you are interested in what we do!

I can speak with seven years of experience as an athlete working with Lightning Wheels coaches, team members, and parents when I say that you will not find a program quite like ours. Everyone is wholly invested in the success of the program and their athletes - and you are bound to find a sport that interests you. I honestly do not know where I would be in my life if not for the team.

Personally, the team has taught me the value of individuality and the necessity of camaraderie. Athletically, the coaches' message was to set a goal and reach for the stars; I am chasing my dream of going to the Paralympics thanks to all of the support I have gotten. These are just a few personal reasons why I love the team and why this project was so important to me; I was able to mesh two things that I love, scouts and athletics.

Reading about the team is great. However, I simply do not think it does our program justice. In order to fully see our team dynamic in action, I suggest you come out to a practice and watch! I sincerely wish that you give us a chance - you will not be sorry. I hope to see you soon!

Yours in Scouting

Stephen R. Koziel Eagle Scout Candidate

Enc.

Newsletters
Team Brochure









In 2010, the Children's Lightning Wheels, was recognized as a Paralympic Sport Club by the designation means that the program has the with We believe that every Children's Lightning Wheels athlete should receive the same level of expertise whether at the developmental level or at the elite level training for the expertise, interest, and the resources to plan and for athletes Olympic Committee. a program States Paralympics. implement disabilities.

The Children's Lightning Wheels hosts two competitive meets during the year, a swim meet and a track and field meet. The athletes also have the opportunity to compete in several other regional meets and, if qualifying standards are met, to travel as a member of the team to the National Junior Disability Championships. In addition, the team collaborates with local community groups to provide other sport experiences that enable the athletes to try new sports and other leisure time activities that can be enjoyed with their families now and in the future.



Athletics help develop poise, discipline and instill a sense of pride and accomplishment in each athlete. A child or adolescent who has a physical disability as a result of a congenital illness or traumatic injury need not be excluded from these important attributes.





Trisha Yurochko, Head Coach 908-301-5424 tyurochko@childrens-specialized.org

## Children's Lightning Wheels

A program of Children's Specialized Hospital





NEW JERSEY

then swimming, archery, table tennis and pow-er-lifting have been added. In 2003, the team embraced athletes whose disability does not 5—22 that have a primary diagnosis of a physand the 2013 and 2014 Junior International Children's Lightning Wheels, a Paralympic Sports Club, is a sports team for athletes ages was mainly a track and field team, but since holders in track, field and swimming. At the ical disability. When founded in 1981, the team require the use of a wheelchair. These athetes may use walkers, crutches, wear orthotplanning record National Junior Disability Championships, the team has consistently been recognized as one of the top three teams in the country and the athletes have been recognized for their commitment to individual sports. The team has also been represented at several international events including the 1996, 2000, 2004, 2008 and 2012 Paralympics, the 2011 World Games Many of the past and present Wheelchair & Amputee Sports Games. members of the team are national ics or braces or may have motor difficulties.



We realize that all participants will not set records or compete on a national or international level but they will have benefited from being part of a team. Those benefits include:

confidence, independence, self-esteem, camaraderie and the life-long friendships that develop. It is a known fact that participation in athletics helps to build a level of confidence in young people that will greatly contribute to their ability to meet life's challenges. Many Children's Lightning Wheels graduates have gone on to successful college and professional careers. They attribute their success, in part to the experience they had as a member of the Children's Lightning Wheels.



Athletic competition is one of the truest tests of the human spirit. Children's Specialized Hospital is committed to nurturing that spirit in every way possible. The objectives of the program are:

To have fun!

To make new friends.

To increase independence, self-confidence and self-esteem in the athlete with a disability.

To improve the level of physical fitness, through exercise.

To improve the individuals' physical skill level through instruction and providing varied activities.

To help establish an awareness of living a healthy lifestyle.

athlete, i.e. not concentrating only on the physical aspects of the activities but also taking—into account other factors like the social, emotional and psychological well-being of the individual.

To increase individual effort and encourage team involvement.

To promote a "carry-over" effect, i.e. to stimulate a desire within the athlete to continue pursuing any activity at his/her present activity level or at a greater level once he/she "graduates" from the program.

To motivate the athlete with a disability to attempt a variety of new sports or activities.

To increase the athlete's awareness of his/her own individual capabilities, by introducing different techniques through instruction and offering suggestions for modifications.

To offer the opportunity to travel and see new places.

To create a peer group for parents and family members.

To create opportunities for athletes to become role models both on and off the playing field.

To help facilitate the integration of the athletes as competitors on their school athletic teams.

To encourage the athletes to excel in their academics as well as other activities.

