
YMCA

SPOTLIGHT



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ALLIANCE OF MASSACHUSETTS

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mavmca.com

YMCA Program Spotlight

WHAT IS YOUR PROGRAM?

Spaulding Adaptive Sports Centers (SASC) offers a variety of adaptive sports programming in the Greater Boston area, the North Shore area, and on Cape Cod. The Centers offer year round recreational opportunities for individuals of all abilities. The Quincy YMCA partners with SASC to offer a wheelchair basketball program where athletes learn the rules, strategies, and skills in order to successfully participate in the amazing sport. Each session starts with a warm up, followed by drills and a scrimmage. Spaulding Adaptive Sports Centers provide court sport chairs for athletes to use during the program.

WHY DO YOU DO THIS PROGRAM?

The SASC offers wheelchair basketball because it is a great way to involve individuals of all ages and abilities in coming together to participate in a competitive, fun sport. One of the great things about this program is that it allows both individuals with disabilities and able-bodied individuals to participate together, encouraging the inclusion and acceptance of all athletes. Wheelchair basketball is also a challenging physical workout. While participating in the program, athletes increase their cardiovascular activity, endurance, and overall strength. The athletes also benefit from the social, emotional, and psychological aspects that the game of basketball has to offer.

WHO IS IMPACTED BY THIS PROGRAM?

This program impacts so many people, from participants to family members, staff, and YMCA members. The participants improve their skills and knowledge of wheelchair basketball every week. Amazing relationships are developed between athletes, and these friendships blossom more and more each week. The players' family members often come out to watch their loved ones participate in the program. Their cheering and support create a motivational and positive atmosphere for the participants. This program also impacts staff members tremendously. Not only do they gain exposure to the game of basketball, the athletes also teach staff members valuable lessons on teamwork. Finally, this program has notably impacted the YMCA members in a positive way. Members have been given the opportunity to participate in wheelchair basketball to discover the program firsthand and to try something new. Some of these individuals return each week because they love it so much! This program allows members to learn about different adaptive sports and help increase awareness and advocacy on physical and developmental disabilities.

Program Spotlight



Quincy YMCA Spaulding Adaptive Sports Centers Wheelchair Basketball Program

QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, IDEAS?

Contact the Massachusetts Alliance
at intern3ymca@gmail.com

WHAT'S ONE GREAT STORY THAT HAS COME OUT OF THE PROGRAM?

This story took place late February 2016 during the last session of wheelchair basketball for the season. Most of the athletes who were participating had been coming each week leading up to this session. When the two minute warning for the end of the scrimmage was called, a collective "NO!!" was shouted out by every player. Once the clock ran out and the session was over, everyone gathered to give high fives and talk about how much they had improved over the past few weeks. Participants asked questions such as "when are we going to be able to play basketball again?" and "do you think we can run a tournament?" Everyone loved wheelchair basketball so much, that they truly did not want the program to end!

WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE OTHER Y'S FOR RUNNING THIS PROGRAM?

The best advice to give other YMCA's or organizations running wheelchair basketball is to never underestimate an athlete. Always look at an individual's abilities, rather than their limitations. Only adapt equipment, rules, or teaching styles when necessary. Not everyone participates for competitive reasons, so always keep basketball fun! Never underestimate the power of duct tape and foam!

WHAT'S THE BENEFIT TO THE Y?

There are many benefits of running the wheelchair basketball program at the Y. All staff members are professional, friendly and helpful. The Quincy YMCA also has an amazing Inclusion Program, which has been a great support system for us. The Inclusion Program has promoted wheelchair basketball to their participants and some of them have come to the sessions to play. The Quincy Y is extremely accessible which allows athletes to navigate through the facility with ease.
