

U.S. Paralympians, Wounded Warriors To Join The Hartford Ski Spectacular Hosted by Move United

The Hartford Ski Spectacular is one of the nation's largest and longest-running adaptive winter sports festivals for people with disabilities

BRECKENRIDGE, CO, USA, December 1, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Move United is hosting the 35th annual The Hartford Ski Spectacular at Beaver Run Resort and Breckenridge Ski Resort in Breckenridge, Colorado, December 4-10. The event will bring together more than 800 athletes, ranging in ability from first-time skiers to elite adaptive athletes with opportunities to participate in six adaptive sports.



Paralympian Orlando Perez monoskiing at the 2021 The Hartford Ski Spectacular.

“As the go-to annual adaptive winter sports festival for youth and adults with disabilities, The Hartford Ski Spectacular showcases the life-changing power of sports,” said Glenn Merry, executive director of Move United. “Thanks to our long-standing partnership with The Hartford, participants with a wide range of disabilities and experience levels receive first-rate instruction that will help them advance their skills and push what’s possible.”

The Hartford, along with the most decorated U.S. Winter Paralympian in history, Oksana Masters and Paralympic Medalist Keith Gabel, will surprise 13 deserving athletes with custom-fit adaptive sports equipment to help them participate and excel in adaptive sports. Over the past five years through its Adaptive Sports program, The Hartford has provided 4,200 pieces of adaptive sports equipment that has impacted more than 42,000 individuals in 43 communities across the U.S.

“We have seen first-hand the power adaptive sports has to help improve people’s lives and we are proud to serve as the title sponsor of The Hartford Ski Spectacular for the 29th consecutive year,” said Jonathan Bennett, head of Group Benefits at The Hartford. “Our business is driven by a long-standing conviction that people should be defined by what they can do as opposed to perceived limitations. Alongside our partner Move United, we are humbled to help bring



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together youth and adults with disabilities to experience the invigorating nature this snow sport event delivers."

As part of their rehabilitation, 70 wounded military veterans, service members, family and military medical staff from Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, San Antonio Military Medical Center, Fort Carson Soldier Recovery Unit, the Tampa VA and communities across the U.S will participate in the event. Since 2003, Move United has served more than 18,000 severely wounded veterans, service members and family members, offering adaptive sports programs in more than 70 different adaptive sports in 45 states through a national network of more than 200 member organizations.

"For me, there is freedom in coming down the mountain," said retired Army Private First Class Orlando Perez, who sustained a spinal cord injury due to a tumor while serving in the military and became the first athlete to ever represent Puerto Rico in a Winter Paralympics Games. "The feeling of gliding in my mono-ski through the snow is like flying. I can go as fast and often faster than other people who do not have disabilities. With the beauty of the mountains, the sunrises and the happy families on the slopes, I can see everything that is good in life when I ski."

The Hartford Ski Spectacular also strengthens and expands adaptive snow sports programs in communities across the country by training staff and volunteers at Move United member organizations through the Ski Spectacular Instructor Academy. In addition, the ski instructor academy, endorsed by Professional Ski Instructors of America - American Association of Snowboard Instructors (PSIA-AASI), offers training for instructors in the latest and safest adaptive ski and snowboard techniques for individuals with disabilities.

In addition to title sponsor The Hartford, event sponsors include Veritas Capital, Oshkosh Defense, Wash Depot, Tee It Up for the Troops, Beaver Run Resort & Conference Center, Breckenridge Ski Resort and Breck Sports. This event is also funded in part by a grant from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). Through grant support from the VA, Move United receives funding to increase, expand and enhance the quantity and quality of adaptive sport activities available for disabled Veterans and members of the U.S. Armed Forces to participate in physical activity within their home communities and more advanced U.S. Paralympic and adaptive sport programs at the regional and national levels. The VA also provides essential equipment and technical support to The Hartford Ski Spectacular.

Move United member organization, Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center, will serve as the host organization for the event. Additional contributing members include Waterville Valley Adaptive Sports, New England Disabled Sports, and Spaulding Rehabilitation Network.

Partnering organizations include Grand Junction VA Medical Center, Professional Ski Instructors of America-American Association of Snowboard Instructors (PSIA-AASI), and Colorado Adaptive Sports Foundation.

Follow all of the action at The Hartford Ski Spectacular by following Move United and #skispec on Twitter, Facebook, TikTok and Instagram. To get involved, please visit <https://www.moveunitedsport.org>.

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