

Four Individuals Inducted Into Adaptive Sports Hall of Fame in 2022

National Adaptive Sports Hall of Fame recognizes achievements in summer and winter adaptive sports in the Competitor and Contributor categories

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EINPresswire.com/ -- The National Adaptive Sports Hall of Fame Award recognizes outstanding individuals who have made significant contributions to summer and winter adaptive sports in two categories: Competitor and Contributor. The Hall of Fame was created to honor individuals who have had an influential role in the field of adaptive sports as well as athletes who have excelled in it.



Move United Executive Director Glenn Merry presents 3X Paralympic Medalist Amy Purdy with the 2022 Adaptive Sports Hall of Fame Award in the Winter Competition category.

COMPETITOR CATEGORY

The award in the Competitor category recognizes one individual (an athlete or coach) in summer sports as well as one individual in winter sports, who has been active in international competition. Race results, team participation, innovative coaching techniques, and event promotions are considered for this category.

The inductee on the winter competition side is Amy Purdy from Silverthorne, Colorado. A lifelong snowboarder, Purdy lost her legs below the knees to bacterial meningitis when she was 19 years old. Throughout her recovery, Purdy vowed to ride again. At that time, two decades ago, adaptive snowboarding was essentially non-existent. If she wanted to ride again, she would have to figure it out. And that she did. With plenty of duct tape, a few rusty bolts, and an unbreakable spirit, Purdy built her first pair of snowboard feet and got back on the snow... and an extraordinary adventure began.

Inspired to help others, Purdy and the man who would later become her husband, created Adaptive Action Sports, sharing what they had learned and becoming a much-needed resource in the adaptive sports world. Adaptive Action Sports, a Move United member organization, would later prove instrumental in getting snowboarding added to the 2014 Paralympic Games and it was there that Purdy left her first mark in history, winning the inaugural bronze medal.

And that was just the beginning. Purdy stepped off that podium and onto the dance floor just days later in Hollywood as the first Paralympian to compete on the TV show *Dancing With the Stars*. She went all the way to the finals coming in runner up and showing the world the possibilities and what adaptive athletes are capable of. Purdy went on to become a New York Times best-selling author for her memoir “On My Own Two Feet.”

Purdy returned to competition at the 2018 Paralympics in South Korea and added another bronze and silver medal to her collection, at the time making her the most decorated Paralympic snowboarder in the history of Team USA.

Since then, she has worked with the International Olympic Committee promoting sustainability, inclusion, peacebuilding and gender equality with young leaders around the world. Most recently, she has just returned from Berlin, Germany, working with the World Health Organization at a global summit promoting the contribution of sport on international development and peace.

Jacqui Kapinowski from Tequesta, Florida, is the 2022 Hall of Fame inductee in the summer competitor category. Kapinowski secured spots on the USA Curling Team, rowing team and triathlon team and is a 2X Paralympian in winter and summer sports. Kapinowski earned nine world championships in four sports. She also competed in close to 100 marathons with many 1st place gold medals and competed in her first ironman in November 2014. In addition, Kapinowski is the founder and president of Shifting Gears United, a nonprofit organization for multiple adapted sports located in Florida and created the Freedom Coast Bicycle Ride. She too has given back to support so many other athletes today.

CONTRIBUTOR CATEGORY

Two awards are also presented in the Contributor category, one for summer sports and another for winter sports. This award recognizes an individual who has made a significant contribution to the field, including innovative techniques, specialized equipment, program development, education or public relations.

The winter awardee in the contributor category is Jeff Inouye from Breckenridge, Colorado. Inouye has spent 30 years in the adaptive ski industry and has been a staff member at the Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center for 28 years. He was a volunteer for two years, became the Assistant Ski Program Director in 1998 and became the Ski Program Director in 2017.

For the past 20+ years, Inouye has been an instrumental member of the Learn to Ski staff at The Hartford Ski Spectacular and part of the event staff for the VA/DAV Winter Sports Clinic for 15 years. He has also served as a staff member for the US Disabled Ski Team and US Paralympics Alpine Skiing Team.

Inouye has been a leader on the national level, including being a trainer for adaptive OEC/Chairlift Evacuation clinics for the National Ski Patrol, a Selector for the PSIA Adaptive National Team, a member of ANSI ASC B-77 committee for passenger tramways, and a National Ski Area Association Diversity, Equity and Inclusion committee member.

US Marine Chris Kaag, from Wyomissing, Pennsylvania, was named to the Adaptive Sports Hall of Fame in the summer sports contributor category. Kaag started IM ABLE Foundation after he was diagnosed with adrenomyeloneuropathy and discharged from the service. IM ABLE has awarded hundreds of grants for adaptive equipment since 2007 and started inclusive programming empowering athletes of all abilities to push their limits. Kaag has been inducted into the Central Chapter of the Pennsylvania Sports Hall of Fame, recognized by the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, and received the American Red Cross Community Impact Hero Award (2015).

To learn more about the Adaptive Sports Hall of Fame, including a list of past award recipients, visit <https://www.moveunitedsport.org/sports/adaptive-sports-awards/>.

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