

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

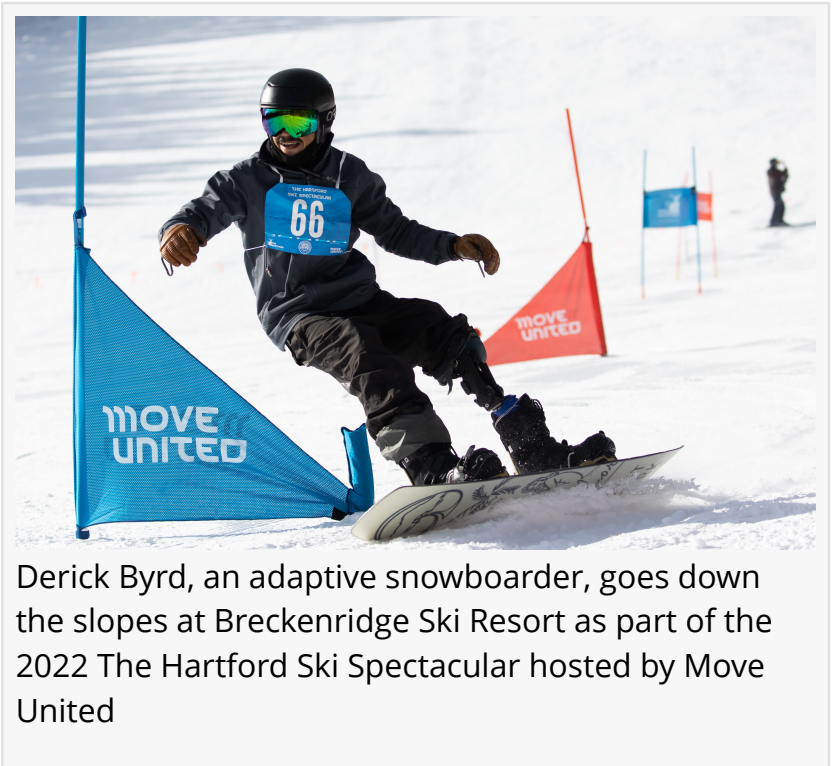
DENVER, CO, UNITED STATES, December 2, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- More than 800 individuals, ranging in ability from first-time skiers to elite Paralympic athletes will come together for the 38th annual The Hartford Ski Spectacular conducted by Move United December 8-14 in Breckenridge, Colorado.

The Hartford Ski Spectacular, held at Breckenridge Ski Resort and Beaver Run Resort, is one of the nation's largest and longest running winter sports festivals for people with physical disabilities. Attendees will have the opportunity to participate in six adaptive sports, including alpine and Nordic skiing, snowboarding, and sled hockey.

"For over three decades, The Hartford Ski Spectacular has provided youth and adults with disabilities the opportunity to feel the exhilaration of outdoor snow sports," said Glenn Merry, executive director of Move United. "I hear again and again how powerful this experience is when it comes to transforming what attendees come to understand is possible for themselves."

At the event, The Hartford, along with Paralympic Medalist Keith Gabel, will surprise 15 deserving athletes with custom-fit adaptive sports equipment on Wednesday, Dec. 11. Adaptive athletes pay approximately 15 times more for equipment than non-adaptive athletes. Over the past six years through its adaptive sports program, The Hartford has provided more than 7,000 pieces of adaptive sports equipment that has impacted more than 55,000 individuals in more than 75 communities across the U.S.

"We are incredibly proud to serve as the title sponsor of The Hartford Ski Spectacular for more



Derick Byrd, an adaptive snowboarder, goes down the slopes at Breckenridge Ski Resort as part of the 2022 The Hartford Ski Spectacular hosted by Move United



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*Move United Executive
Director Glenn Merry*

than 30 years," said Mike Fish, head of Group Benefits at The Hartford. "As a leading disability insurer, we recognize how transformative sports can be on helping individuals return to active and productive lives. Our enduring partnership with Move United is breaking down barriers to participation, enabling more youth and adults with disabilities to experience the joy and freedom of sports."

One of the highlights this year is the fact that several wounded veterans who will be representing the United States at the first ever Winter Invictus Games in 2025 will be training and improving their skills at the event. In

addition, another 60+ wounded military veterans, service members, family and military medical staff from Walter Reed National Military Medical Center and San Antonio Military Medical Center, as well as veterans from nearly a dozen VAs and communities across the U.S will participate in the event as part of their rehabilitation. Since 2003, Move United has served more than 19,000 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 240 member organizations.

In addition, The Hartford Ski Spectacular 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. Through the academy, endorsed by Professional Ski Instructors of America - American Association of Snowboard Instructors (PSIA-AASI), 90 courses will be offered around the latest and safest adaptive ski and snowboard techniques.

Additional event sponsors include Veritas Capital, Oshkosh Defense, Leonardo DRS, Tee It Up for the Troops, Bob Woodruff Foundation, 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 Adaptive Sports at Mount Snow, Challenged Athletes of West Virginia, Lounsbury Adaptive Ski Program, New England Disabled Sports, Oregon Adaptive Sports, Spaulding Adaptive Sports Center, Summit Adaptive, and Waterville Valley Adaptive Sports. 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 the action at The Hartford Ski Spectacular by following Move United and #SkiSpec on Facebook, TikTok, and Instagram. To get involved, visit <https://www.moveunitedsport.org>.

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