

Seattle Takes Center Stage as UASA Showcases Adaptive Soccer Ahead of World Cup 2026

Ahead of the tournament, UASA is accelerating the advancement of disability soccer through training, referee development, and cross-pathway collaboration.

SEATTLE, WA, UNITED STATES, December 9, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Seattle will host one of the largest adaptive soccer education gatherings in the country from Thursday, December 11 through Sunday, December 14, marking a breakthrough year of national growth for the [United Adaptive Soccer Association](#) (UASA). As the nation prepares for the FIFA World Cup 2026, UASA is accelerating the advancement of disability soccer through national training, referee development, and cross-pathway collaboration.



Adaptive soccer players in a variety of pathways huddle in the goal to pose for a photograph at UASA's Adaptive Soccer Camp in Chicago earlier this year

Hosted by UASA - in collaboration with the U.S. Soccer Federation, [Explore Seattle Southside](#),

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*Joslynn Bigelow, UASA
President*

Starfire Sports, Glacier Middle School, and additional regional partners - the event showcases what adaptive soccer truly is: intentional variations of the traditional 11-a-side game designed to meet similarly-abled groups where they are, level the playing field, and provide meaningful access. Just as youth, age-group, and gendered divisions structure the broader soccer landscape, disability-specific pathways such as Amputee, Power, Blind, and Pan-disability Recreation Soccer create functional environments where athletes can participate equitably and safely.

Joslynn Bigelow, UASA President, said: "UASA's guiding philosophy is straightforward: a coach is a coach, a referee is a referee, and a player is a player, regardless of sport variation or ability. Best practices in leadership, instruction, match management, and athlete-centered design are fully transferable across pathways. This education event intentionally brings disabled and non-disabled participants together in an environment designed to meet individual needs and flexible enough to adapt when the unexpected inevitably happens."

Because funding remains one of the greatest barriers to participation for people with disabilities, UASA removes these barriers entirely. The organization covers 100% of travel, lodging, meals, and education costs for participating athletes and candidates - made possible through the U.S. Soccer Federation's Innovate to Grow initiative, national and local sponsors, and support from regional tourism and facility partners.

Across four days (December 11–14), participants head to Starfire Sports and surrounding Seattle-area venues to engage in immersive education and hands-on practicums, including:

- Amputee Soccer Referee Education
- Power Soccer Referee Education
- Adaptive Coaching Education (U.S. Soccer Grassroots Track)
- Integrated player practicums and pan-disability clinics

Alongside the national education sessions, UASA will host a free community disability soccer clinic on Sunday, December 14, for people with disabilities only. Local families, players, and adaptive recreation programs are encouraged to register by the deadline.

- Clinic Registration (People with Disabilities Only):
- Registration available here: tinyurl.com/uasa-seattle-clinic
- Registration closes Friday, December 12.

This event reflects UASA's ongoing work to expand opportunity through adaptive-focused training models and cross-pathway leadership development - with athlete-centered learning experiences and ongoing national resources, such as inclusive event-planning guides. Since its founding in 2023, UASA has served as the national connector for seven disability soccer pathways - aligning organizations, training educators, and increasing access to high-quality programming nationwide.

Michel Tume, an adaptive soccer athlete, grassroots coach, certified referee, and UASA's Vice President & Director of Pathway Development, said: "Being part of UASA has opened up many more opportunities for me beyond just playing soccer. UASA is not only developing player participation but also increasing access to coaching and refereeing opportunities for all."

The 2025 Seattle event marks a major milestone in UASA's strategic plan: advancing goals that include expanding into 15 new states by 2026, engaging more than 500 new athletes, recruiting over 50 referees and coaches, and significantly increasing its digital reach by 2028.

With Seattle serving as a FIFA 2026 host city and one of the Pacific Northwest's most active adaptive sport regions, UASA's Education Event arrives at a pivotal moment. Seattle (recognized as the birthplace of amputee soccer in the U.S. and a regional hub for blind soccer) is emerging as a national leader in disability sport with an expanding Paralympic footprint. As a destination partner, Explore Seattle Southside will support regional storytelling, videography, and visitor engagement throughout the event.

Cydney Marks-Nicholes, Sports Development Manager at Explore Seattle Southside, said: "Explore Seattle Southside is proud to partner with UASA on this innovative, impactful event, which will benefit athletes nationwide. As the destination marketing organization for Seattle Southside, we are committed to ensuring that every athlete and family feels supported and celebrated during their visit. We're honored to help elevate adaptive soccer and spotlight those who are shaping the future of the sport."

As the country prepares for FIFA World Cup 2026, UASA will continue investing in nationwide coaching education, referee development, and athlete programming - expanding regional hubs, strengthening partnerships, and increasing grants and resources for families and emerging players.

UASA invites communities across the country to join in this momentum as we continue building an accessible, empowering, and unified future for adaptive soccer. This moment marks another step toward a future where every athlete, in every community, has a place in the world's game.

Media Access: Interviews with players, coaches, and staff are available. Media are invited to attend and film on-site. Contact Caroline Oatway (caroline@sayhowconsulting.com) to coordinate access. Photo and video assets will be available following the event.

About the United Adaptive Soccer Association (UASA)

Founded in 2023, the United Adaptive Soccer Association connects and elevates disability soccer across the United States. From Recreation to Competitive, UASA supports players, coaches, families, and stakeholders through partnerships, free programming, and long-term advocacy. In 2025, UASA is expanding its national footprint through training, talent identification, and cultural transformation - making adaptive soccer not just more available, but more visible. In 2025, UASA is advancing its national footprint through training, talent identification, and cultural transformation, making adaptive soccer not just more available, but more visible.

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