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Veterans Affairs**

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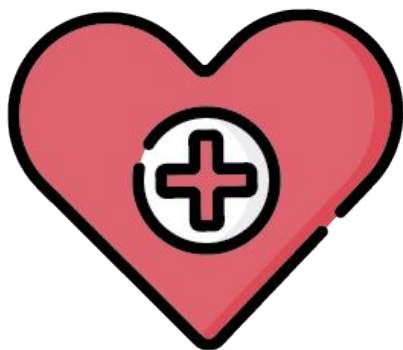
# 2024

## Statewide Symposium in Support of Service Members, Veterans & Their Families

April 17-18 | Phoenix, Arizona

arizona coalition  
for military families





# Health & Wellness

## Session 1

Adapting Health Strategies for  
Veterans with Injuries & Disabilities



# Facilitators



**Dean Wenrich**

CONNECTION COACH

Arizona Coalition for Military Families



**Jose Gonzalez**

RISK REDUCTION PROGRAM SPECIALIST

Arizona Coalition for Military Families





# Agenda

- 1 **Recreational Therapy Services for Individuals with Physical Disabilities**
- 2 **Ability 360 - Veteran Programs**



# Recreational Therapy Services for Individuals with Physical Disabilities

Dr. Beth Dietrich

Recreational Therapy Section Chief

Phoenix VA Healthcare System





Recreational Therapy &  
Adaptive Sports Programs  
@ the Phoenix VA

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**VA**



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

Veterans Health Administration  
*Phoenix VA Health Care System*





# Presentation Objectives

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- Participants will gain an understanding of all Recreation Therapy/Creative Arts Therapy Programs available within the Phoenix VA system.
- Participants will gain an understanding on how we adapt/modify physical activity programs for Veteran's with physical limitations
- Local Visually Impaired Veteran will share his experiences and journey with the Phoenix VA Recreation Therapy and Adaptive Sports Program





# Recreation Therapy (RT)

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- What is RT?
  - A professional service which uses recreation interventions as a treatment modality to assist individuals with disabilities to exercise their right to a lifestyle that focuses on functional independence, health, and well-being.
- Mission Statement
  - The mission of the Recreation Therapy Program is to provide a wide range of recreational interventions to promote the independent physical, cognitive, emotional, and social functioning and well-being of Veterans, by enhancing current skills and facilitating the establishment of new skills for daily living and community functioning.



# Benefits of RT

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- Improve physical health status and reduce pain
- Stress reduction
- Improve cognitive functioning and social interaction skills
- Decrease depression and anxiety symptoms
- Learn new coping skills
- Improve psychosocial health
- Enhance quality of life and overall well-being
- Improve self-esteem
- Promote a sober lifestyle
- Develop a healthy support system
- Prevent physical deterioration
- Develop skills to overcome boredom
- Increase your leisure repertoire
- Increase community awareness

# General Outpatient RT Services

## Programs Scheduled as Semesters

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- Physical Programs



- A variety of programs are offered to help promote health and movement
  - Group Exercise; Tai Chi, Core, Yoga...

- Creative Programs



- Treatment programs based on utilizing creative expressive techniques to promote physical and emotional healing
  - Pottery, Leather, Drawing, Ceramics, Music, Creative Expression...

- Specialty Programs

- Programs designed to target Veterans with specific needs
  - Tension & Trauma Releasing Exercises, Coping & Stress Management, Social Skills, Depression, Relaxation, Tibetan Bowls, Self-Es





# Adaptive Sports

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- What is Adaptive Sports?
  - Designed to use sports and other recreational opportunities to achieve specific patient goals. The clinic is designed to be a safe and therapeutic environment for Veterans with physical disabilities while providing a social atmosphere for all whom participate.
- Goal for Adaptive Sports
  - This specialized program aims to optimize Veterans independence, community engagement, well-being, and quality of life. Through program participation, Veterans gain the skills to break down participation barriers and increase awareness of and access to adaptive sports equipment.





# Adaptive Sports

## Programs Scheduled as Semesters



- Adaptive Sports offers a variety of treatment options that vary throughout the year.
- Veterans work with their RT provider to discuss treatment goals and needs.



### *Program Examples:*

Cycling	Pickleball
Archery	Hiking
Boccia	CrossFit
Fishing	Air Guns
Virtual Reality	Sailing





# VA National Games & Events

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- National Veterans Golden Age Games
  - Open to Veteran's 55 and older
    - Events vary from year to year
- National Veterans Summer Sports Clinic
  - Veterans with SCI, amputations, VI, PTSD, Neurological conditions, Burns, TBI/Poly Trauma
    - Adaptive Surfing, Sailing, Cycling, Kayaking, and CrossFit
- National Veterans Winter Sports Clinic
  - Veterans with SCI, amputations, VI, Neurological conditions, and other severe disabilities
    - Adaptive Downhill Skiing, Cross Country Skiing, Snowmobiling, Trout Fishing, and Rock Climbing
- National Veterans Wheelchair Games
  - Veterans with SCI, amputations, MS, or other Central Neurological Conditions that require a wheelchair to participate
    - Events vary from year to year
- National Disabled Veterans Golf Clinic
  - Veterans with Visual Impairments, TBI, SCI, MS, CVA, Amputations, Parkinson's
    - Adaptive Golf
- Creative Arts Festival
  - Open to all Phoenix VA Veterans
    - Fine Arts; Applied Arts; Craft Kits; Music, Dance, Drama, Creative Writing

# How do we Adapt for Physical Limitations?

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Large  
Pieces



Adaptive  
Devices



Make it  
Accessible



Work  
Together



# Where are RT OP Services Available?

- Topaz Clinic/Main Hospital
- SE CBOC
- NW CBOC
- SW CBOC
- 32<sup>nd</sup> Street Clinic

# How Can I get Involved?

## Step 1

***Request a Consult*** – General RT services can be from any provider – Adaptive Sports must be from your PCP

## Step 2

***Attend an Intake Session*** – An MSA will call to schedule; Can be done F2F or VVC; 30-60 minutes depending on the program

## Step 3

***Select a Treatment Option*** - Work with your RT provider during the assessment to develop a treatment plan



# James Malone

Navy Veteran with VI

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[Exciting New Discovery \(youtube.com\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=veTzwQdUoDy)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=veTzwQdUoDy>

**VA**



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

Veterans Health Administration  
Phoenix VA Health Care System



# CONTACT US

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# Ability 360 Sports and Fitness Center

Autumn Ewert

Military Program Specialist -

Recreational Specialist

Ability 360 Sports & Fitness Center



# ABILITY360



## SPORTS & FITNESS

## CENTER



Veteran Programs





# OFFERINGS

**01. ★**

## **INCLUSIVE GYM FACILITIES**

Accessible gym equipped with state-of-the-art equipment.

**02. ★**

## **MILITARY ACCESS PASS**

Military and veteran offering for discounted membership

**03. ★**

## **LIGHT RAIL ACCESS**

ABILITY360 Stop

**04. ★**

## **VIRTUAL OFFERINGS**

Workout, recreation and cooking classes!

**05. ★**

## **360 OUTDOORS**

Getting outside!



# OUR WHY



Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center provides exceptional adaptive sports, recreation, aquatic, and fitness programs that promote the independence, health and overall wellbeing of people with disabilities and their families.



01

# INCLUSIVE GYM FACILITIES





# FACILITIES



## AQUATIC CENTER

4 lap lanes, therapy pool, whirlpool  
Aquatic classes, swim lessons, Recreational  
Therapy and Personal Training sessions



## SPORTS COURTS

Full sized sports courts open for member use



## ROCK WALL

35 ft. wall, open climb sessions twice a  
week, rental opportunities



## INCLUSIVE FITNESS CENTER

Indoor track, group fitness classes,  
equipment orientations, personal training



# ABILITY360 SPORTS & FITNESS CENTER

Programs examples:

- Group classes (in person and virtual)
- Locker rooms, showers and changing areas
- Adaptive sports
- Aquatic classes
- Youth programming
- Personal training
- Recreational Therapy
- Swim Lessons





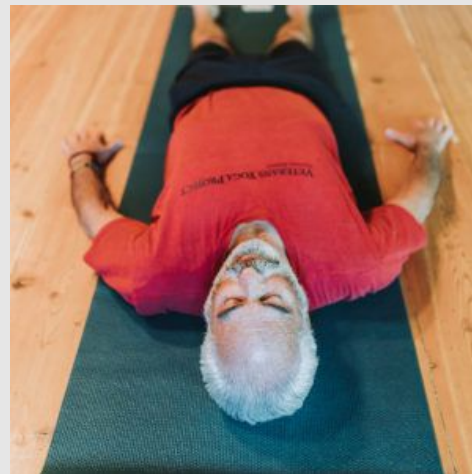
# VETERANS YOGA PROJECT

## CLASS



Every other Tuesday night at Ability360 Sports & Fitness Center

- Trauma Informed
- Trained with V4P 200 YTT





# 02

## MILITARY ACCESS PASS



How Ability360 gives back to veterans



# MILITARY ACCESS PASS



## COST

\$25 Annual Fee  
\$3 Daily Drop in



## WHO QUALIFIES

Any veteran or active duty, spouse  
and children in the home under 18  
years of age





# 4,000



Military Members have been served at Ability360 Sports and Fitness Center since opening in 2011



03

**LIGHT RAIL ACCESS**





# ABILITY360 LIGHT RAIL STOP



“It really says good things about Phoenix that of all the light rail projects we could have begun with, we’re starting here today,” said Councilwoman Kate Gallego. “We’re sending a message that Phoenix values inclusivity; that we want everyone to feel welcome riding on our rail. And it’s a design that welcomes people and makes it easier to operate. It says good things about Phoenix that we value our community and partners.”



# 04

# VIRTUAL OFFERINGS

★★★★★



# FITNESS CLASSES

Virtual offering examples are meditation and movement, stretch fusion and Tai Chi



# MENS GROUP

Every Thursday, 4 - 5:30pm



# 360 IN THE KITCHEN

Find us on YouTube on the Ability360 Channel!



# AGING WITH GRACE

Aging with Grace meets the 1st Monday of each month.

1 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. - Via Zoom





05

360 OUTDOORS





# 360 OUTDOORS PROGRAMS



## PADDLE DAYS

Kayaking days hosted  
once a month throughout  
AZ



## ADAPTED SKI LESSONS

Partnership with High  
Country Adaptive to  
provide transportation



## MAINSTREAM EXPERIENCE

Multi Day rafting trip  
through the Grand  
Canyon with Arizona  
River Runners



## OFF ROAD DAYS

aMTB rides hosted  
weekly



## INCLUSIVE HIKES

All over the valley and  
beyond through  
November



## LEE'S FERRY FLY FISHING

All inclusive Fly Fishing  
Trip in October





# 360 OUTDOORS PROGRAMS



## WHEELS N' REELS

Seasonal monthly urban fishing program



## DRAGONBOAT

Team blue dragonboat team practices at TTL on Monday nights



## FREEDOM ROWS

Adaptive rowing team partners with US Rowing for a recreational and competitive team



## VETERAN GOLF DAYS

Adaptive Golf Program



# JOSHUA TREE CLIMBING TRIP





# MAINSTREAM EXPERIENCE





# FREEDOM ROWS





# FLY FISHING TRIP





# MILITARY ACCESS PASS



## COST

\$25 Annual Fee  
\$3 Daily Drop in



## WHO QUALIFIES

Any veteran or active duty,  
spouse and children in the  
home under 18 years of age



# THANKS



Do you have any questions?

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# Questions?







# Session Evaluation

We want to hear from you!

