



**NATIONAL
ABILITY
CENTER**

info@DiscoverNAC.org e.
435.649.3991 p.
435.658.3992 f.

P.O. Box 682799
Park City, UT 84068

www.DiscoverNAC.org

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Press Release

**For Immediate Release
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**Press Contact: Lauren Rayner
435.200.0983**

National Ability Center Receives grant from U.S. Paralympics to create Nordic Development Program

January 11, 2007- The National Ability Center (NAC) is proud to be the recipient of a grant awarded by the U.S. Paralympics for the creation of a Nordic Development Program for athletes with physical disabilities in Park City, UT. The goal of the program is to recruit and train athletes with physical disabilities and for them to go to compete at the Paralympic level. The program will be held at the White Pine Touring and Soldier Hollow Nordic Centers.

The National Ability Center will be recruiting athletes from Utah and the surrounding states. Athletes will engage in a rigorous training program including a minimum of three days a week of on-snow training for 16 weeks, as well as dry land training including weight training, yoga, and sports psychology. In addition to training, athletes will compete in local non-disabled competitions. Scholarships are available for athletes in this program.

The Nordic Development Program will be managed by Head Coach Steve Cook. Cook is a very accomplished Nordic skier with a below-the-knee amputation. He lost his right leg in a farming accident in 1988 and was motivated to challenge his abilities after the accident. Cook became active in mountain biking, climbing, and Nordic Skiing. Cook's accomplishments include two Paralympic gold medals in 5 km freestyle and 10 km classic, as well as Paralympic bronze in the 20km classic. In addition, Cook plans to compete in the 2010 Winter Paralympic Games in Vancouver, B.C. He is eager to share his skills and talents with others through the NAC's Nordic Development Program.

For more information on the National Ability Center's Nordic Development Training Program call 435.649.3991.

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