



Press Release

For Immediate Release
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NATIONAL ABILITY CENTER

National Ability Center Starts First Adaptive Recreation Exchange in Thailand

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December 28, 2006- The National Ability Center is implementing an international disabled sports exchange program in collaboration with the *Redemptorist Foundation for People with Disabilities* in Pattaya, Thailand, and the Mobility Project in Seattle, Washington. Together these organizations will create adaptive recreation programs in Thailand. The new programs will be given the knowledge, strength, and skill sets to operate adaptive sports programs successfully far beyond the terms of the grant. This has all been made possible through a grant from the U.S. Department of State Cultural Affairs Division.

Meeche White, National Ability Center CEO and co-founder, has participated in many international sports exchanges over the past 20 years, including programs in Chile, Spain, and Korea. White hopes these projects will help to further demonstrate the capabilities and worthiness of people of all different abilities. White visited Thailand this past November and is optimistic about the future of the program. With an eight person team from around the U.S. White will return to Thailand in January 2007 for three weeks to initiate programs through a series of coach training, three-day sports skills development camps for participants, and recruitment of volunteers.

The National Ability Center will provide sports skills training to coaches and individuals with disabilities in Chang Mai and Pattaya, Thailand. This project will provide the adaptive equipment for sports participation including two hundred wheelchairs, sports chairs, walkers, and hand-cycles through support from the Mobility Project. The primary focus will be on youth ages 8-18, however adults with disabilities will also be included.

All participants in this project will gain a broader perspective of the different cultures in the world, but ultimately find common ground through celebrating *abilities*. The National Ability Center feels honored to spread their mission of affordable adaptive recreation to people of all different abilities.

For more information on the National Ability Center's international sports exchange with Thailand please contact Lauren Rayner at 435.200.0983 or by email at laurenr@DiscoverNac.org.

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