

BlazeNotes

January 2009

BlazeNotes is a monthly publication of the BlazeSports Institute for Applied Science (BIAS) designed to provide new and emerging information on disability sport, physical activity and healthy lifestyles.

Submit your success stories, resources, and trainings for next month's newsletter by February 13, 2009. Send to jjones@blazesport.org

[News and Information](#)

[Resources and Tools](#)

[Policy Issues](#)

[Conferences and Training Opportunities](#)

[News and Information](#)

Office on Disability at HHS Announces New Deputy Director

The Office on Disability (OD), Office of the Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) is pleased to announce the appointment of Michael Marge, Ed.D. as the new Deputy Director of OD. The Director of the Office of Disability, Dr. Margaret Giannini, has resigned as of January 16, 2009. Until the new HHS Secretary appoints a Director, Dr. Marge will serve as Acting Director for the new Administration. Dr. Marge will provide scientific and technical leadership and direction to the programs of OD. He will assist the Director in the development and implementation of strategic plans; in monitoring the implementation of OD's Initiatives, providing analysis and coordination as needed; recommending courses of action to the Director in the resolution of major decisions and concerns which may be sensitive and may require delicate negotiation or resolution; managing research, grant reviews and writing of comprehensive reports; and supervising staff, assigning and reviewing work, identifying training needs, and evaluating performance. His responsibilities encompass disability issues and programs across all agencies within HHS, both nationally and internationally.

Prior to joining OD, Dr. Marge was a Scientific and Technical Advisor to the Director of the Office on Disability. He developed and implemented two major OD priorities: The National Initiative on Closing the Gaps in Health Care and Early Intervention Services for Infants and Young Children with Hearing Loss and the National Initiative on Physical Fitness for Children and Youth with Disabilities (the I Can Do It, You Can Do It Program). He also served as a Professional Consultant and Advisor for the Foundation of the National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, Maryland, assisting in the implementation of its National Initiative on Physical Fitness for Children and Youth with Disabilities.

US Census Bureau Reports: 54.4 Million Americans Report Some Level of Disability

In a report issued in the December 2008 *Current Population Reports* the U.S. Census Bureau reported that of the 291.1 million people in the 2005 population of the United States, 54.4 million, or 18.7 percent, reported some level of disability, and 35 million (12.0 percent of all people) reported a severe disability.

To view full report, visit: <http://www.disabilityinfo.gov/digov-public/public/DisplayPage.do?parentFolderId=161>.

Request for Research Participants

The University of Illinois at Chicago is partnering with BlazeSports America and other organizations serving youth with disabilities to conduct an internet-based survey with youth with disabilities aged 12-18 and their parents/caregivers on the lifestyle and environment of adolescents with disabilities. **Share the following link with your participating families by visiting the following link: www.healthforyouth.org and entering the access code: BLAZE1.** For more information, or if you have difficulty accessing the survey, please contact Brienne Davis in the Department of Disability and Human Development at bdavis7@uic.edu or 312-355-4054.

Social Cohesiveness of Neighborhood Can Influence Children's Physical Activity

A new study published in the February edition of the American Journal of Public Health examined the link between children's neighborhood environments, physical activity and weight. This study of physical activity levels reported by 5th graders from various schools in the cities of Birmingham, Houston and Los Angeles. Researchers looked at not only physical environment factors such as traffic, population density, sidewalk availability, but also social environment factors such as social cohesion, neighbors' willingness to look after others' children, and networks among parents. Controlling for demographic factors related to physical activity and childhood weight, the study found that a favorable social environment was more strongly related to physical activity than the physical environment. Authors suggest that community based interventions aimed at improving physical activity levels in children should involve ways to enhance social cohesion in neighborhoods.

The article abstract can be found at: <http://www.ajph.org/cgi/content/abstract/99/2/271?etoc>

Last Call for Applicants for BlazeSports America Sports Technical Committee Positions

2009 will include a number of new and exciting opportunities for BlazeSports America including regional and national competitions, sports clinics, distance learning sessions and our Annual National Disability Sports Conference in September. In preparation for a challenging and event filled year BlazeSports America will be re-structuring several key Sport Technical Committees. At this time we are posting a call for applications for consideration for committee members for the Sports Technical Committees of Boccia, Powerlifting and Wheelchair Team Handball (formally Indoor Wheelchair Soccer). The committees will consist of at least one representative

from the following areas: athlete, coach, classifier, and referee/official. Applicants will be recommended for positions on these individual sports technical committees after a review and consideration of all applications by a selection committee appointed by the BlazeSports America leadership.

In addition to national recognition, each committee member represents BlazeSports America locally, regionally and in some sports internationally all critical events in the sport he/she represents. Sports Technical Committee members may be asked to attend annual meetings and regular conference calls. Although no salary is involved with this appointment, all expenses incurred in travel, etc. will be met, when possible. Responsibilities and privileges include assisting in the selection of national team members and coaches, attending meets, preparing a budget request, planning of funding; marketing and public outreach, rule changes and their implementation, sanctioning of events, communicating with the BlazeSports America office and submitting periodical progress reports.

The four-year appointment begins February 15, 2009 and continues until December 31, 2012, however, similarly to staff positions all Sports Technical Committee positions are ultimately at the discretion of the Executive Director. Evaluation of each Sports Technical Committee member's performance will be conducted and reviewed periodically by the staff of BlazeSports America. Chairpersons for each Sports Technical Committee will be appointed by BlazeSports America staff from the overall committee members selected. Interested candidates are asked to submit a letter of interest, resume and a completed Sports Technical Committee Application. Applications should be mailed to BlazeSports America, Sports Tech Selection Committee, 280 Interstate North Circle, Suite 450, Atlanta GA 30339 or emailed to info@blazesports.org, by close of business on Friday, February 6, 2009.



Hat Tricks

by Dan Humphreys, Photo credit: Ben Johnson

Indoor wheelchair soccer is a fast-paced, action-packed sport. During this championship tournament, hosted by BlazeSports America, teams were ready to rumble.

Read this article: <http://www.pvomagazines.com/sns/magazine/article.php?art=2685>

Resources and Tools

Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities Newsletter

The newly established Carolina Institute for Developmental Disabilities (CI) provides cutting-edge services, research, and training to benefit individuals with developmental disabilities and their families and is reaching out to all our partners, friends, and supporters with a new newsletter.

The Carolina Institute combines four nationally-recognized programs within the UNC School of Medicine—the [TEACCH](#) Program, the [Center for Development and Learning](#) (CDL), [Family Support Network](#) (FSN), and the [Neurodevelopmental Disorders Research Center](#).

If you have a comment, question, or any feedback please send us an email to: info@cidd.unc.edu. If you would prefer **not** to receive this newsletter, send an email with **UNSUBSCRIBE** in the subject line to info@cidd.unc.edu.

National Recreation and Park Association Launches the Health Management Practice Resource: Strategies for Sustainability



As part of the National Recreation and Park Association's ongoing involvement in health promotion and current Step Up to Health initiative, NRPA is pleased to announce the development of a new instrument to be used in the continued fight against obesity and inactivity – The Health Management Practice Resource: Strategies for Sustainability.

The Resource repositions parks and recreation as essential to the health and vitality of a community and includes:

- Quick-Start Reference Guide
- Detailed implementation guide
- User-friendly CD-ROM with access to all materials
- Step Up to Health: Year in Review- compilation of community examples
- “Step Into Action” A Collaborative Approach to Health and Livability
- Advertising resources
- Five FREE access passes to the NRPA Step Up to Health online training
- Consulting Services

For information on ordering, visit:

<http://ipv.nrpa.org/Core/Orders/product.aspx?catid=13&prodid=1282>

For more information on Step up to Health: <http://www.nrpa.org/health>

Are you listening?

The most common denominator when analyzing dysfunction within a team is poor communication. All too often when someone wants to improve their communication skills they spend the majority of their time strengthening their speaking or delivery skills. Just as much, if not more attention should be spent developing your listening skills.

Rosenfeld and Wilder (1990) discovered three levels of listening, each possessing a varying degree of listening effectiveness. In order to promote healthy communication, whether it is coach-team, coach-athlete or athlete-athlete communication, the listener should engage in active listening. This level of listening is characterized by the listener showing genuine concern for the content, intent and feelings of the message.

The next level of listening is superficial or inattentive listening. This level is characterized by the listener quickly prejudging the intent of the speaker and then tuning the speaker out. While the listener may correctly gauge the intent of the message, the listener does not show genuine interest in the speaker or their message and often fails to understand the emotional feeling underlying the concepts of the message.

The final level of listening, the least preferred, is arrogant listening. This level is illustrated by a listener that is self absorbed and more concerned with their response than what the speaker is conveying. The arrogant listener will wait for pauses to jump in and take over the conversation.

As a coach or an athlete, make an effort to become an active listener. The more you know and care about the people on your team, the easier this will be as you will have a genuine desire to hear what the speaker is communicating. The result will be more clear communication that is properly understood and a team that feels valued by each of its members.

Rosenfeld, L., & Wilder, L. (1990). Communication fundamentals: Active listening. *Sport Psychology Training Bulletin*, 1(15), 1-8

Policy Issues

BlazeSports America actively engages in advocacy and monitoring public policy affecting people with disabilities and particularly issues relating to sport, physical education and health. In this section, we report on these activities as well as legislation, regulations, and policy related to our collective work.

Obama Administration

BlazeSports America met with President Obama's transition team disability advisors on January 13th to discuss access to sports and recreation for people with disabilities in community and school settings and the importance of physical activity and health promotion. The President's advisors held a series of small group meetings with disability organizations during the transition to learn more about policy and program priorities for people with disabilities. The White House Office of Public Liaison and Intergovernmental Affairs will be the liaison with advocacy groups and continue to seek input into pressing national issues affecting people with disabilities.

You can contact the The Office of Public Liaison & Intergovernmental Affairs directly through the following website: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/opl/>

Economic Stimulus Bill

The House and Senate drafted economic stimulus bill (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009) being debated in Congress includes funding for disability programs. Vocational Rehabilitation Services funding of \$500 million is for “basic vocational rehab services” grants to states for programs under part B of title I of the Rehabilitation Act. According to the Rehabilitation Act, “basic vocational rehab services” includes recreational therapy and “other services that contribute substantially to the rehabilitation of a group of individuals”.

If the bill passes as written funding for VR services would go directly to states. This is new money with no federal match requirement and it is in addition to the state’s annual appropriation from the federal government. The states will receive half of the funding upon passage of the bill and half on October 1st so they can spend it over two fiscal years.

Additionally, Independent Living Services will receive \$200 million in new money to be allocated to states through formula grants. Independent living services include “individual and group social and recreational services”.

Proposed ADA Regulations for Recreational Facilities - Update

On January 21, 2009, the Department of Justice announced that it has withdrawn its draft final rules to amend the Department's regulations implementing title II and title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) which includes new guidelines for recreational facilities. This action was taken in response to a memorandum from the White House directing federal agencies to defer publication of any new regulations until the rules are reviewed and approved by officials appointed by President Obama. No final action will be taken by the Department with respect to these rules until the incoming officials have had the opportunity to review the rulemaking record. Withdrawal of the draft final rules does not affect existing ADA regulations. Title II and title III entities must continue to follow the Department's existing ADA regulations, including the ADA Standards for Accessible Design (see <http://www.ada.gov/stdspdf.htm>)

Success Stories

BlazeSports America wants to share with our readers some of the success stories from our various programs across the country. This section will highlight those programs, camps or special events with hopes of sharing great ideas and programming experiences.

BLAZESPORTS LOUISIANA, LOUISIANA GUMBO, LOUISIANA GUMBO INC., & SPAR (Shreveport Public Assembly & Recreation) sponsored a Wheelchair Basketball Clinic in Shreveport, Louisiana on January 10, 2009. Doug Garner, head wheelchair basketball coach from the University of Texas at Arlington, was the instructor. He also brought four of his

athletes to assist. Over 30 athletes, coaches, teachers, and therapists from all over Louisiana attended and had a great time. The clinic was held at the Southern Hills Recreation Center where Louisiana's first junior wheelchair basketball team is practicing every Friday afternoon. All the youth participants received a BlazeSports Basketball shirt.



Conferences and Training Opportunities

We need your best practice and success stories!
Submit a presentation at www.blazesports.org

Connect · Innovate · Inspire

BlazeSports America's 10th Annual Disability Sport Conference

September 10-12, 2009 on the campus of Kennesaw State University, Georgia

The 2009 Conference is expected to be the best ever, with more than 30 interactive sessions on topics ranging from coaching to recruitment and program development. These sessions will be led by the nation's top sports professionals; elite coaches and Paralympic athletes will share their cutting edge training techniques with attendees. Wheelchairs and other sporting equipment will be on hand to ensure a hands-on learning experience. Additionally, Conference attendees will have access to one-on-one consulting on fundraising, risk management, public relations, grant writing, and more. This is an excellent chance to meet the best minds in disability sport from across the country! **Continuing education credits** will be offered.

To submit a presentation, visit www.blazesports.org for forms, updates and more information.

Mark your calendar - BlazeSports Webinar Series

Sports for People with Cerebral Palsy and Related Conditions

Wednesday February 4, 2009

Space is limited.

Reserve your Webinar seat now at:

<https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/514843269>

Top Ten Ways to Make Your Fitness Facilities Accessible

Wednesday February 25, 2009

Active Living Research Conference

February 18-20, 2009, in San Diego. The theme of this year's conference is *Active Communities for Youth and Families: Creating Momentum for Change*. For details, visit the conference website: www.activelivingresearch.org/conference/2009

National Conference on Chronic Disease Prevention and Control

Cultivating Healthy Communities

February 23-25, 2009, Gaylord National Convention Center, Washington, DC

This conference will celebrate two decades of extraordinary progress in the prevention and control of chronic diseases and offer attendees opportunities to learn about successful chronic disease prevention efforts, best practices, and effective interventions used by their colleagues. For the first time, attendees will be invited to participate in the development of a conference *Call to Action*, a framework of both individual and collective actions to accelerate our progress in preventing disease and promoting health over the next 20 years. Visit www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/conference for updates and more information.

Amputee Coalition of America – 2nd Annual Lobby Day

March 10, 2009, Washington DC

The event will address adequate insurance coverage, other health care reform issues among others. Visit www.amputee-coalition.org/advocacy/lobby-day.

The Future is Now - First World Congress on Spina Bifida Research and Care

March 15-18, 2009, Orlando, Florida

Hundreds of physicians, nurses and other healthcare practitioners will travel from around the country and around the world for this groundbreaking forum. SBA is currently accepting abstracts from national and international professionals in the multidisciplinary fields that deliver care and conduct research relevant to the Spina Bifida community. To submit an abstract or to register visit the meeting website at: <http://medicalconference.spinabifidaassociation.org>.

US Paralympics: Developing Amazing Leaders Conference

April 17-20, 2009, Colorado Springs, CO

The conference provides an opportunity for leaders of the Paralympic movement and those who want to start new programs to come together to share, learn and inspire one another. Online registration for the conference will open in early December. Visit <http://paralympics.teamusa.org/event/event/570> for more details.

American Therapeutic Recreation Association – Annual Conference

Oct 2-6, 2009, Hyatt Regency Minneapolis

The ATRA Annual Conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Minneapolis. Visit <http://atra-online.com/cms/> for more information and to make room reservations 612-370-1234.

3rd International Congress on Physical Activity and Public Health

May 5-8, 2010

The Program Committee for the 2010 International Congress on Physical Activity and Public Health has selected “Mobilizing Research for Global Action in Policy and Practice” as the major title for the Congress. The title highlights the major goal of the Congress to provide leading edge research as the foundation for the development of future physical activity policies and programs.

BlazeNotes January 2009

For more information on this exciting conference please view the Fall Newsletter at http://www.cflri.ca/icpaph/documents/Fall_08V12.pdf.

**For More Information Contact: BlazeSports America
280 Interstate North Circle, Suite 450, Atlanta, GA 30339
(770) 850-8199, info@blazesports.org**