

# RECONNECT

CONNECTING KIDS AND ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES TO SPORTS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

**WHEELCHAIR & ADAPTIVE SPORTS  
PROGRAM SCHEDULE**



**SPRING 2024**



**Mary Free Bed**  
Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports

# CONNECT MOVE INSPIRE

Mary Free Bed Wheelchair & Adaptive Sports programs can be fast paced, challenging and competitive. Our programs provide a fun opportunity to exercise, make new friends, develop social and teamwork skills, and increase confidence. Many of our athletes can walk, but their abilities are limited when they are competing against athletes without disabilities.

In addition to team sports, we offer adaptive sports clinics for those who prefer a less competitive environment. With the exception of the women's basketball team, our sports programs and clinics are all co-ed.



## ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA:

### Mary Free Bed Wheelchair Sports Teams

Our teams are open to anyone with a permanent physical disability that limits participation in able-bodied sports.

#### Participants must be:

- Age 7 and older
- Have a physical disability due to orthopedic or neurological medical conditions
- In need of modification to participate in leisure and sports activities due to physical disability
- Able to benefit from participation in group activities
- Able to follow directions; be alert and oriented
- Free of disruptive behavioral issues that would create a danger to self or others
- Living in a non-institutional setting
- Cognitively able to participate in the program at an appropriate developmental level
- Evaluated by a team coordinator and coach prior to placement
- Able to use upper extremities to independently push a sports chair or handcycle, propel on the ice using sled hockey sticks or steer a power soccer chair. (Power chairs may be used in wheelchair tennis, based on coordinator and coach evaluation.)

### Mary Free Bed Adaptive Sports Clinics and Classes

Sports clinics offer participants a more relaxed and leisurely experience.

Depending on the season:

- Clinics include downhill skiing, water skiing, sailing, kayaking, canoeing, scuba diving, tennis, archery, zip lining, pickleball and golf.
- Classes include yoga, rock climbing, functional fitness, swim lessons (group and private) and youth sports samplers.

Participants must be cognitively or physically impaired. Common diagnoses of children and adult participants include amputation, spinal cord injury, spina bifida, stroke, muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, spinal muscular atrophy, hip dysplasia, cerebral palsy, arthrogryposis, traumatic brain injury and post-polio syndrome. There may be some restrictions based on individual barriers, such as difficulty swallowing water, personal fears or age restrictions. The clinic coordinator will answer any questions.

For more information,  
call 616.840.8356

Scan to register





# TEAMS

## Junior Wheelchair Tennis Team

Children and teens with physical disabilities are coached in basic tennis skills and competitive play. Juniors practice alongside the adult team to learn drills and mobility skills, join in cardio exercise and participate in match play. Practices and games are on a standard tennis court – no special equipment or modifications to the court are necessary. This inclusive program provides practice and playing opportunities for children and teens of any skill level who are full- or part-time wheelchair users. Practices will be two times per week.

**Dates:** Mondays and Thursdays, June 3 - August 12

**Time:** 5 - 6:30 PM

**Location:** MVP Crahen, 115 Crahen Ave. SW, Grand Rapids

**Age:** 7 - 18 years

**Cost:** \$104 due at first practice

**Equipment:** Limited supply available for loan.

## Adult Wheelchair Tennis

Adults with physical disabilities are coached in basic tennis skills and competitive play. No prior knowledge or experience playing tennis is needed to participate. Practices and games are on a standard tennis court – no special equipment or modifications to the court are necessary. This inclusive program provides practice and playing opportunities for adults of any skill level who are full or part-time wheelchair users. Practices are throughout the season and team participation includes travel to tournaments throughout the United States.

**Dates:** April - October

**Time:** 6 - 8 PM Mondays

**Location:** MVP Crahen, 115 Crahen Ave. SW, Grand Rapids

**Age:** 18 and older

**Cost:** \$104 due at first practice, additional registration fee to USTA

**Equipment:** Limited supply available for loan per request

## Para Standing Tennis

This team is for adults with physical disabilities who wish to play standing up rather than playing from a sports wheelchair. Individuals who play para standing tennis have decreased mobility due to amputations, cerebral palsy, hemiplegia, limb difference, dwarfism or other congenital conditions. No prior knowledge or experience playing tennis is needed to participate. Practices and matches are on a standard tennis court – no special equipment or modifications to the court are necessary. This inclusive program provides practice and playing opportunities for adults of any skill level. Practices are throughout the season and team participation includes travel to tournaments throughout the United States.

**Dates:** April - October

**Time:** 6 - 8 PM Thursdays

**Location:** MVP Crahen, 115 Crahen Ave. SW, Grand Rapids

**Age:** 16 and older

**Cost:** \$104 due at first practice



## TEAMS



### Adult Wheelchair Softball | West Michigan Rollin' Whitecaps

Looking to stay active this summer? Consider joining the West Michigan Rollin' Whitecaps wheelchair softball team! The team is registered under the National Wheelchair Softball Association and will participate in the Wheelchair Softball World Series in August. Join us for a practice to see if it's right for you.

**Season:** April - August

**Practice:** 6 - 8 PM Tuesdays

**Tournaments:** The team travels to one tournament monthly June – August, including our home tournament.

**Age:** 18 and older

**Location:** Mary Free Bed YMCA, 5500 Burton St. SE, Grand Rapids

**Cost:** \$104, due at first practice (checks payable to Mary Free Bed)

**Equipment:** Bats, balls and sports wheelchairs provided on loan.

### Handcycling

The Mary Free Bed handcycling team is an enthusiastic group of individuals dedicated to riding. The team meets for weekly rides at Millennium Park. Enjoy camaraderie and peer support while training for races or just enjoying the ride. Local and out-of-state race options are available.

**Season:** March - October

**Group Ride:** 6 - 8 PM Wednesdays

**Age:** 16 and older

**Practice Location:** 1415 Maynard Ave. SW, Walker

**Cost:** \$104, due at first practice (checks payable to Mary Free Bed)

**Equipment:** Each participant needs a handcycle fitted to his or her needs; limited number of handcycles available to borrow.

### Wheelchair Lacrosse | Frenzy

Wheelchair Lacrosse is one of our fastest growing sports. This sport offers the complete package for the competitive athlete. A game that's physical, lightning-fast and aggressive, wheelchair lacrosse will fulfill your need for speed.

**Season:** May - August

**Practice:** 6 - 7:30 PM Mondays

**Age:** 15 and older

**Location:** Eagles Ice Center, 2600 Village Dr. SE, Grand Rapids

**Cost:** \$104, due at first practice; volunteering responsibilities throughout the season

**Equipment:** Limited supply available for loan, please inquire.



## HOME TOURNAMENTS

### Sled Wings Home Tournament and Adult League Weekend 2024 Griff's Sled Hockey Classic

Hosted by the Grand Rapids Sled Wings, this annual tournament showcases our talented adult and junior teams. Opponents travel from across the United States to compete!

**Dates:** March 22 - 24

**Location:** Patterson Ice Arena, 2550 Patterson Ave., Grand Rapids

**Cost:** Free admission

### Annual Mary Free Bed Wheelchair Softball Tournament

The West Michigan Rollin' Whitecaps will host their home tournament at the wheelchair softball field at the Mary Free Bed YMCA.

**Date:** June 8 - 9

**Location:** Mary Free Bed YMCA, 5500 Burton St. SE, Grand Rapids

**Cost:** Free for spectators

### Midwest Wheelchair Tennis Championships – SAVE THE DATE!

This hometown tournament, which is an ITF 3 and USTA II sanctioned event, welcomes more than 80 wheelchair tennis athletes from all over the world. From novice athletes to Paralympians, this is a must-see, competitive tournament. We invite you to watch our local Mary Free Bed wheelchair tennis team compete on its home courts.

**Date:** July 11 - 14

**Time:** 9 AM - 6 PM daily

**Location:** MVP Crahen, 115 Crahen Ave. NE

**Cost:** Free for spectators

### Frenzy Fest Wheelchair Lacrosse Tournament

Hosted by the Frenzy, the Frenzy Fest brings together wheelchair athletes from around the country for a thrilling and competitive lacrosse tournament. It is not only about the competition, but also about fostering a sense of community and camaraderie among the wheelchair lacrosse teams.

**Date:** July 13 - 14, 2024

**Time:** 8 AM - 5 PM daily

**Location:** Eagles Ice Center, 2600 Village Dr SE, Grand Rapids

**Cost:** Free for spectators





## CLASSES

### Adaptive Group Swim Lessons *(Offered Quarterly)*

Come learn swimming and safety in a positive, fun environment! Open to children with physical and cognitive disabilities, these group lessons include instructions from a certified water safety instructor. A volunteer will be available to assist the instructor and participant.

**Age:** 3 - 18 (or still receiving school services)

**Session length:** 6 weeks, 45-minute sessions

**Cost:** \$50 due at time of registration. Registration is on a first-come basis.

**Location:** Mary Free Bed Therapy Pool, 235 Wealthy St. SE, Grand Rapids

#### MONDAYS

(April 15 - May 20)

5:00 - 5:45 PM

5:45 - 6:30 PM

6:30 - 7:15 PM

7:15 - 8:00 PM

#### TUESDAYS

(April 16 - May 21)

5:00 - 5:45 PM

5:45 - 6:30 PM

6:30 - 7:15 PM

7:15 - 8:00 PM



### Adaptive Private Swim Lessons *(Offered Quarterly)*

Open to children and adults with physical and cognitive disabilities, private lessons include one-on-one instruction from a certified water safety instructor. Participants learn swimming and safety in a positive, fun and quiet environment.

**Age:** 3 and older

**Session length:** 6 weeks, 45-minute sessions

**Location:** Mary Free Bed Therapy Pool, 235 Wealthy St. SE, Grand Rapids

**Cost:** \$150 due at time of registration. Registration is on a first-come basis.

#### WEDNESDAYS

(April 17 - May 22)

5:00 - 5:45 PM

5:45 - 6:30 PM

6:30 - 7:15 PM

7:15 - 8:00 PM

#### THURSDAYS

(April 18 - May 23)

5:00 - 5:45 PM

5:45 - 6:30 PM

6:30 - 7:15 PM

7:15 - 8:00 PM



Register now at [maryfreebed.com/sports](https://maryfreebed.com/sports)

### Saturday Adaptive Private Swim Lessons *(Offered Quarterly)*

We are happy to offer private swim lessons on Saturday mornings. These are offered for children and adults with physical and cognitive disabilities. These private lessons include instruction from a certified water safety instructor (PGY-Z resident). Participants learn swimming and safety in a positive and calm environment in order to meet their goals. These hours and dates may run differently than the traditional swim lessons during the week.

**Age:** 3 and above

**Session length:** 6 weeks, 45-minute sessions

**Location:** Mary Free Bed Therapy Pool, 235 Wealthy St. SE, Grand Rapids

**Cost:** \$150 due at time of registration. Registration is on a first-come basis.

#### SATURDAYS

(April 20 - June 1\*)

9:00 - 9:45 AM

9:45 - 10:30 AM

10:30 - 11:15 AM

11:15 AM - 12:00 PM

*\*Skip May 25*

### Future Frenzy – Wheelchair Lacrosse Series

This series is for ages 12 - 16 years old who are interested in learning the sport of wheelchair lacrosse. Anyone over age 16 is eligible to play on the wheelchair lacrosse team.

**Dates:** June 3 - July 8

**Time:** 5:30 - 6:30 PM Mondays

**Location:** Eagles Ice Center, 2600 Village Dr SE, Grand Rapids

**Cost:** \$52

### Adaptive Canoe and Kayak Clinic

Discover the joy of water activities for all ages and abilities! Join our adaptive kayak and canoe clinic at Millennium Park, brought to you by Mary Free Bed Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports and the City of Kentwood Parks and Recreation Department.

**Date:** June 12

**Time:** Session 1: 10:30 - 11:45 AM | Session 2: 12:30 - 1:45 PM

**Location:** Millennium Park (DeVos Family Boathouse),  
1415 Maynard Ave. SW, Walker

**Cost:** \$30

### Adaptive Archery

In partnership with Kentwood Parks and Recreation, and hosted by West Michigan Archery Center, Mary Free Bed Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports is excited to offer seasonal archery clinics! For both novices and seasoned enthusiasts alike, come join us to learn more about this amazing sport.

**Date:** March 26, 2024

**Time:** 6 - 7 PM

**Location:** West Michigan Archery Center, 3500 10 Mile Road NE, Rockford

**Age:** 12 and older

**Cost:** \$25. Fee covers instruction, equipment and shooting.



Register now at [maryfreebed.com/sports](https://maryfreebed.com/sports)



## SPECIAL EVENTS

### Bikes For The Rest Of Us

Riding a bike is a time-honored activity. This annual event introduces children and adults with disabilities to adaptive bicycling. Participants are paired with a therapist and evaluated to determine needed adaptations. Mary Free Bed therapists and volunteers introduce participants to a variety of adaptive bikes available for purchase.

**Date:** Saturday, April 20

**Time:** 9 AM - 12 PM; pre-registration and appointment required

**Location:** Mary Free Bed West Entrance Parking Ramp (Near the main hospital entrance)

235 Wealthy St. SE, Grand Rapids

**Age:** 3 years and older

Contact [sports@maryfreebed.com](mailto:sports@maryfreebed.com) to be added to receive registration link sent in March.

### Amway River Bank Run

This year is the 47th Annual Amway River Bank Run, which marks the 33rd year of the Mary Free Bed Guild's sponsorship of the Wheelchair Division and the 17th year of sponsorship for the Handcycle Division. Amway River Bank Run offers competitive 25K divisions for both wheelchair and handcycle athletes. Athletes must use a racing wheelchair or handcycle to participate. Participants include former Mary Free Bed patients, Michigan residents and athletes from across the United States and abroad. This event raises public awareness of professional athletes in the adapted sports arena.

Register online at [amwayriverbankrun.com](http://amwayriverbankrun.com). If you have questions regarding registration or the Wheelchair and Handcycling Divisions, email [christy.vanhaver@maryfreebed.com](mailto:christy.vanhaver@maryfreebed.com) or call 616.840.8207.

**Date:** May 11

### Junior Wheelchair Sports Camp

Our five-day sports camp is designed for youth with physical disabilities who require the use of a wheelchair. Kids ages 7 - 18 are empowered to explore different sports, make new friends and have fun being active. We'll introduce them to basketball, tennis, team handball, softball, sled hockey, handcycling and much more!

**Dates:** July 22 - 26

**Time:** 8:30 AM - 4 PM

**Location:** Grand Valley State University, 1 Campus Drive, Allendale

**Age:** 7 - 18 years

**Cost:** FREE to day campers, \$225 for overnight campers who live more than 45 miles one way from GVSU. The registration link will be open in May.

A promotional poster for the Mary Free Bed Open Golf Tournament. The left side features a photograph of a golfer in mid-swing on a green golf course under a blue sky. The right side is a dark green vertical panel with white text. At the top left of the poster is the Mary Free Bed logo, a stylized 'M' and 'B' inside a circle. Below it, the text 'Mary Free Bed' is written in a large, white, serif font, with 'open' in a smaller, white, script font below it. The text 'On Course to Support' is written in a small, white, sans-serif font above the 'Mary Free Bed' text. At the bottom left of the poster, the text 'Mary Free Bed' is written in a large, white, serif font, with 'Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports' in a smaller, white, sans-serif font below it. The right panel contains the following text: 'JOIN US' in large, white, sans-serif font; 'MONDAY, JUNE 3' in white, sans-serif font; 'THOUSAND OAKS GOLF CLUB' in white, sans-serif font; 'DOUBLE SHOTGUN' in white, sans-serif font; '8 AM AND 1:30 PM' in white, sans-serif font; 'Reserve your foursome or secure your sponsorship. Contact Laura Dulay at [laura.dulay@maryfreebed.com](mailto:laura.dulay@maryfreebed.com) or 616.840.8729. Purchase online at [maryfreebed.com/golf](http://maryfreebed.com/golf).' in white, sans-serif font; and '\*All shotgun times are first come, first served.' in a smaller, white, sans-serif font. At the bottom of the right panel, the text 'Sold out seven years in a row!' is written in a white, sans-serif font.





### LEE MONTGOMERY ATHLETE ASSISTANCE FUND

Applications open from April 1 - May 1, 2024.

The Lee Montgomery Athlete Assistance Fund (LMAAF), established in 2022 by the generosity of The Meijer Foundation, seeks to support and empower athletes with physical disabilities who are training competitively in adaptive sports and looking to take their game to the next level.

This fund enables new athletes to explore the world of wheelchair and adaptive sports or supports seasoned athletes in reaching next-level sports opportunities. The goal of the LMAAF is to give all individuals an opportunity to become the best athletes they can be, both on and off the field.

**Requests for assistance can be up to \$1,000\*. Eligible expenditures include:**

- Pay-to-play fee for athletes to join a WAS team
- Specialty sports and/or training camp fees outside of WAS offerings
- Sport-specific fees for athletes playing wheelchair sports at the collegiate level
- Fees and costs related to trying out for a Paralympic or Junior National sports team
- Housing assistance (including meals, activities and supervision) for campers during Jr. Wheelchair Sports Camp. Family costs are not eligible.
- Travel expenses are not eligible expenditures

### ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

**To be eligible to apply for assistance to participate on a WAS sports team, you must:**

- Have actively participated in at least one WAS team (even if you've never played before)
- Be in good standing with the WAS program and/or teams
- Live in the United States

**For spring submissions, to be eligible to apply for assistance to participate in Junior Wheelchair Sports Camp, you must:**

- Be diagnosed with a physical disability due to orthopedic or neurological medical condition and use, or require, a wheelchair to be successful in sports and recreational activities
- Live in the United States and be more than 45 miles one way from the Junior Wheelchair Sports Camp location

**To be eligible to apply for assistance to participate in an elite/specialty sports camp, you must:**

- Have actively participated in at least one WAS team for at least one year
- Be in good standing with the WAS program and/or teams
- Live in the United States

**To be eligible to apply for assistance to try out for a Paralympic team, you must:**

- Have actively participated on a WAS team for at least two years
- Be in good standing with the WAS program and/or teams
- Live in the United States (open to all states)

**\*IMPORTANT NOTE:** Funds cannot be paid directly to the individual requesting assistance. They will be paid to the approved camp or program. In the case of membership fees, a participant may only be reimbursed once receipt of payment is received.

# GEAR UP TO SUPPORT WAS!

Mary Free Bed Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports has partnered with a local company to offer fanwear merchandise and clothing for the whole family. High School Fan Stand gives 8% of all sales back to Mary Free Bed Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports in the form of a cash donation to help continue our mission!

Scan the QR code to purchase your items today. These make great gifts!



**Mary Free Bed**  
Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports

## Connections to Consider

### Grand Rapids Eagles Disabled Sports

This non-profit organization provides athletic training for athletes ages 7 and older with cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, spina bifida, visual impairments, spinal cord injuries and other physical disabilities. It's a great opportunity to participate in team sports and make friends with others who range from power wheelchair users to full ambulation athletes.

Current training opportunities include bowling, bocchia ball, swimming, power lifting, track & field and more. Meetings are Tuesdays, 6 - 7:30 p.m., October through May.

Contact head coach Lori Moerdyk at **616.550.6806**, [LMoerdyk@gmail.com](mailto:LMoerdyk@gmail.com), or visit the Eagles' Facebook page ([GREaglesdisabledsports](https://www.facebook.com/GREaglesdisabledsports)).



### Kentwood Parks and Recreation

Kentwood Parks and Recreation provides adaptive recreation programs that promote social, creative and educational opportunities for youth and adults with physical and developmental disabilities. For a listing of current classes, clinics and events, visit [kentwood.us/parks](https://kentwood.us/parks) or contact Katelyn Bush, CTRS, at **616.656.5279** or [bushk@kentwood.us](mailto:bushk@kentwood.us).





# CONNECT MOVE INSPIRE

Mary Free Bed  
Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports

Thank you to our program sponsors:



Michael and Christina  
Rosloniec Family



Richard and Lori  
Hinkley Family



Help more athletes get in the game! For Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports sponsorship opportunities, please contact Laura Dulay at [laura.dulay@maryfreebed.com](mailto:laura.dulay@maryfreebed.com) or 616.840.8729.

## Registration, Cancellation and Refunds:

To sign up for teams, classes or clinics, visit [www.maryfreebed.com/sports](http://www.maryfreebed.com/sports). Click on "Register."

For any questions, please contact the Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports Program at Mary Free Bed at 616-840-8356 or email [sports@maryfreebed.com](mailto:sports@maryfreebed.com).

Payment is due at the time of registration. Refunds will only be issued if you notify us five business days prior to the day of the clinic or the day of the first class. Any cancellation made within the five days or after the beginning of class will forfeit a refund.