# RECCONNECT

CONNECTING KIDS AND ADULTS WITH DISABILITIES TO SPORTS AND RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

## WHEELCHAIR AND ADAPTIVE SPORTS PROGRAM SCHEDULE

**WINTER 2026-27**



Mary Free Bed
Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports

# CONNECT. MOVE. INSPIRE.

Mary Free Bed Wheelchair and 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 compete 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+
- 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:

- **Sports clinics** offer a great opportunity to explore a variety of sports and activities in a fun, low-pressure environment—without the cost of purchasing equipment or the commitment of joining a team. These sessions focus on introducing skills, building confidence, and encouraging participation at all experience levels.
- Our **adaptive classes** provide a welcoming, inclusive, and relaxed environment where participants can learn and have fun at their own pace. Sessions are held once a week over six weeks, allowing time to build skills, confidence, and connections. Activities are designed with flexibility to support individuals of all ability levels in a positive, low-pressure setting.

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



## Power Soccer Team (Mary Free Bed Overdrive)

Mary Free Bed Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports is proud to announce that we are sanctioned with the United States Power Soccer Association for the third year and compete across the nation! Whether you've never played power soccer, or are a seasoned enthusiast, come join us to learn more about this amazing sport. Practices will include drills, scrimmages and more!

**Age:** 7 and older
**Season:** October–June
**Time:** 5–7 PM Wednesdays (skipping the last week of each month)
**Cost:** $125, due at first practice
**Equipment:** A limited number of power soccer chairs are available to borrow upon request. Otherwise, participants are limited to those who have their own power chairs. A limited number of footguards will be provided to participants on a first-come, first-served basis.

## Sled Hockey – Adults (Grand Rapids Sled Wings)

The Grand Rapids Sled Wings sled hockey team offers a sport ideal for individuals with lower limb-affected disabilities. This program is for both recreational and competitive athletes.

**Age:** 18 and older
**Season:** October–May
**Time:** 8:30–9:50 AM Saturdays
**Location:** Griff's Icehouse, 30 Coldbrook St. NE, Grand Rapids
**Cost:** $125, due at first practice; volunteering responsibilities throughout the season. Must be a member before starting practice.

## Goalball Team (Mary Free Bed Sonics)

In partnership with the Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the Mary Free Bed Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports program is thrilled to revive the sport of goalball. Goalball is a team sport designed specifically for athletes who are blind or visually impaired. Goalball is a unique and inclusive sport that relies on the sense of touch and hearing, allowing individuals with visual impairments to participate in a team-based athletic activity.

**Season:** February–August
**Time:** 6:30–8:30 PM Mondays
**Location:** St. Peter and Paul Church School, 1433 Hamilton, Grand Rapids
**Equipment:** Athletes need a comfortable pair of gym shoes, comfortable shorts or sweatpants, and a willingness to learn about this exciting sport.

# TEAMS

## Wheelchair Basketball – Prep (Mary Free Bed Jr. Pacers)

Athletes get the opportunity to participate on a team, stay connected with basketball and remain active with other children their age. This program is for both recreational and competitive athletes with physical disabilities who can operate a manual wheelchair independently.

**Age:** 7–13
**Season:** September–April
**Time:** 6–7:30 PM Mondays
**Location:** Mary Free Bed YMCA, 5500 Burton St. SE, Grand Rapids
**Cost:** $125, due at first practice; volunteering responsibilities throughout the season. Must register for NWBA before attending a tournament. NWBA membership fees apply separately.




## Wheelchair Basketball – Varsity (Mary Free Bed Jr. Pacers)

Athletes get the opportunity to participate on a team, stay connected with basketball and remain active with other children their age. This program is for both recreational and competitive athletes with physical disabilities who can operate a manual wheelchair independently.

**Age:** 14–18 (Birthday on or before July 31, 2012)
**Season:** September–April
**Time:** 5:30–7:30 PM Tuesdays
**Location:** Mary Free Bed YMCA, 5500 Burton St. SE, Grand Rapids
**Cost:** $125, due at first practice; volunteering responsibilities throughout the season. Must register for NWBA before attending a tournament. NWBA membership fees apply separately.

## Wheelchair Basketball – Adults (Pacers DI)

The Mary Free Bed Pacers DI offers competitive wheelchair basketball for those high-level players who are at least 18 years old and live with a physical disability. Players have the opportunity to participate on a National Wheelchair Basketball Association Division I basketball team. The level of play is fast-paced and fun to watch. The team travels to competitions throughout the U.S.

**Age:** 18 and older
**Season:** September–April
**Time:** 6:30–8:30 PM Thursdays
**Location:** Mary Free Bed YMCA, 5500 Burton St. SE, Grand Rapids
**Cost:** $125, due at first practice; volunteering responsibilities throughout the season. Must register for NWBA before attending a tournament. NWBA membership fees apply separately.




## Wheelchair Basketball – Adults (Pacers DIII)

The Mary Free Bed Pacers DIII is a National Wheelchair Basketball Association DIII team for players who are at least 18 years old and live with a physical disability. This team is a great starting point if you are new to the sport of wheelchair basketball.

**Age:** 18 and older
**Season:** September–April
**Time:** 6–7:30 PM Thursdays
**Location:** Mary Free Bed YMCA, 5500 Burton St. SE, Grand Rapids
**Cost:** $125, due at first practice; volunteering responsibilities throughout the season. Must register for NWBA before attending a tournament. NWBA membership fees apply separately.

## Wheelchair Basketball – Adults (Women Pacers)

The Mary Free Bed Women Pacers started in the 2022-23 season and is back for its fourth year! This team is for girls/women ages 14–17 who are rostered on the Mary Free Bed Junior Pacers Varsity Team, and women 18 and up.

**Age:** 14–17 for those rostered on the Jr. Pacers Varsity team, and those 18 and older
**Season:** September–April
**Time:** 7:30–9 PM Thursdays
**Location:** Mary Free Bed YMCA, 5500 Burton St. SE, Grand Rapids
**Cost:** $125, due at first practice; volunteering responsibilities throughout the season. Must register for NWBA before attending a tournament. NWBA membership fees apply separately.

# TEAMS




## Wheelchair Rugby (Grand Rapids Thunder)

The Grand Rapids Thunder is a team for those living with physical disabilities to upper and lower body extremities, including amputees! Heavy-duty sports chairs, fit to each individual, are used in this high-intensity, chair-to-chair contact sport. The game is equally as physical and extreme as conventionally played rugby.

**Age:** 16 and older
**Season:** September–March
**Time:** 7–9 PM Wednesdays
**Location:** Mary Free Bed YMCA, 5500 Burton St. SE, Grand Rapids
**Cost:** $125, due at first practice; volunteering responsibilities throughout the year.

## Para Swim

Mary Free Bed Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports is excited to introduce Para Swim, a new competitive swimming program for athletes with physical disabilities. This program will focus on stroke development, fitness, confidence-building, and competitive opportunities in a supportive team environment. Athletes will receive coaching tailored to their abilities while working toward individual and team goals. Additional program details, including practice location, schedule, eligibility, and registration information, will be announced as they are finalized.

**Age:** 7 and older
**Season:** February–July
**Time:** TBD (Practices will occur once a week)
**Cost:** $125, due at first practice
**Requierements:** Athletes must be able to swim independently for 50 meters.

## HOME TOURNAMENTS

### Wheelchair Basketball Adults Home Tournament

The Mary Free Bed Invitational Adult Wheelchair Basketball tournament presented by CareLinc is open to DI, DII, and DIII teams.

**Date:** December 5–6
**Location:** Mary Free Bed YMCA, 5500 Burton St. SE, Grand Rapids
**Cost:** Free admission

### Adult Sled Wings Tournament

The MItten MeIt Adult Sled Hockey Weekend.
**Date:** April 17–18
**Location:** Griff's Icehouse, 30 Coldbrook St. NE, Grand Rapids
**Cost:** Free admission

## SAVE THE DATE

### Wheelchair and Handcycle Racing – Amway Riverbank Run

**Date:** Saturday, May 8

**Please see QR code below to register.**



# CLASSES

*Note: Swim session dates may change based on instructor availability. Always refer to the online registration system for the most current dates offered.*

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

Group lessons are offered for school-aged children with physical and cognitive disabilities. Participants learn swimming and safety in a positive and fun environment. Lessons include instructions from a certified water safety instructor. A volunteer assists the instructor and participants.

**Age:** 3–18 (or still receiving school services)
**Session length:** Six weeks, 45-minute sessions
**Location:** Mary Free Bed Therapy Pool, 235 Wealthy St. SE, Grand Rapids
**Cost:** $45, due at time of registration. Registration is on a first-come basis.

### MONDAYS

There is no Monday session this season. If this changes, a separate email will be sent.

### TUESDAYS

| SESSION 1 | SESSION 2 |
|---|---|
| Jan. 5–Feb. 9 | Feb. 23–Mar. 30 |
| 5:00–5:45 PM | 5:00–5:45 PM |
| 5:45–6:30 PM | 5:45–6:30 PM |
| 6:30–7:15 PM | 6:30–7:15 PM |
| 7:15–8:00 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:** Six 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

| SESSION 1 | SESSION 2 |
|---|---|
| Jan. 6–Feb. 10 | Feb. 24–March 31 |
| 5:00–5:45 PM | 5:00–5:45 PM |
| 5:45–6:30 PM | 5:45–6:30 PM |
| 6:30–7:15 PM | 6:30–7:15 PM |
| 7:15–8:00 PM | 7:15–8:00 PM |

### THURSDAYS

There is no Thursday session this season. If this changes, a separate email will be sent.



CLASSES

## Adaptive Yoga

Experience being grounded at the center of inner peace through the guidance of a certified instructor with extensive adaptive yoga practice. This 6-week class is offered for those with cognitive and physical deficits.

**Age:** 12 and older
**Date:**

**SESSION 1**
Mondays, Jan. 4–Feb. 8

**SESSION 2**
Mondays, Feb. 22–Mar. 31

**Time:** 6–7 PM
**Location:** Mary Free Bed Professional Office Building, Meijer Conference Room, 350 Lafayette Ave. SE, Grand Rapids
**Cost:** $47
**Equipment:** We highly suggest you bring your own yoga mat, otherwise equipment will be provided upon request.

## Adaptive Rock Climbing

Experience the thrills of rock climbing in this 4-week class. All levels are welcome. Variations of rope and rock-climbing instruction are offered by certified belayers. Levels range from entry-level walls to very challenging obstacles.

**Date:** Thursdays Jan. 7–28
**Time:** 6–7:30 PM
**Location:** Higher Ground Rock Climbing, 851 Bond Ave. NW, Grand Rapids
**Age:** 4 and older
**Cost:** $50 for climbing, equipment and shoe rental



CLINICS



## Adaptive Scuba Diving Clinic

Whether you're a first timer or experienced diver, all are welcome to enjoy the freedom of adaptive scuba diving.

**Age:** 5 and older
**Dates:** December 12
**Time:** Morning Session 9–11 AM, Afternoon Session 11 AM–1 PM
**Location:** Forest Hills Public Schools Community and Aquatic Center
660 Forest Hill Ave SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546
**Cost:** $25

## Adaptive Archery Clinic

In partnership with Kentwood Parks and Recreation, hosted by West Michigan Archery Center, Mary Free Bed Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports is excited to host seasonal archery clinics! Whether you've never picked up a bow, or are a seasoned enthusiast, come join us to learn more about this amazing sport.

**Age**: 12 and older
**Date:** Tuesday, December 15
**Time:** 6–7 PM
**Location:** West Michigan Archery Center, 3500 10 Mile Rd. NE, Rockford
**Cost:** $25
**Equipment:** WMAC will provide equipment, unless you want to bring your own.

## Adaptive Downhill Ski Clinic

This clinic is in partnership with Kentwood Parks and Recreation, sponsored by Adaptive Ski Association of West Michigan (formerly Cannonsburg Challenged Ski Association). All ability levels are welcome and encouraged to attend. Registration is first-come, first-served.

**Date:** Saturday, January 30
**Time: Session 1:** 10 AM–12 PM | **Session 2:** 1–3 PM
**Location:** Cannonsburg Ski and Ride Area, 6800 Cannonsburg Road. NE, Belmont
**Age**: 5 and older
**Cost:** $45

## Athletic Assistance

# LEE MONTGOMERY ATHLETE ASSISTANCE FUND

### Applications open from April 1–May 1, 2027.

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 will enable new athletes to explore the world of wheelchair and adaptive sports or support 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.
- Housing assistance, including meals, activities and supervision for campers to participate in Mary Free Bed Junior Wheelchair Sports Camp. This applies to costs for the camper only. Family costs are not eligible.
- Specialty sports and/or training camp fees outside of MFB 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.
- Note: Travel expenses are not eligible expenditures.

## ASSISTANCE 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 have never played before)
- Be in good standing with the WAS program and/or teams
- Live in the United States

**For spring submission, 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 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

*__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.*

**For questions about LMAAF or your application, contact Maria Besta at maria.besta@maryfreebed.com or 616.840.8537.**

# 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, boccia ball, swimming, power lifting, track & field and more. Meetings are Tuesdays, 6–7:30 PM, October–May.

Contact head coach Lori Moerdyk at **616.550.6806**, **LMoerdyk@gmail.com**, or visit the Eagles' Facebook page (**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 their most current classes, clinic and events, visit **kentwood.us/parks**.

## Grand Rapids Griffins Youth Foundation

The Grand Rapids Griffins Youth Foundation is handling all registrations for the Junior Sled Wings Sled Hockey team. Sled hockey is a sport ideal for individuals with lower limb-affected disabilities. This program is ideal for both recreational and competitive athletes. For more information, go to Griffins Youth Foundation at **griffinskids.org**.

## West Michigan Spina Bifida Organization

A recreation scholarship is available to individuals with spina bifida. Visit **wmsbo.org** or scan the QR code to apply.

## West Michigan Special Hockey Association (WMSHA)

The West Michigan Special Hockey Association is a non-profit organization that provides ice hockey to physically and/or cognitively disabled children and adults in West Michigan. WMSHA is open to any player over the age of five, male or female, who is physically able to play at any level but is unable to participate in any other organized hockey program.

The program is free, except for a small registration fee. All hockey equipment, ice time, coaching staff and on-ice helpers are provided. No skating or hockey experience necessary. The group plays at the Patterson Ice Center in Grand Rapids on Sunday afternoons from October–March. For more information, visit **westmipatriots.com** or **facebook.com/WMSHAPatriots**. Contact via email at **admin@westmipatriots.com**.

# CONNECT.
# MOVE.
# INSPIRE.

Mary Free Bed
Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports

## Thank you to our program sponsors:

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Restoring hope and freedom so our patients can achieve their highest degree of independence is what we do best at Mary Free Bed. Be a part of helping someone get in the game! For Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports sponsorship information, please contact Laura Dulay at laura.dulay@maryfreebed.com or 616.840.8729.

### Registration, Cancellation and Refunds:

**To register for teams, classes or clinics online, please visit the registration section at maryfreebed.com/sports.**

**For any questions, please contact the Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports Program at Mary Free Bed at 616.840.8356 or 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 of the first class. Any cancellation made within the five days or after the beginning of the clinic or class will forfeit a refund.**