



*Meet Your Nonprofit, a weekly profile of nonprofit organizations in our community, is brought to you by the Center for Nonprofit Excellence.*

Describe your nonprofit's mission.

To provide outdoor sports and recreational opportunities for persons with disabilities, of all ages and with all types of disabilities-physical, cognitive, and sensory.

What need in our community brought about the creation of your nonprofit?

The dearth of opportunities for snow sports for persons with disabilities, combined with our early recognition that families were ready to exploit the opportunity if presented professionally and with significant flexibility and modest expense.

How has your nonprofit made a difference in our community?

It has been transformative for many of the individual students. "If I can do this this (skiing, snowboarding, kayaking), I can do anything," is a declaration we often hear in one form or another, a testament to both the joy and exhilaration that comes with learning such a seemingly difficult sport in such a beautiful setting, but also to the way in such experiences build confidence and affirmation of a bigger, more exciting world than many normally would imagine.

It has also served to bring families together for experiences they may have otherwise not even considered. Our students do not always achieve total independence on the mountain or river, but many

do. Many other students learn to ski or snowboard or paddle where they can join their families and friends, with us at the beginning, but often, with continued instruction and experience, at other places, too.

 How can community members help you achieve your mission?


If they have skiing, snowboarding, or paddling experience, they can volunteer to join our talented all-volunteer instructors corp. If they like helping out with community fundraiser events (5K race, wounded warriors golf tournament, Spartan Race event volunteer duty, UVA and Fridays After Five charitable concessions events, etc.), they may join us for these periodic events.

Tell us a story that has come out of your work.

Since 2005, we have conducted an annual wounded warriors weekend, on which we host approximately 25 combat-injured service members and their families for three days of adaptive snow sports. These service members stay with Wintergreen resort host families and Wintergreen Adaptive Sports provides all instruction, equipment, meals, and children's activities at no charge to the honored guests. In an experience we have seen repeated several times, one of these recent wounded warrior guests arrived two years ago for the first time, presenting with gunshot wounds to both legs, a traumatic brain injury and post-traumatic stress, from his service in Afghanistan in 2012.

At the (somewhat busy and crowded) check-in that year, he became nervous and very anxious and his wife told us within about fifteen minutes that they had probably made a mistake and had decided to return home. Two of our most experienced instructors met with him in a quieter place, and, noticing that they were both having second thoughts about an immediate departure, we changed his host family housing assignment to a family with broad experience with our wounded warrior guests, (and whose home is a very comfortable and quiet refuge at the resort). He and his wife decided to stay, the host residence and family put the immediately at ease, he ended up skiing (on a sit-down mono-ski) nearly every hour of the weekend, quickly became an advanced and independent mono-skier, and left at the end of the weekend with a reserved smile and a much more noticeably serene and confident demeanor. He returned this past season, arriving not in a cloud of anxiety and apprehension, but with an eager smile and a gregarious disposition. He and his wife have befriended their host family, with whom they have stayed both years now, and he was the first to register for the 2017 Wounded Warriors Weekend (set for January 20-22). Hearing this, their host family has already made contact, made plans to host this young couple once again, and all parties eagerly await the arrival of the winter snow and the Wintergreen Adaptive Sports 2017 Wounded Warrior Weekend.

Learn more about Wintergreen Adaptive Sports

 Meet Your Nonprofit is a special feature brought to you in partnership with Center for Nonprofit Excellence.

*Strengthening nonprofits to realize the potential of our community.*

Charlottesville Tomorrow's Community Voices

The content in this Meet Your Nonprofit profile is provided by the organization and should not imply endorsement by Charlottesville Tomorrow. The

organizations are members of Center for Nonprofit Excellence. The goal of the Meet Your Nonprofit feature is to share information about the many local organizations working on behalf of a wide range of community interests. We encourage readers to contact the nonprofit directly for more information.