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March 20, 2015

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New Foundation Launched to Support Sled Hockey Athletes

Funds raised will increase access to hockey programs and provide equipment for disabled participants

BUFFALO, N.Y. -- A group of advocates for disabled athletes, led by Paralympic gold medal winner and Western New York native Adam Page, has launched The Sled Hockey Foundation, Inc., a not-for-profit organization that will help expand sled hockey programs and bring the sport to an increased number of young athletes.

The mission of The Sled Hockey Foundation, Inc. is to provide the opportunity for individuals with disabilities to participate in the adaptive sport of sled hockey and, through this participation, develop the social, emotional and physical confidence necessary to become leaders in the community.

The prohibitive cost of equipment and rink rentals and the lack of strong sled hockey programs across the country are often barriers to participation for many disabled athletes. The Foundation seeks to alleviate these challenges by raising funds in support of three main initiatives: accessibility, equipment, and programs. Funds will improve access to existing sled hockey rinks around the country, create and expand new sled hockey programs, and provide equipment rental or donation programs for participants.

Sled hockey was invented in Stockholm, Sweden in the early 1960s by a group of athletes who, despite their physical disabilities, wanted to play hockey. The rules of sled hockey are similar to typical ice hockey, but players sit in specially designed sleds on top of two hockey skate blades. Each player uses two sticks. The sticks have metal edges that the players use to propel themselves forward on the ice.

Adam Page, a native of Lancaster, N.Y., was 15 years old when he became the youngest member of the 2007-08 U.S. National Sled Hockey Team. Page went on to become a two-time gold medal winner at the Paralympic Winter Games, in Vancouver in 2010 and in Sochi in 2014. Page was born with spina bifida and hydrocephalus. In addition to his athletic achievements, Page has become a prolific public speaker and an advocate for disabled athletes who brings his inspiring message to audiences across the country.

“My story is proof that adaptive sports can have a major impact on the life of a young person with a disability,” said Page. “Sled hockey empowers participants and teaches them teamwork and leadership skills they can carry beyond the rink. The Sled Hockey Foundation will work to ensure that financial or accessibility constraints no longer prevent someone from taking part in a sport that can change his or her life.”

The Sled Hockey Foundation is a 501(c)(3) (Application pending) not-for-profit organization. For more information or to make a donation, visit sledhockeyfoundation.org.

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