



Join the North Carolina Disability Sports Movement as a sponsor of the 7th Annual AUGUST MADNESS Wheelchair Basketball Tournament Fundraiser

Why?

As a nonprofit, it is expected that we host an annual fundraiser. For those who know me, if there is not a good reason and purpose, then why are we doing it?

August Madness is much more than a fundraiser. It is multi-faceted event with dynamics impacting change on many levels.

The **Cage Events**, at the YMCA court on the American Tobacco Campus, has influenced children, visitors to the ATC from different parts of our country, youth, adults, and companies, that wheelchair basketball is fun, competitive, and athletic. Some have commented that "it is more fun than traditional basketball"! This event educates the community that disability is not the end of sport- there is life and fun with disability. This event empowers our community to be part of recruiting friends and family members who may have lost hope after injury or disability.

Another fun facet of August Madness is **The Draft** event taking place this year at the Durham Bulls Athletic Park. This event will be star-struck with some major athletic faces, but, the Draft will also include Bridge II Sports athletes. I am very proud to say, that our athletes are drafted first as the August Madness Wheelchair Basketball Tournament is very competitive. Wheelchair athletes know how to shoot, block, and set up to make the shots! The Draft is a place where we showcase many of our athletes who play differently:

DJ Robinson, currently Ranked #1 in the US as a Tandem Cyclist, shared the impact of sport on his life.



Karen Stallings shared how she still loves to compete at 60 years old at USA Boccia Nationals.

Nolan Turner shared some of the struggles living with Spina Bifida as part of his journey, but the need for a new kidney was his focus. He was looking forward to getting back in the game that made equality for him in school when wheelchair basketball was shared with the entire school by BIIS.



Miles Hill and **Lizzie Becker** would share that wheelchair basketball is what gave them the push to strive and earn scholarships to play wheelchair basketball at the University of the Illinois and the University of Texas.

William Christy shared that wheelchair basketball bridged a sport relationship with his Dad, an avid athlete.



The Draft is fun with a Silent Auction and Wine Pull, but, it renews the soul of all who are in different places on the journey of life, giving hope and validating the power of adapted sport.

The **August Madness Tournament** on the floor at PNC Arena impacts the world. Why do I say this? Corporate and community teams play against each other in a wheelchair basketball tournament. Behind the scenes, companies have practiced at the Cage Events or on their own campuses. GSK is a great example. BIIS delivered wheelchair basketball and tandem cycling to their campus during a disability awareness corporate event. Their Executive spoke during the event and asked:

“What if you were blind, or could not use your legs? What if we hired someone who could not use their legs or see? How would we respond?”

Wow, he impacted the mind, that would engage the heart, and empower action.

Why August Madness? Our goal is to change how the world sees disability, challenging the perceptions, one game at a time. To empower a platform that builds equality in opportunity freeing those from being disabled to living life with disability.

Disability does not define outcome, but opportunities do.

August Madness creates change cultivating equality of opportunity, inspiring acceptance, and impacting on many levels, thus changing the world.

Come Join us!

Building the Bridge together!

Ashley Thomas

Founder and Executive Director

