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Bridge II Sports Receives \$565,000 in VA Adaptive Sports Grants to Serve Veterans with Disabilities

DURHAM, N.C. — September 21, 2022 — Bridge II Sports, a non-profit organization based in Durham, N.C., committed to creating opportunities for people with physical disabilities through the power of adaptive sports, was awarded two grants from the Veteran Health Administration office of National Veterans Sports Programs and Special Events. The grants, totaling \$565,000, are for 'Adaptive Sports Programs for Disabled Veterans and Disabled Members of the Armed Forces'.

"We are honored to be able to serve our nation's Veterans with disabilities. After a life has been impacted by disability the journey of learning how to live life with limits begins. It is with great pride that that Bridge II Sports gets to be on that journey with our Veterans helping them discover a community, find their passion, and live life well after disability. We are so thankful that Veterans Affairs sees the benefit of our mission and entrusts to continue and grow the impact of this important work." stated Ashley Thomas, Founder and CEO of Bridge II Sports.

Bridge II Sports will continue to provide quality adaptive sports programming year-round for Veterans with disabilities in the Triangle area including cycling, archery, air rifle, kayaking, golf and more. The Durham VA Healthcare System Recreation Therapy team is engaging with Bridge II Sports as well to introduce their clients to adaptive sports and utilize Bridge II Sports spaces for some of their programs.

The grants will also enable Bridge II Sports to continue the legacy and impact of Valor Games Southeast, an annual multi-day adaptive sports event bringing Veterans with disabilities from around the country to the Triangle for spirited competition and camaraderie. Over the past 10 years Valor Games Southeast has become a marquee event in the country bringing the community and a total of over 1200 Veterans together.

An exciting program developed the COVID-19 lock down will continue to be successfully implemented. The Veteran Fitness Challenge (VFC) helps Veterans with disabilities stay active and connected in community despite not being together 'in person'. Using FitBits, Veterans join the VFC Community Board and participate in innovative monthly challenges created 'in-house' by Bridge II Sports staff. Two years later and 24 challenges in, the VFC has become a strong, supportive community 'United in Movement' with over 340 Veterans with disabilities involved around the country.

About Bridge II Sport

Bridge II Sports is a North Carolina non-profit organization dedicated to developing and implementing opportunities for youth, adults, and Veterans with physical disabilities to realize their potential through sports participation. Through sports programming, special events, awareness initiatives and team development, Bridge II Sports empowers persons with physical disabilities to "Find the Player Within" and challenge perceptions of disability. It is the power of adapted sports that builds healthy bodies, minds, impacting the community with strength. For more information on Bridge II Sports visit www.bridge2sports.org