

Contact:
Carlos Escaba
Challenged Athletes Foundation
Sr. Marketing and PR Manager
Phone: (858) 210-3514
Cell: (310) 613-0959
carlos@challengedathletes.org

**San Diego Padres Partner With Challenged Athletes Foundation To Help Fulfill Its Mission
During Bill Walton Basketball Festival At Petco Park**

**Bill Walton Joins for Special Grant Presentation To Local Basketball Wheelchair Athlete
During Basketball Wheelchair Game on Thursday, December 3**



*Long-time Challenged Athletes Foundation Ambassador Bill Walton, celebrating at CAF's Aspen Medical Products San Diego Triathlon Challenge last October, will be presenting San Diego's Jashaka Acevedo, who was diagnosed with spinal bifida, his own custom Basketball wheelchair.
Photo: Rich Cruse*

San Diego, CA – Dec. 2, 2015 – As a community partner of the San Diego Padres, Challenged Athletes Foundation® (CAF) has been given the opportunity to be a part of the Bill Walton Basketball Festival at Petco Park. Top Challenged Athletes Foundation supporters will be given an exclusive experience to witness CAF's mission being fulfilled in the San Diego community. It

is the mission of Challenged Athletes Foundation to provide opportunities and support to people with physical challenges so they can pursue an active lifestyle through sport.

On Thursday, December 3, from 10am-11:30am, a Wheelchair Basketball game featuring two local teams, Hammer and Silverbacks, will take place as part of the Bill Walton Basketball Festival. Additionally, a special presentation will take place to grant San Diego's Silverbacks team member, Jashaka Acevedo, who was diagnosed with spinal bifida, his own custom Basketball wheelchair.

In 2015, Challenged Athletes Foundation awarded 1,709 grants worth over \$3.5 million to people ages 2-77 across 32 countries. Challenged Athletes Foundation's grant program strives to give the opportunity for applicants to pursue an active lifestyle whether their needs are for adaptive equipment, training or competition expenses. The piece of equipment most highly requested is the Basketball wheelchairs with CAF granting 175 of them this past year alone. Each chair can cost anywhere from \$1,800-\$5,000 a piece and insurance companies typically don't cover the cost.

Challenged Athletes Foundation ambassador Bill Walton, elated about this great event said, "This is an incredible opportunity that combines three things I am very passionate about - the Padres, Basketball and CAF. I am thankful to the Padres organization and CAF for bringing those three elements together and enhancing the quality of someone's life."

The Bill Walton Basketball Festival will feature a full size basketball court placed at Petco Park's home plate where Hammer and Silverbacks will play a game of wheelchair basketball.

The San Diego Adaptive Sports & Recreation Association's Hammer Wheelchair basketball team, is a Division 3 National Wheelchair Basketball Association (NWBA) team. Over the years, the team has won the Southern California Wheelchair Basketball Conference Championship. Team Hammer came in 5th in the nation at the NWBA National Championship Tournament in 2010 out of approximately 80 teams.

The San Diego Silverbacks is a team driven to succeed. They hope to give motivation and inspiration to others with disabilities and show that the power of a positive mindset and the support from like-minded people can help overcome any physical set back.

Silverback team member and grant recipient Jashaka Acevedo was born in 1984 and was diagnosed with spinal bifida. At a young age he started practicing wheelchair basketball and fell in love with the game. Over the years, Jahshaka's abilities and skills have improved drastically, and his drive and determination to be the best have led him to successfully compete in numerous tournaments and play with three teams. Jahshaka's current goal is to compete in the National Championship. A new basketball wheelchair will help him achieve his goals and carry him through many more years of playing his favorite sport.

#

About the Challenged Athletes Foundation

The Challenged Athletes Foundation® (CAF) is a world leader in helping people with physical challenges lead active, healthy lifestyles. CAF believes that participation in physical activity at any level increases self-esteem, encourages independence and enhances quality of life. Since 1994, more than \$70 million has been raised and over 11,000 funding requests from people with physical challenges in all 50 states and dozens of countries have been satisfied. Additionally, CAF's outreach efforts reach another 60,000 individuals each year. Whether it's a \$2,500 grant for a handcycle, helping underwrite a carbon fiber running foot not covered by insurance, or arranging enthusiastic encouragement from a mentor who has triumphed over a similar challenge, CAF's mission is clear: give opportunities and support to those with the desire to live active, athletic lifestyles. To learn more, visit challengedathletes.org or call 858-866-0959.