



For Immediate Release

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Challenged Athletes Foundation Access For Athletes Grant Program Application Open through December 2, 2016

Individuals with Physical Challenges Globally Can Apply for Adaptive Sports Equipment, Competition and Training Expenses



San Diego, California — September 23, 2016 – The Challenged Athletes Foundation's® (CAF) annual **Access For Athletes Grant Program** application is open through **December 2nd, 2016**. Individuals with physical challenges around the world have the opportunity to apply for a grant for adaptive sport equipment, competition and training expenses.

Every year, CAF's staple program provides the proper tools and opportunities to challenged athletes of all ages and abilities, so they can pursue active lifestyles through physical fitness and competitive athletics. CAF believes that involvement in sports at any level increases self-esteem, encourages independence and enhances quality of life.

Through the 2015-2016 grant distribution – the largest grant distribution to date in the organization's 23-year history – 2,098 challenged athletes in 32 countries received a



variety of grants representing more than \$3.7 million in support. This represents an increase from 1,709 grants and \$3.5 million awarded in 2015. To date, over 13,000 grants have been awarded.

The grants, which are one of the many ways CAF supports athletes with physical challenges, empower individuals to take part in life-affirming sport and physical fitness and fill an important void that otherwise can leave challenged athletes on the sidelines. Highly technical, and in many cases customized, adaptive sport equipment is expensive and not typically covered by medical insurance, which means many athletes with desire to be active are not able to function at their highest ability.

CAF grants range in need, ability, and individual goals. Take for example, seven-year-old Braylon O’Neil, a congenital bilateral amputee, who received a CAF grant of Össur Flex-Run Jr. running legs that allow him to continue being physically active in the sports he loves in school. Or Cheryl Hile, who has Multiple Sclerosis (MS), and received a CAF grant to pursue her dream of being the first person with MS to run seven marathons on seven continents in 12 months. Watch the joy of the moment applicants receives their CAF grant acceptance letter in this video from last year’s Team CAF grant recipients [here](#).

Challenged Athletes Foundation Programs Director Dawna Callahan, a Team CAF athlete and four-time Boston Marathon finisher said, “Through first-hand experience, I know how impactful receiving a Challenged Athletes Foundation grant is. Any individual who has a physical challenge should never feel like they don’t have the proper support, and we are proud to provide those opportunities to thousands of challenged athletes around the world.”

To apply for an **Access For Athletes Grant**, please [click here](#).

Highlights from last year’s (2015-2016) grant distribution were:

- 30% growth in number of applications received over the previous grant season
- 22% growth in number of grants approved over the previous grant season
- 50% of those approved are first-time CAF grant recipients
- 12% are wounded military personnel and first responders (supported by CAF’s Operation Rebound® program)
- All ages are represented (the youngest grantee is 3-years-old, the oldest is 72)
- 98 Paralympians were awarded grants to support their journey to the Rio 2016 Paralympic Games



- 11% of grants were distributed internationally across 32 countries

Most requested pieces of equipment were:

- Sport chairs (268), starting cost - \$2,000
- Handcycles (115), starting cost - \$2,500
- Sports prosthetics (89), provided by CAF's Global and Prosthetics Sponsor, Össur. Running prosthetics starting cost - \$12,000
- Adaptive Bicycles (17), starting cost - \$500

Follow 2015-2016 Access for Athletes grant recipients on social media through #TeamCAF on Facebook- Challenged Athletes Foundation, Twitter- @CAFoundation and Instagram- @CAFoundation.

2016-2017 CAF Access For Athletes Grant recipients will be announced **April, 2017.**

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 \$76 million has been raised and over 13,000 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.

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