

SAILING PROGRAM INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW FOR VOLUNTEERS

The Adaptive Sports Connection (ASC) is a nonprofit charity that provides outdoor recreational opportunities to people with disabilities who otherwise might not have the opportunity to do those activities themselves. All of the programs are run by volunteers. It takes a “village” of volunteers to make the programs fun and safe for everyone. There are currently over 450 volunteers total in the various sports including snow skiing in the winter. We are always in need of new volunteers to support our expanding programs. The programs are a win-win for volunteers and participants. Volunteers are making a positive impact on people’s lives while getting outdoors with free use of equipment (sailboats, kayaks, cycles, etc.). Participants are provided the opportunity to do activities by themselves, or with family and friends, they otherwise might not be able to do.

The Adaptive Sports Connection sailing program is a fun opportunity for both participants and volunteers to try something new and learn to sail, or share sailing skills and knowledge they already have, with others.

We welcome volunteers of all skill levels and areas of interest to the sailing program. Some volunteers may not even want to go out on the water but are interested in greeting, assisting, and getting to know our participants. Other volunteers may have little to no sailing experience but are interested in learning to sail. Never feel overwhelmed. For instance, the glossaries in each level are goals with many words and terms but you do not have to know every word and term in a glossary before you can be out sailing with participants. You will find the ASC sailing program to be a wonderful opportunity to learn to sail, or build on sailing skills you may already have. Other volunteers may be very experienced sailors already. The ASC sailing program provides experienced sailors the opportunity to share their passion for sailing and to pass along their skills and knowledge to others. That includes other volunteers as well as people with disabilities who might not otherwise have a chance to go sailing, or learn to become sailors themselves.

Volunteers are encouraged to improve their skills and knowledge by completing whatever levels in the sailing program they are interested in. It takes many volunteers of different interests, backgrounds, and abilities to make the ASC sailing program fun, safe, and successful for both participants and volunteers. Sailing program levels consist of general event and participant help volunteers, Shore Help volunteers (able to rig, launch, retrieve, and derig the sailboats), Crew (on water in sailboats with participants), and Skippers (the volunteer onboard in charge of the boat).

Adaptive Sports Connection is a mentoring organization to volunteers and people with disabilities. Don’t be intimidated by all the things one can learn and experience in sailing. That is opportunity for personal growth. Please share with us your goals in the program and we will help you achieve them.

In addition to scheduled training/practice sessions, volunteers may request unscheduled training/practice sessions on the Slack Sailing Training channel (we use Slack to enable volunteers to communicate with each other). If available, a qualified skipper will respond on that Slack channel.

In appreciation of your time volunteering, there are monthly volunteer appreciation days to allow volunteers in good standing the opportunity to sail or kayak with family and friends. Volunteers are encouraged to bring new people on those days with the hope they too will become volunteers.

Sailing is a lot of fun for everyone with your help and input. Do not hesitate to share skills or ideas you may have to help improve the sailing program for both participants and volunteers.

We look forward to seeing you at the Adaptive Sports Connection.