



St. Mary's County Recreation and Parks is a strong advocate for people of all ability levels; the Department believes that every individual, regardless of ability level, is deserving of satisfying recreational, leisure and sporting activities. **Paralympic Sport – Southern Maryland** will initially focus on **adaptive aquatic programming** and programs for injured military personnel, with hopes of expansion to shooting, archery, cycling and kayaking in the near future.



Advisory Board

Paralympic Sport Southern Maryland is overseen by an Advisory Board. Board Members: Plan for the future of the club, approve and monitor the clubs programs and services, provide sound financial management & enlist financial resources. The Advisory Board meets monthly and is looking for a few individuals to join that are committed to the mission and success of the club.

General Contact Information

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Board of Commissioners for St. Mary's County

Francis Jack Russell, President, Lawrence D. Jarboe,
 Cynthia L. Jones, Todd B. Morgan, Daniel L. Morris



Leonardtown Rotary

Mechanicsville Moose Lodge





WHAT IS THE PARALYMPICS?

U.S. Paralympics, a division of the U.S. Olympic Committee, is dedicated to becoming the world leader in the Paralympic sports movement and promoting excellence in the lives of people with physical disabilities. Since its formation in 2001, U.S. Paralympics has been inspiring Americans to achieve their dreams.

Research shows that daily physical activity enhances not only an individual's self-esteem and peer relationships, it also results in increased achievement, better overall health, and higher quality of life. However, despite these findings, most individuals with physical disabilities do not have the opportunity to participate in any regular sports.

U.S. Paralympics operates programs in three key areas: **Community Programs, USOC Paralympic Military Program** and **Elite Athlete & Team Support**.

U.S. Paralympics lead the preparation and selection of [national Paralympic teams](#) for 24 sports. The athletes represent the U.S. in the Paralympic Games and other international competitions

WHAT IS A PARALYMPIC SPORT CLUB?

U.S. Paralympics is partnering with community organizations from across the country to create a network of Paralympic Sport Clubs. Paralympic Sport Clubs are community-based programs developed to involve youth and adults with physical and visual disabilities in sports and physical activity, regardless of skill level. With 21 million physically disabled Americans, including thousands of military personnel who've sustained serious injuries while on active duty, this is an important community need.



At U.S. Paralympics, it's not just about elite performance. It's about using sports to inspire possibilities. Because once a person with a disability believes he or she can play volleyball, or swim, or run, it's a small step to believing they can do everyday things as well—the things they may have once seen as impossible.

Paralympics VS. Special Olympics

There are two primary differences between Paralympics and Special Olympics – the disability categories of the athletes and the criteria under which athletes participate. Paralympic sports are open to athletes who have visual or physical disabilities, while Special Olympics serves only those with intellectual disabilities. At all levels of Paralympic sport, athletes compete in five main disability categories: amputee, cerebral palsy, visually impaired, spinal injuries and Les Autres (French for "the others", a category that includes conditions that do not fall into the categories mentioned before).



Additionally, elite athletes who qualify to compete at the Paralympic Games have to fulfill certain criteria and meet rigorous performance standards in order to be eligible. On the other hand, Special Olympics does not make a distinction between elite and recreational sport as do the Paralympics. No qualifying events are held and there is instead a system of random selection of participants for the Special Olympics. Thus, while the Paralympics emphasizes high-level performance, the Special Olympics emphasizes participation from those who can and will.