



# **“Praise Be to Trail Angels”**

Adaptive Sports Partners' DEI Journey:  
From Education to Evolution

# Kelly Starr, Executive Director

I am

- Certified Therapeutic Recreational Specialist, PSIA Level 1 Adaptive, CARSS Level 1, ACA Stand-Up Paddle Board Level 1, ACA Adaptive Paddling Instructor
- Experienced with over 10 years in adaptive sports
- Mom of a child with a disability, endurance athlete, tree skiing enthusiast

I am NOT

- A Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Expert



# Today

- Learn about Adaptive Sports Partners' DEI Journey

1. Our Fire
2. Education
3. Baby Steps
4. Communicate Evolution
5. Organizational Culture

- Discover tangible action steps to bring back to your programs and organizations

What are some of your big DEI dreams within your organization, program, event, etc.?

# 1. Our Fire, The Why

2020 Move United Education Conference

Recognition that we have a responsibility as adaptive sports providers to support our athletes, educate our communities, and be leaders

A feeling of “ick” with some of our publicly facing language use, photos, policies



## 2. Education

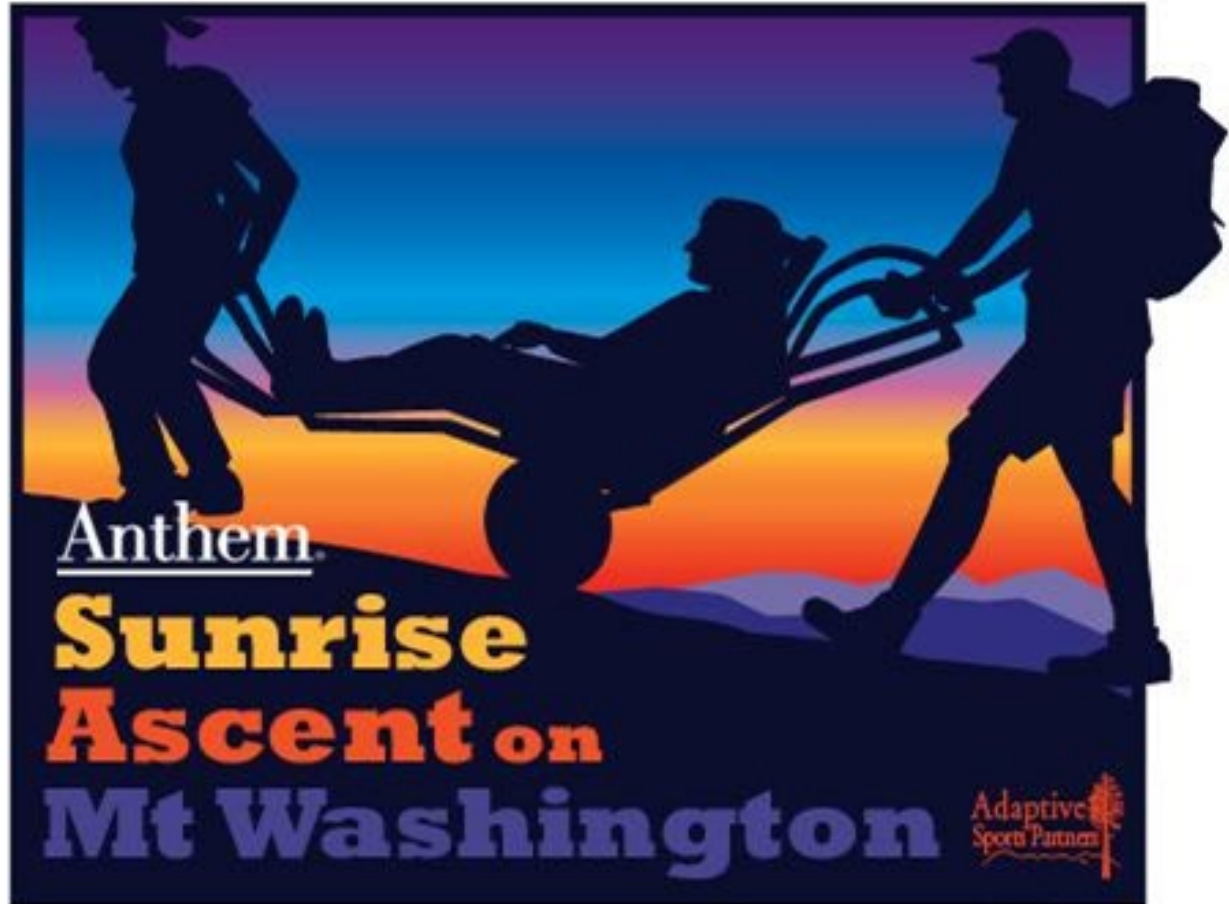


- Hired a consultant (Patty Cisneros Prevo) and committed to educating our staff
- We did not need to be the experts, but we needed to be knowledgeable
  - Met many times with Patty to share our concerns and get support on how and what needed to be evolved.
- DEI professional development opportunities were everywhere (virtual and in-person)

A wide-angle landscape photograph of a mountain trail at sunrise. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and long shadows. The foreground shows large, dark, textured rocks. A dirt path winds up the slope, with several hikers and a person on a bicycle visible. The background features rolling mountain ranges under a cloudy sky.

### 3. Baby Steps - Sunrise Ascent on Mt. Washington

Old Logo



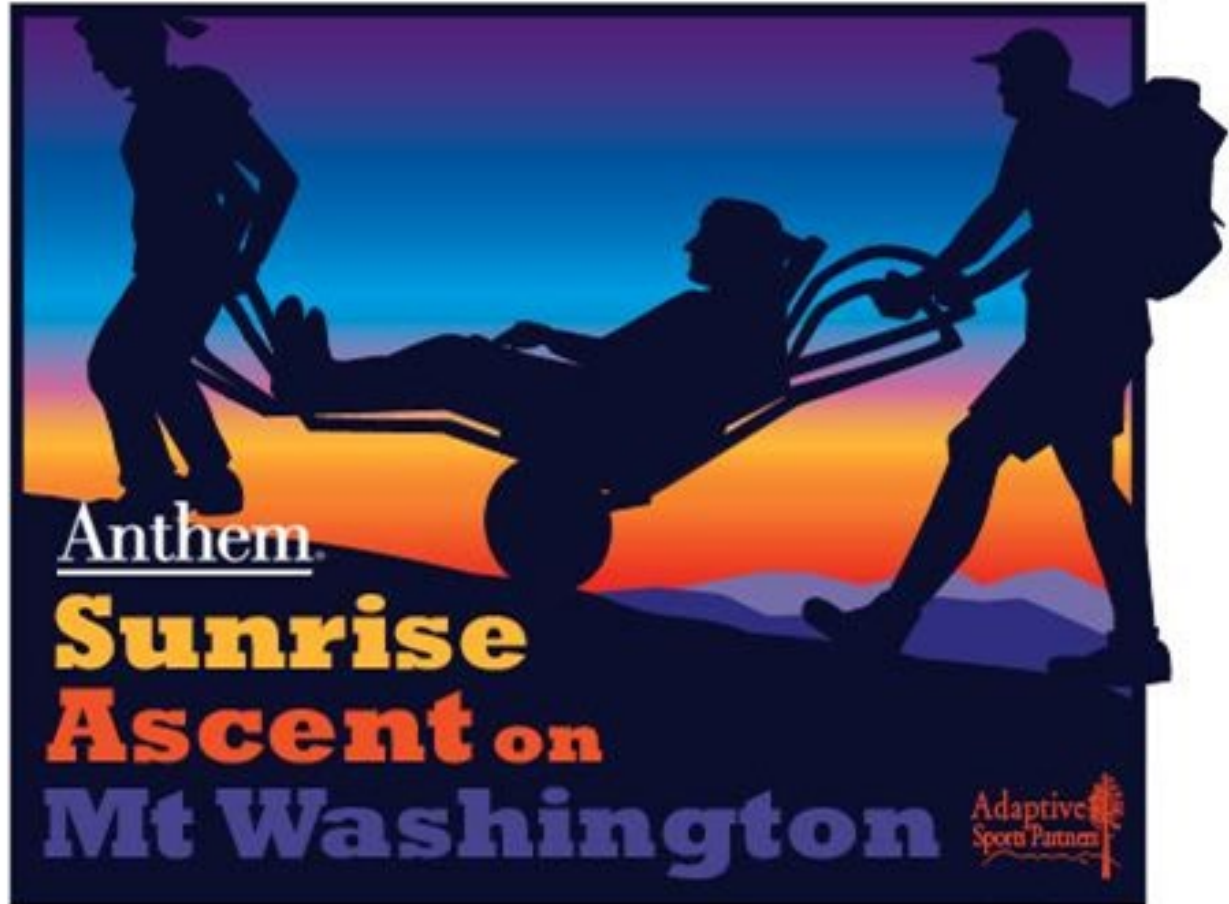








Old Logo



---

# New Logo

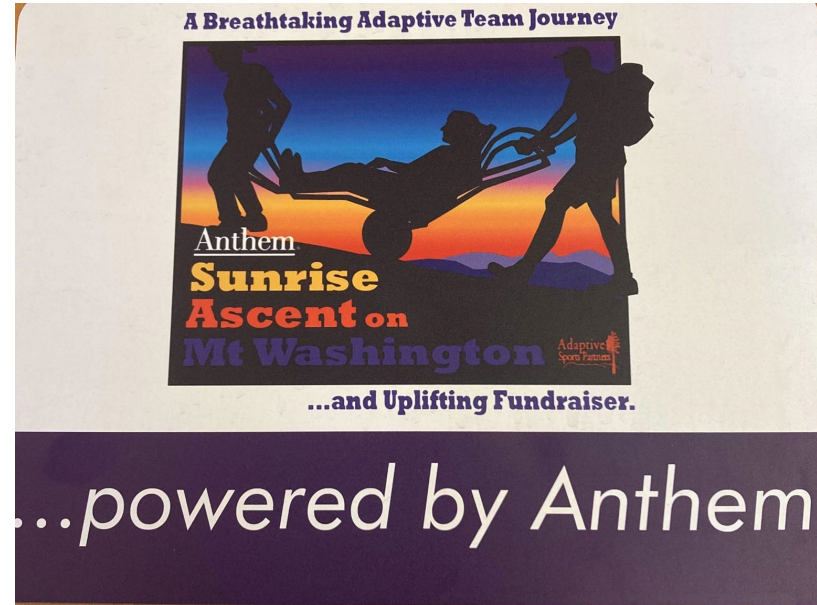


# Language Changes - “Inspiration”

- “Whatever your involvement, you are sure to be inspired!”
- “A Breathtaking Adaptive Team Journey...and Uplifting Fundraiser”

Evolved to:

- An Adaptive Team Journey... and Empowering Fundraiser!



# Language Changes - Terminology

“Mules” - Crew

“Trail Angels” - Gone





Photos and  
Bios - Athlete's  
Choice



# Where would you start?

Is there an event, program, language that you would like to revamp through the DEI lens?

4.

## Communicate “Evolution”

- Launch evolution at All Volunteer Gathering
- Bring in the expert at our all volunteer gathering



# Challenges

- The evolution was viewed as offensive to founders
- DEI is a “political” movement, not a space for Adaptive Sports Partners
- DEI advocacy and education does not fall under the mission



What challenges do you anticipate for your  
DEI journey?

## 5. Organizational Culture

*Making evolution and growth a part of the culture*

- Updated mission and vision statement
- “Evolved” winter fundraiser
- DEI commitment in strategic plan
- Continued DEI training for staff and volunteers
- Athlete photo usage policy in marketing
- Updated marketing, website, public relations



What will be your next steps? What can you bring back to your organization?



# What's next for DEI within Adaptive Sports Partners?



- Board education
- Board recruitment
- DEI staff professional development plans
- DEI volunteer resources
- Disability first language vs. person first language

# Success Story

Jerry!





# Questions

