

## 2026 The Hartford Nationals Fact Sheet

<https://TheHartfordNationals.org>

#TheHartfordNationals (Primary if small space)

#ChampionsCompeteHere

#MoveUnited

### ABOUT THE HARTFORD NATIONALS

The Hartford Nationals conducted by Move United is the largest longest-running national sports championship for athletes with a physical disability, visual impairment, or intellectual disability. The 2026 event, scheduled for July 10-16 in Grand Rapids, MI, will be the 69th year of competition. With hundreds of athletes with disabilities and coaches participating, the weeklong event includes competitions, clinics, education, and social opportunities. The sports contested include archery, boccia, para powerlifting, paratriathlon and aquathlon, shooting, swimming, track and field and wheelchair tennis. Competition builds character, so now is your time to engage at <https://TheHartfordNationals.org>.

### ABOUT MOVE UNITED

Move United is the national leader in community adaptive sports, empowering 131,000 youth and adults with disabilities each year to live to their fullest potential. Move United's 250+ member organizations in 45 states and the District of Columbia are united by a single mission: ensuring everyone, regardless of ability, experiences the life-changing power of sport and is fully included in their community.

Move United, an Affiliate of the U.S. Olympic & Paralympic Committee, provides opportunities for individuals with disabilities to become physically and emotionally stronger through participation in 70 adaptive sports. Established in 1956, Move United offers community-based sports recreation, education and competition that push people further, bring people closer and leave no one on the sidelines. Join our MOVEment at [www.moveunitedsport.org](http://www.moveunitedsport.org).

### ABOUT THE HARTFORD

The Hartford is a leader in property and casualty insurance, group benefits and mutual funds. With more than 200 years of expertise, The Hartford is widely recognized for its service excellence, sustainability practices, trust, and integrity. More information on the company and its financial performance is available at <https://www.thehartford.com>. Follow us on Twitter at @TheHartford\_PR.

The Hartford Financial Services Group, Inc. (NYSE: HIG) operates through its subsidiaries under the brand name, The Hartford, and is headquartered in Hartford, Connecticut. For additional details, please read The Hartford's legal notice.

### ABOUT THE HARTFORD ADAPTIVE SPORT PROGRAM

The Hartford has been inspiring human achievement through adaptive sports for 30 years. As a leading provider of disability insurance, the company has seen first-hand the positive impact sports can have on people and is dedicated to making adaptive sports and

equipment more accessible. This includes equipment donations to adaptive sports programs nationwide, raising awareness about equity in sports in partnership with its world class Team Hartford athletes, as well as The Hartford Adaptive Sports Competition Series\* and The Hartford Ski Spectacular in partnership with Move United. [The Hartford Competition Series](#) features five premier sanctioned events across the country, including the culminating event, The Hartford Nationals, and includes surprise custom equipment donations, the Human Achievement award and meet and greets with champion Para Athletes.

## **ABOUT THE LOCAL ORGANIZING COMMITTEE**

For the 2025 & 2026 The Hartford Nationals, Grand Rapids, Michigan has been selected as hosts with the West Michigan Sports Commission and Mary Free Bed Wheelchair & Adaptive Sports making up the local organizing committee.

The West Michigan Sports Commission is no stranger to Olympic-style sporting events as they own and operate the Meijer State Games of Michigan and have hosted the USA Masters Games as well as re-created the Transplant Games of America after its predecessor folded the US Transplant Games. They are well versed in how to manage the events, people and logistics of an event, in partnership with Move United, like The Hartford Nationals.

Mary Free Bed Wheelchair & Adaptive Sports is a top program in the country that hosts adaptive sports clinics, manages 11 sports teams and hosts their own tournaments. Part of the Move United member network, their expertise in adaptive sports is top notch, and they are a perfect partner on the LOC for hosting The Hartford Nationals.

## **TALKING POINTS**

### **What Does Para or Adaptive Sport Mean?**

- Adapted is having been changed through specialized equipment, different rules, or other changes to allow participation
- Adapted equipment are tools that have been changed to help people with disabilities; tools could be sport specific or for everyday life
- Adapted sports are competitive or recreational sports for people with disabilities
- Adapted physical education is physical education that has been modified for an individual with a disability
- The word “Paralympic” derives from the Greek preposition “para” (beside or alongside) and the word “Olympic”. Its meaning is that Paralympics are the parallel Games to the Olympics and illustrates how the two movements exist side-by-side. The Hartford Nationals is a steppingstone for athletes along the athlete pipeline, many of whom become Paralympians.

### **2026 The Hartford Nationals Basics:**

- Move United, the national leader in community-based sports and recreation for individuals with disabilities, will have its 2026 The Hartford Nationals in Grand Rapids, Michigan. The event, scheduled for July 10-16, will mark the 69th year of Nationals.
- The Hartford Nationals conducted by Move United is the largest longest-running national championship event for athletes with a physical, visual, and/or intellectual disability.

- The national competition for adult athletes began in 1957 and continued through 1995. Youth athletes started competing in 1984, and those two events merged in 2024.
- The Hartford Nationals serves as a pipeline to international competition and the Paralympic Games. In fact, nearly **62% of the Paralympians representing the United States at the 2024 Paralympics in Paris participated this event or another Move United program.**
- More than 400 athletes with disabilities and coaches are expected to participate in the major event—jam-packed with competitions, clinics, education, and social opportunities. Of course, the weeklong event features a wide array of sports, including:
  - Archery
  - Boccia
  - Para powerlifting
  - Paratriathlon and Aquathon
  - Shooting
  - Swimming
  - Track and Field
  - Wheelchair tennis through the Wheelchair and Para-Standing Tennis Tournament through Mary Free Bed Wheelchair and Adaptive Sports
- [423 athletes from 36 states were at the 2025 event.](#) We welcome new and returning athletes with a goal of a 10% participation increase annually.
- [National classification](#) will be offered in archery, para powerlifting, swimming and track and field.
- Archery is sanctioned by USA Archery, paratriathlon is sanctioned by USA Triathlon, shooting by USA Shooting, swimming is observed by USA Swimming, Track & Field is World Para Approved and USATF sanctioned, and wheelchair tennis is sanctioned by USTA.
- New to The Hartford Nationals competition lineup for the first time ever is the Move United [College Cup](#) along with a revisit from the Para-College Recruiting Showcase.
- A sample of clinics and education session opportunities, Paralympians onsite and fun to be had:
  - The Hartford Gifting Moment with Paralympic Gold Medalist Matt Scott, where individual athletes are surprised with their own custom-fit adaptive sports equipment and the presentation of The Hartford Human Achievement Award (a \$2500 cash award to support an athlete's training and travel)
  - Sport Livestreaming with Amanda McGrory during Sunday's track session, and Chuck Aoki as emcee for the Closing Ceremony.
  - Sport chair giveaway from Eagle Sportschairs
  - Sports N Spokes Junior Athlete of the Year award announced
  - Induction of two individuals into the Adaptive Sports Hall of Fame
  - Adaptive Judo & Self Defense with Olympian Nina Cutro Kelly
  - Boccia 101
  - Discover Field Hockey; A Sport for All, A Sport for Life
  - Para Powerlifting Officials Certification Training
  - Para Swimming Development Clinic
  - The Adaptive Sports Pipeline
  - Wheelchair Softball with the West Michigan Rollin Whitecaps
  - Wheelchair Track Clinic with Paralympian Daniel Romanchuk

## Host and Venue Information:

- The local organizing committee that will host the 2026 event is led by the West Michigan Sports Commission and includes Mary Free Bed Wheelchair & Adaptive Sports.
- This will be the third time the state of Michigan has hosted the event as Saginaw was the host city in 2011 and Grand Rapids in 2025.
- The 2026 venues include:
  - Calvin University: Gainey Athletic Facility: 1661 E. Paris Ave. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546, MI 49546 (Track & Field, Welcome Ceremony)
  - Calvin University - Venema Aquatic Center: 3195 Knight Way SE., Grand Rapids, MI 49546 (Swimming)
  - Hilton Garden Inn Grand Rapids East: 2321 E. Beltline Ave. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546 (Athlete & Coach Check-In)
  - Mary Free Bed YMCA: 5500 Burton St. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546 (Archery, Para Powerlifting, Clinics, Swim classification & practice)
  - Millennium Park: 1415 Maynard Ave. SW, Walker, MI 49534 (Paratriathlon & Aquathon)
  - MSA Fieldhouse: 5435 28<sup>th</sup> St. Ct. SE, Grand Rapids, MI 49546 (Boccia, Shooting)
  - MVP Athletic Club – Crahen: 115 Crahen Ave. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49525 (Tennis)
  - The Grand Rapids Public Museum: 272 Pearl St. NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49504 (Closing Celebration)

## Eligibility and Qualifying:

- Through the Move United Member network, over 35 sanctioned competitions occur across the United States serving as qualifiers leading up to Nationals. Athletes must qualify to compete through a [Move United Sanctioned Competition](#), a National Governing Body or High School Athletic Association sanctioned event, or another event approved by Move United.
- Eligible athletes include youth and adults with a physical, visual and/or intellectual disability who are classifiable under the International Paralympic Committee's classification system.
- The event often attracts athletes with an amputation, limb difference, cerebral palsy, dwarfism, spina bifida, a spinal cord injury, visual impairment, and/or various other disabilities ages 6 through adulthood.
- For more information on eligibility and qualification, visit <https://moveunitedsport.org/events/nationals/eligibility-and-classification-and-rules/>

## Registration:

- [Online registration](#) for athletes and coaches will be live May 1 through June 26 with late registration June 27 through June 30, 2026.
- [Online registration for volunteers](#) is open through the start of the event.
- Multiple funding opportunities are available for the 2026 The Hartford Nationals for athletes. Learn more at [2026 The Hartford Nationals Grant Opportunities - Move United](#).

## Sponsorship and Exhibitor Opportunities:

- If you are considering a donation, thank you! Your support is appreciated! To make a donation, visit <https://moveunitedsport.org/donate/>.
- A contribution to Nationals will enhance the quality of the experience for athletes and help offset the cost of planning and implementing the event, which exceeds \$400,000. For financial and in-kind sponsorship opportunities, contact: Dave Simonson at [dsimonson@moveunitedsport.org](mailto:dsimonson@moveunitedsport.org) for national sponsorship or Barb Benda at [benda@westmisports.com](mailto:benda@westmisports.com) for local sponsorship. Additionally, further information can be found at [Sponsor Nationals - Move United](#).
- Thank you to our [local and national sponsors](#) for their support around the The Hartford Nationals.
- Exhibitor opportunities exist throughout various venues during the week of The Hartford Nationals. Learn more and apply at [Be a vendor at Nationals - Move United](#).

### Stay Connected:

- Be sure to follow Move United on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, X, Tik Tok, and YouTube (@moveunitedsport) and utilize The Hartford Nationals hashtag throughout the week #TheHartfordNationals.
- An event communication app will be used onsite for highlights and announcements which can be installed free of charge once onsite at check-in.
- A full schedule of events can be found at <https://moveunitedsport.org/events/nationals/event-schedule-and-venues/>.
- Further questions, contact:
  - [Registration, Eligibility, and Sport-Specific](#): Jessie Cloy at 240-268-5380 or [jcloy@moveunitedsport.org](mailto:jcloy@moveunitedsport.org)
  - [Volunteers](#): Katy Tigchelaar at [ktigchelaar@westmisports.com](mailto:ktigchelaar@westmisports.com)
  - [Media](#): Shuan Butcher at 240-268-2180 or [sbutcher@moveunitedsport.org](mailto:sbutcher@moveunitedsport.org)
  - [Sponsorship](#): Dave Simonson at 301-217-9837 or [dsimonson@moveunitedsport.org](mailto:dsimonson@moveunitedsport.org)

For answers to commonly asked programmatic questions, glance through the FAQ's at the bottom of the homepage of <https://TheHartfordNationals.org>.