

**Great Lakes Adaptive Sports Association**  
**Quick Facts and Talking Points**  
Additional information can be found at [www.glasa.org](http://www.glasa.org)

**Mission:** Great Lakes Adaptive Sports Association (GLASA) promotes and supports the optimal development and well-being for youth, adults and injured military veterans who have a primary physical or visual disability through the provision of inclusive recreational, fitness and competitive sports activities. GLASA offers opportunities for empowerment through education, leadership and training in collaboration with community-based organizations.

**Motto:** Let No One Sit on the Sidelines

**Quick Facts:**

- GLASA serves over 1,136 youth, adults and injured military veterans with physical or visual disabilities each year.
- 3,000 youth and adults are impacted through education and outreach programs
- 40% growth in program participation over the last five years
- 250 days of programming are offered each year, providing 2,411 program hours
- 60 different locations around Northern Illinois and Southern Wisconsin are used for GLASA programs
- GLASA is committed to never turning away an individual due to an inability to pay program registration fees. Over 63% of GLASA athletes receive free or reduced fee programs.
- 91 cents of every dollar raised goes directly into GLASA programs (2016 Audit)
- GLASA is the only agency in Lake County that is solely committed to providing adaptive sport, health and wellness programs to individuals with physical and visual disabilities. Program participants also come from Cook County and Southern Wisconsin to access GLASA's innovative services.
- GLASA offers over 25 different sports, including: archery, boccia, cycling, goalball, golf, judo, kayaking, power soccer, softball, scuba diving, sled hockey, snow skiing, swimming, table tennis, tennis, track and field, water skiing, weight lifting, wheelchair basketball, wheelchair football, yoga and others.
- Each program features customized adaptive equipment and specialized coaching to allow individuals of every ability to participate and succeed. Programs are offered over 250 days each year so individuals are able to meet national guidelines which encourage youth to be active 60 minutes per day and adults to engage in 150 minutes of aerobic activity each week.
- 100% of GLASA's high school seniors went on to college in 2014 – 2016  
Nationally, only 31% of youth with disabilities attend college in the first two years after high school and 14% receive a college degree

### **Impact and Outcomes:**

- 95% of program participants increase overall health and wellbeing
- 93% of program participants increase self-confidence
- 85% of program participants reduce their social isolation
- 89% of program participants engage in nationally recommended amounts of physical activity
- 91% of program participants improve overall strength and endurance
- 91% of program participants increase their desire to participate in adapted sport programs
- 63% of program participants improve their knowledge of nutrition and make better food choices

### **Quotes:**

"The experiences (with GLASA) have shaped my son's life. He has become a confident athlete, leader and soon to be adult. Never in a million years did I think a program like this existed and now 11 years later my son has had the opportunity to compete, travel, grow, share ideas, develop lifelong friendships and has become the independent person that he is. -Parent of a youth athlete"

"Since I have been with GLASA, I have not been depressed and lonely. I have a lot more friends now. I now know there are no obstacles that I cannot overcome, even with a disability." --Samantha, age 15

"...it lets them, and us, know that they are truly alive and deserve to have all the same rights, benefits, activities and exercise opportunities as non-disabled folks." --Grandparent of youth participant

"I have watched kids and disabled veterans participate in sports; their smiles tell all. Need to believe?... come watch. " -GLASA supporter