



Tour de Cove



For Immediate Release

Contacts:

Christy Fritts

Challenged Athletes Foundation

christy@challengedathletes.org or 858-442-9570

Courtney Pendleton

YMCA of San Diego County

cpendleton@ymca.org or 714-926-8106

**CHALLENGED ATHLETES FOUNDATION® AND YMCA OF SAN DIEGO COUNTY
TEAM UP AT THE TOUR DE COVE CYCLETHON TO EMPOWER ATHLETES
WITH PHYSICAL CHALLENGES**

Stationary cyclethon by the sea will raise money to support challenged athletes in their quest for an active lifestyle, while raising awareness of the YMCA's inclusive mission

San Diego – Oct. 14, 2019 – The Challenged Athletes Foundation (CAF) and the YMCA of San Diego County (YMCA) bring one of the most popular indoor fitness activities to the outdoors at the Tour de Cove in La Jolla, CA on October 20, 2019. This high-energy, stationary cycling marathon event will bring people of all abilities together to raise funds in support of CAF's mission. With a shared commitment to improve the lives of others and make a difference in the community, these organizations are creating a culture where all feel welcome and have access to a supportive fitness and community environment.

In conjunction with CAF's 26th annual Aspen Medical Products San Diego Triathlon Challenge, the 2019 YMCA of San Diego County Tour de Cove will feature over (200) fundraising cyclists and challenged athletes. Sharing the stage with YMCA's top cycling instructors, accountability coaches from All In by Teddi, led by Teddi Mellencamp of Real Housewives of Beverly Hills and Kim Strother, one of LA's top fitness guru, will energize the crowd for the 4.5-hour stationary cycling marathon. Of the (100) bikes on the lawn, over 50 challenged athletes - each with an incredible story to tell - will participate in the sweat-drenching workout overlooking the Pacific Ocean. Stationary bikes have been donated by Keiser and hand cranks by the YMCA. Partners Sycuan Resort Casino and Headsweats also contribute to this transformational day.

Over the past five years, the YMCA has provided over 1,000 memberships to San Diego-based CAF grant recipients wishing to pursue their fitness goals.

“Through the YMCA of San Diego County partnership together we've made a positive difference in the lives of challenged athletes,” says CAF Chief Executive Director Virginia Tinley. “The membership grant program has helped so many motivated athletes in San Diego get



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active for the first time or increase their fitness and athletic levels. The Tour de Cove is the perfect celebration of our long-standing partnership.”

Some of the Challenged Athletes participating in this year’s Tour de Cove:

Two years ago, blind triathlete, **Amy Dixon** moved from the east coast to San Diego to train full-time for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics. “The YMCA has meant so much more to me than a place to train. It has been my source for community, friendships and constant inspiration,” said Amy Dixon, Team USA. “The CAF grant and YMCA membership allow me to pursue my dream of being a Paralympian.” Dixon is currently swimming at the YMCA with her coach Michellie Jones, a highly-decorated Olympic triathlete, CAF supporter and recent inductee to the Ironman Hall of Fame.

In 2004, synovial sarcoma claimed 17-year-old **Danielle McLaughlin’s** foot along with a life filled with competitive soccer and running. She lost her left foot and her identity but soon rediscovered herself as an elite adaptive athlete. After rehabilitating at the YMCA through strength training and spin classes, Danielle has gone on to become a Paratriathlon National and World Champion. Danielle will be running the Boston Marathon in 2020 while balancing her work at UCSD Cancer Center.

Lera Doederlein was born in Russia and was adopted at the age of two. Born with arthrogryposis in both legs, she wore braces for most of her life until a year a few years ago. She decided to take control of her mobility through a double above knee amputation. Now independence is a key part of her life and “disability” isn’t a word in her dictionary. She trains at the YMCA to help her with handcycling and sled hockey. She will soon be awarded Most Inspirational Athlete along with five other women on the first-ever CAF women’s handcycling team. She was also named the 21st player on the Anaheim Ducks professional hockey team.

According to Baron Herdelin-Doherty, President & CEO of the YMCA of San Diego County, CAF grantees are some of the most active members at the YMCA. “The athletes love the facilities and resources, but more importantly, they feel welcomed and cared for by the staff,” he said. “Belonging to the Y means these athletes have a safe and encouraging environment. We are proud to partner with CAF and admire the elite athletes.”

Those interested in participating can register as an individual or as part of a three-person relay team. All participants receive great perks, including a goodie bag featuring a custom *Tour de Cove* tank top, t-shirt, sweatshirt, visor, water bottle and more.

To register or learn more about the event - <https://www.challengedathletes.org/events/tour-de-cove/>

About the Challenged Athletes Foundation



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The Challenged Athletes Foundation® (CAF) is a world leader in helping people with physical challenges lead active, healthy lifestyles. CAF believes that participation in physical activity at any level increases self-esteem, encourages independence and enhances quality of life. Since 1994, more than \$110 million has been raised and over 26,000 funding requests from people with physical challenges in all 50 states and dozens of countries have been satisfied. Additionally, CAF's outreach efforts impact another 60,000 individuals each year. Whether it's a \$2,500 grant for a handcycle, helping underwrite a carbon fiber running foot not covered by insurance, or arranging enthusiastic encouragement from a mentor who has triumphed over a similar challenge, CAF's mission is clear: give opportunities and support to those with the desire to live active, athletic lifestyles. To learn more, visit challengedathletes.org or call 858-866-0959.

About the YMCA of San Diego County

The YMCA of San Diego County is the largest Y association in the nation, serving nearly 500,000 San Diego County residents and employing more than 5,500 people. Through a variety of programs and services focused on youth development, healthy living and social responsibility, the Y unites men, women and children - regardless of age, income or background - to nurture the potential of children and teens, improve the nation's health and well-being, and provide opportunities to give back and support neighbors. The YMCA of San Diego County is dedicated to improving the quality of human life and to helping all people realize their fullest potential as children of God through the development of the spirit, mind and body. Visit www.ymca.org to find your local YMCA or call (858) 292-YMCA (9622).