

## ADAPTIVE RECREATION SERVICES

### Service Description

Adaptive Recreation Services (ARS) are designed to promote an improved quality of life for persons experiencing disabilities, through the positive use of leisure time. Adaptive Recreation Services is the primary public provider of community recreation services for people with disabilities in the Eugene area. Persons with disabilities include those with developmental disabilities (mental retardation, autism, Down syndrome, cerebral palsy), physical disabilities (traumatic brain injuries, multiple sclerosis, stroke, spinal cord injury), mental health and vulnerable populations (psychiatric, alcohol, drug recovery, learning and behavioral disabilities). Over 50% of Adaptive Recreation Services participants with disabilities are unemployed and are living at Federal low-income earning levels.

Adaptive Recreation Services is based in Hilyard Community Center, a model, accessible facility which is available to the community for programs, community/city meetings and private rentals. Direct services include recreational and educational programs, health and wellness classes, seasonal camps, visual and performing arts adapted to serve people with disabilities and other vulnerable populations. Inclusion services and trainings are provided to make city recreation activities accessible. ARS also provides adapted recreation equipment as well as referral and information assistance. For FY09 adopted budget, Adaptive Recreation Services is provided by 4.48 FTE at a cost of \$673,257.

Adaptive Recreation also serves as a regional hub that ties partnerships with 75 community support groups, nonprofit agencies, and public commissions representing the concerns and needs of people with disabilities. Staff provides training, consultation, and adapted equipment to other city departments and community groups to facilitate the inclusion of people with disabilities in their programs. Adaptive Recreation Services staff also assist with training other city staff about compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Adaptive Recreation staff present trainings regarding disability awareness and recreation inclusion at the city, state, national and international level. ARS has been identified by the University of North Carolina at Greensboro in their 2008 report "Search for Best Practices in Inclusive Recreation" as a model for inclusive recreation for municipalities. This decentralized model of recreation inclusion has changed the way Adaptive Recreation Services has provided inclusion for the past 35 years. Training staff from Youth and Family Services on inclusion and positive behavioral supports, the bulk of inclusion services and supports are now carried out by the staff from Youth and Family Services, making inclusion services more effective.

### Historic Perspective

- 1969 Eugene begins to provide recreational programs for citizens with disabilities.
- 1969 Eugene awarded Gold Medal for excellence in parks and recreation by the National Recreation and Parks Association.
- 1976 Year-round services housed in Washington Park.
- 1990 Hilyard Community Center opened.
- 1990 Federal Government passed the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- 2000 National Recreation and Parks Association provides first National Institute on Recreation Inclusion Conference.
- 2001 Staley v Kitzhaber Settlement Agreement. Created brokerages that assist individuals with financial and personnel support to qualified individuals with disabilities to participate in community programs.
- 2003 Over 450 Adaptive Recreation Services stakeholders participated in focus groups to assess recreation needs of the disabled community.
- 2006 Organization Citation Award from National Recreation and Park Association.
- 2006 Meritorious Award from National Therapeutic Recreation Society – Molly Elliott.
- 2007 Programming Award – Arts for All Program from Oregon Recreation and Parks Association.
- 2007 Annual Fitness Leadership Award from the Governors Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.
- 2007 Adaptive Recreation Manager – Andy Fernandez awarded International Human Rights Day – City of Eugene Staff Recognition Award.
- 2008 Adaptive Recreation staff present at the Shafalla Center's "Third Annual International Forum on Children with Disabilities" in Doha, Qatar.
- 2008 Completed 5 year Strategic Plan for Adaptive Recreation Services
- 2008 Accessibility Committee formed to assist with the 2008 Olympic Track and Field trials.
- 2008 National Institute on Recreation Inclusion is held in Eugene.
- 2008 First adaptive single rider golf cart purchased for the City of Eugene, Laurelwood Golf Course.

### Citizen Involvement

In 2006 the Eugene City Council approved the "Parks, Recreation and Open Space Comprehensive Plan" (PROS Plan) that included significant citizen involvement in the development of long-term priorities and strategies for Adaptive Recreation. The public's interest in Adaptive Recreation Services is addressed by the Budget Committee review of the Adaptive Recreation

Services budget and service profile.

### **Customer Input**

Staff assess needs and designs programs and services by routinely asking potential participants and the social service community about their knowledge of Adaptive Recreation Services programs and services, types of services required, ages of potential service customers, and types of disabilities of potential users of Adaptive Recreation Services. Ongoing participant surveys are conducted for ARS programs and services and patrons are asked their input regarding future programs.

### **Mission**

Adaptive Recreation Services provides diverse recreation programs and services that enhance the quality of life for people with disabilities.

### **Outcomes**

For people with disabilities:

- Contribute to the wellness, fitness, health and safety of the community, and provide life-long recreation.
- Provide affordable fitness and adaptive recreation.
- Improved self esteem and empowerment.
- Independence, socialization and improved social interaction skills.
- Increased quality of life, physical and cognitive function and overall health.
- Equal access to recreation activities through inclusion services.
- Improved support systems including stronger families, friendships, volunteer opportunities, etc.
- Prevention of secondary disabilities to patrons with disabilities such as depression, obesity, arthritis, hypertension.
- Increased personal safety.

For the community:

- Ongoing assessment and response to the adaptive recreation needs of people with disabilities to enhance their quality of life.
- Affordable recreation services for patrons and respite for care-givers.
- Create a resource of certified and trained adaptive recreation leaders, disability resource staff and fitness leaders who meet or exceed industry standards.
- Legal ADA compliance for City programs.
- Reduced health care costs.

### **Operating Principles**

- We serve individuals with a wide range of disabilities who are interested in and need basic skill-building for recreation participation.
- We provide a full spectrum of recreation services from introductory through advanced in a supportive, respectful, positive environment.

- We recruit, train and hire people with disabilities as our instructors, staff and volunteers.
- We actively seek participant, family and support staff evaluation of the services we provide.
- We involve participants, family and support staff in the planning and development of services we provide.
- We are a certified, trained staff providing a safe environment for our participants.
- We provide excellence in safety, customer service and programming.
- We demonstrate professionalism through a positive attitude, teamwork, patron service, flexibility, enthusiasm, creativity and hard work.
- Listen openly to each employee's ideas, give constructive feedback, and realize all staff play a role in meeting our mission and desired outcomes.

### **Current Operating Environment**

#### External Trends

#### **Increase in the Diagnosis of Autism and Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder – primarily in youth.**

Presently, some researchers and experts recognize that there is a correlation between Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Autism Spectrum Disorders. Some believe that ADHD is closely related to Asperger's Syndrome. Autism Spectrum Disorders and ADHD are developmental disorders that affect the areas of social skills, behavior, and communication. This increase in diagnosis may affect the number of inclusion requests for a variety of recreation programs the Recreation Division provides.

#### **Personal Safety Impact**

Individuals with disabilities routinely experience violations of their legal and human rights and are at greater risk for abuse, neglect and financial and sexual exploitation. Involving individuals in safe, fun and meaningful activities through Adaptive Recreation enhances self-esteem and teaches self advocacy skills, boundaries and social skills. Without organized recreation, individuals with disabilities may involve themselves in destructive or socially unacceptable acts either individually or with a group. Structured physical and social activities that are offered through Adaptive Recreation Services, especially those encouraging choice and control, demonstrate significant decreases self-abusive or inappropriate behaviors.

#### **Converging Health Care Trends**

The aging baby boom generation and improved health care mean a growing older population. Those with disabilities want recreational and social opportunities. Health care cost cutting (decreased hospital stays, recreation therapy eliminated) and pressure on social service spending at all levels of government decreases opportunities for people with disabilities. National, state, and local public health agencies recognize the disparities in health care

provision among user groups. Those individuals experiencing disability and poverty are less likely than the general population to receive adequate health care and mental health services. With this decrease in services, the rise in secondary disabilities such as obesity and depression occurs. This increases the need for coordination among community service providers as well as health and wellness programs for people with disabilities.

### **Continually Rising Expectations and Standards**

As technology opens more recreational opportunities to people with disabilities, Adaptive Recreation Services faces increased demand for new services, specialized adapted equipment, and ongoing staff training to keep current on new technology. Historically marginalized disability groups are expecting increasing opportunities for community integration and access in recreation, education, employment and public policy making. Working collectively with community partners, Adaptive Recreation encourages self-advocates to partner with others in developing systems and policies to ensure equal and welcoming access for all.

### **ADA Requirements**

The Americans with Disabilities Act creates uncertainty regarding reasonable accommodations. To ensure compliance and avoid penalties, staff must spend an increasing amount of time staying current on new cases and interpretations of the ADA, assessing participant's abilities, program components, and program risks. Adaptive Recreation works throughout the city to develop culturally competent services and practices that are respectful and supporting of persons experiencing disabilities.

### **Changing Philosophy in Service to People with Disabilities**

Throughout the country, community services which have previously been dominated by vocational programs are now attempting to integrate social and recreational needs into existing services. Supported living programs and families of people with disabilities are requesting more opportunities for community recreation and socialization, and inclusion into existing recreation activities with peers without disabilities.

### **Reduction in Education Funding**

Adapted recreation services are an essential part of IEP's (Individualized Education Plans) required for students with disabilities. Cuts to local school districts have eliminated many adapted physical education opportunities for students with disabilities. Transitional services from high school to adulthood for individuals with disabilities continues to prove challenging. Adaptive Recreation Services provides important recreational activities to meet social, recreational and physical fitness needs for this population and opportunities for service learning and community involvement.

### **Community Partnerships**

Adaptive Recreation Services is considered by the community to be a stable provider of services. Approximately 75 community partners serving people with disabilities depend upon support from Adaptive Recreation Services to enable them to serve the community through support and advocacy groups.

### **Reduction in State Funding for Senior and Disabled Services**

Ongoing cuts to the State budget continue to have a negative effect on services available for seniors and people with disabilities. A majority of people with disabilities are low income and ongoing reduction in state funding further limits their ability to pay for recreation programs.

### Internal Conditions

#### **Nationally Certified Staff**

Adaptive Recreation Services program staff maintain their National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification.

#### **Part Time Program Leaders: Recruitment and Retention**

Reduction of Therapeutic Recreation programs at the higher education level affects Adaptive Recreation Services pool of qualified temporary part time staff for front line program leadership. In this fast paced field, staff must be extremely innovative and proactive in marketing locally as well as nationwide to recruit qualified interns, volunteers and paid leaders.

#### **Regional Center**

Most Oregon communities have not invested in recreation services for citizens with disabilities. At this point Adaptive Recreation Services is a regional center, serving a population outside of the Eugene metro area. As a regional center Adaptive Recreation staff is called upon as experts in the field of adaptive recreation, disability awareness, inclusive recreation and disability advocacy. Adaptive Recreation serves as a training site for university students across the nation completing their studies in Therapeutic Recreation.

#### **Requests for Inclusion Services**

Requests from participants with disabilities are increasing as more people with disabilities recognize their right and opportunity to participate in a full range of recreation services provided by the City. Community expectations to serve people of all abilities are balanced with a combination of direct service from Adaptive Recreation and by conducting inclusion trainings for Youth and Family Services staff. These trainings ensure an inclusive, supportive and safe environment for all participants. Utilizing this decentralized model for inclusion services has provided a more efficient method of serving patrons with disabilities.

### Performance Measures

#### **Core Processes**

Provide recreation classes and services

- Number and type of classes and services provided.

Provide information, referrals and training

- Number and type of trainings provided.

Manage facilities and equipment

- Number of adaptive equipment rentals per year.
- Number, type and cost analysis of facility rentals per year.

**Total System**

Effectiveness

- Number of patron visits.
- Number of activities offered by Adaptive Recreation.
- Number of community partners.
- Number of partner activities.

Efficiency

- Total Adaptive Recreation Services cost per patron visit.
- Net Adaptive Recreation Services cost per patron served.

Financial

- Percent of total Adaptive Recreation Services budget offset by revenue.

Customer Satisfaction

- Percent of customers (survey respondents) who are satisfied or very satisfied with Adaptive Recreation Services services.

**Strategy 1: Maintain the adaptive recreation programs as award-winning services and increase the number of new recreation participants by 10% per year for the next 4 years.**

Objective: Increase the number of new participants with disabilities to Adaptive Recreation Services programs to meet the following targets:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Individual Participants</u>
FY10	FY10 + 10%
FY11	FY11 + 10%
FY12	FY12 + 10%
FY13	FY13 + 10%

Work Activities:

- Present information of current services to community groups including school districts to reach new and under-served markets.
- Target outreach efforts to agencies who serve low income, isolated individuals with disabilities and vulnerable populations including those that serve minorities.
- Create, develop and advertise adaptive program offerings in a variety of media forms.
- Participate in the local youth and family programs to facilitate inter-agency understanding of Adaptive Recreation Services for transition age youth and adults.

**Strategy 2: Provide information to policy and decision makers responsible for decisions effecting disabled and vulnerable community members.**

Objectives: Number of board, commission, and other meetings attended by adaptive recreation staff which potentially affect disabled and vulnerable communities.

Number of individuals assisted by adaptive recreation staff to advocate for and/or educate boards, commissions, and decision makers of their needs.

Number of information and assistance requests to adaptive recreation staff from boards, commissions, and decision making bodies.

Work Activities:

- Establish baseline for interactions with decision makers in FY10.
- Establish mechanisms to track and measure information requests and contacts with decision makers in FY10.

**Strategy 3: Maintain high levels of customer satisfaction.**

Objective: Maintain a customer satisfaction level of 95% who indicate they are satisfied or very satisfied with Adaptive Recreation Services.

Work Activities:

- Continue to implement a customer satisfaction evaluation for participants.
- Examine the mix of service demand and remaining resources to ensure that programs are of high quality.
- Partner with other organizations and community agencies to sponsor and support special activities for people with disabilities and other vulnerable

communities.

