



**Department of  
Veterans Affairs**

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# **News Release**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
March 13, 2009

## **Over 400 Disabled Veterans Register to Ski at National Event**

WASHINGTON – As evidence of what President Barack Obama called America’s “unyielding commitment” to our nation’s Veterans, more than 400 severely injured Veterans will take part in the 23rd National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic from March 29 through April 3 in Snowmass Village, Colo.

The clinic, which is hosted by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), and co-sponsored by the Disabled American Veterans (DAV), instructs Veterans with disabilities in adaptive Alpine and Nordic skiing, and introduces them to a number of other adaptive recreational activities and sports. This year's clinic will feature a record number of participants, including many who served in the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Secretary of Veterans Affairs Eric K. Shinseki said that he will attend this year’s event and is “looking forward to celebrating the triumph of the human spirit over both physical adversity and fear of failure.” He believes that the event, and the volunteers who work with Veterans during it, “give so many young Veterans a glimpse of what is possible if they keep hope alive. I know of few greater gifts one can bestow on others.”

The clinic is an annual rehabilitation program open to U.S. military Veterans with traumatic brain injuries, spinal cord injuries, orthopedic amputations, visual impairments, certain neurological problems and other disabilities, who receive care at a VA medical facility or military treatment center. It is the largest adaptive event of its kind in the world.

An estimated 200 certified ski instructors for the disabled and several current and former members of the U.S. Disabled Ski Team serve as instructors to meet the unique needs of the participants.

“Now, more than ever, we need events like the Winter Sports Clinic to challenge and inspire our wounded Veterans,” said DAV National Commander Raymond E. Dempsey. “The complexity of the injuries suffered by some of our newest disabled Veterans and the health issues facing our aging Veterans make necessary the most creative and engaging recreational rehabilitation.”

## **Winter Clinic 2/2/2/2**

At the six-day event, Veterans also learn rock climbing, scuba diving, snowmobiling, curling and sled hockey. They can also participate in additional events and workshops. The U.S. Secret Service will offer a course on self-defense.

“DAV is proud to have a committed partner in the Department of Veterans Affairs,” said Dempsey. “Without our friends at VA, these ‘miracles’ are not possible.”

VA is a recognized leader in rehabilitative and recreational therapies, and operates more than 1,400 sites of care, including 153 medical centers. DAV is a non-profit, congressionally chartered Veterans service organization with a membership of more than one million wartime disabled Veterans.

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### **Contacts:**

For further information, contact Richard Olague, VA public affairs coordinator, Winter Sports Clinic, at (202) 461-7541; or (202) 746-8552 (cell), Rob Lewis, DAV Communications, at (859) 442-2049, or Log on to the event’s Web site at: [www.wintersportsclinic.va.gov](http://www.wintersportsclinic.va.gov)