



Press Release

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BlazeSports America Welcomes its Leadership Class for 2008

BlazeSports America welcomed its graduating class of young leaders during a ceremony held June 14 at Kennesaw State University's Convocation Center. Family and friends gathered for the happy occasion which was the culmination of the BlazeSports Trailblazers Leadership Program, a training designed to develop leadership skills, self responsibility, healthy lifestyle behaviors and pre-vocational skills for young people with physical disabilities. The graduates also got an opportunity to tour the campus of Kennesaw State University and learn about the academic programs available.

Young people who participate in leadership development are more likely to perform at higher levels in school, engage in their communities, and transition more effectively from adolescence into adulthood. However, youth with disabilities rarely have an opportunity to participate in leadership training experiences. The Trailblazers program is designed to fill this void by providing an educational experience that students with physical disabilities can utilize throughout their lives. Curriculum topics include: communication skills, goal setting, conflict resolution, problem solving, self-awareness, pre-vocational skills, and developing healthy lifestyles.

The Trailblazers Youth Leadership Program is funded by Novartis Pharmaceuticals, Inc., the General Unrestricted Fund of The Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta and by a Quality of Life Grant from the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation. Additional funding partners for the program include the Georgia Department of Labor, Kennesaw State University and the U.S. Department of Education.

Trailblazers is just one of the programs offered by BlazeSports America, the legacy organization of the 1996 Atlanta Summer Paralympic Games. BlazeSports provides sports training, competitions, summer camps, leadership training, and recreational opportunities for youth and adults who use wheelchairs, have a visual impairment, have an amputation, or who have a neurological disability such as cerebral palsy.

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