



For More Information Contact
brasil@blazesports.org

For Immediate Release

**Empowering Brazilians with physical disabilities through sport:
BlazeSports to host USAID ‘Sports For All’ multi-city trainings and inclusive festivals**

Rio de Janeiro (June 9, 2016) – In July 2016, BlazeSports America will return to Brazil to host training workshops and inclusive sports festivals promoting integration of youth with and without disabilities in multiple cities across Brazil, as part of the USAID and BlazeSports initiative ‘Sports for All’. A video promoting the training was released this week:
<https://youtu.be/sDICxv2TW98>.

‘Sports for All’ Empowering People with Disabilities to Lead an Active Lifestyle project in Brazil aims to promote awareness of the rights of children and adults with disabilities to experience the full enjoyment of sports and physical activity, improve health and quality of life of Brazilians with disabilities through participation in sports, and create an inclusive and accessible society that allow for people with disabilities to participate throughout daily life.

Training workshops in each city will engage local physical education teachers and leaders, equip them with skills and knowledge to integrate students with and without physical disabilities through sport, then provide the opportunity to implement learned skills at the inclusive sports festival that immediately follows. The inclusive sports festivals are open to the public and will provide an opportunity for community members, workshop participants and project partners to try adaptive sports and increase awareness about the initiative.

Felipe Rodrigues, Director of International Programs at BlazeSports shared: “We are excited to be back to Brazil and continue the Sports for All workshops and festivals. The July programs will provide the opportunity to train leaders to become trainers, so that they can promote key messages of the initiative and promote sustainability in the years to come. We are also very excited about organizing four inclusive sport festivals in four different Brazilian cities (Rio de Janeiro, Palmas, Brasilia and Natal) and to welcome athlete ambassadors, including Brazilian Paralympians, to these events.”

A schedule of July activities across each city is below.

Rio de Janeiro

July 7-8: Workshop 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM
July 9: Festival 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Palmas

July 12: Festival hosted by Reviver (USAID Brazil project)

Brasilia

July 14-15: Workshop 10:00 AM – 6:00 PM
July 16: Festival 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM



Natal

July 21-22: Workshop

July 23: Festival

Since the two-year project began in 2014, ‘Sports for All’ programs have served 538 individuals, trained 145 leaders on inclusive sport strategies and strengthened and empowered 7 organizations. July programs are the final BlazeSports trainings and workshops within the project period, in lead up to the 2016 Paralympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

Project partners include the Secretary of Sport and Leisure for the City of Rio de Janeiro (SMEL), SPORTV, Secretariat of the State of Rio de Janeiro for Sport, Leisure, and Youth (SEELJE), SESC, Brazilian Society of Adapted Physical Activity (SOBAMA), and the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Organizing Committee.

About USAID

USAID is the lead U.S. Government agency that works to end extreme global poverty and enable resilient, democratic societies to realize their potential. In Brazil, USAID works as partners with the Brazilian government and the private sector towards common development goals. We are working with Brazil to become a best practices donor through trilateral cooperation; to preserve and conserve biodiversity in the Amazon; and to increase the development impact of corporate social investments through private sector partnerships. For more information about USAID, visit: www.usaid.gov/brazil.

About BlazeSports America

A legacy organization of the 1996 Paralympic Games hosted in Atlanta, BlazeSports is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that empowers children and adults with physical disabilities through adaptive sport and recreation. As a USAID (United States Agency for International Development) registered Private Voluntary Organization with support from the U.S. Department of State and the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, BlazeSports America has worked alongside project partners to launch new sport for social change initiatives and strengthen existing programs in Brazil, Egypt, Haiti, Jordan, Russia, South Africa, and Trinidad and Tobago.

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