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Vermont Adaptive Unveils Phase Two Of Its Home Sweet Home Permanent Homes Campaign with a New \$1.7 Million Facility at Sugarbush Resort's Mt. Ellen

Anonymous donor pledges \$1 million challenge gift toward the project; groundbreaking slated for Spring 2019

KILLINGTON, Vt. (Oct. 3, 2018) – Erin Fernandez, executive director of Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports, the nationally recognized year-round organization offering daily adaptive sports programs to people with any disability, announced today that the organization is officially underway with the final phases of its Home Sweet Home Permanent Homes Campaign and plans to break ground on a new state-of-the-art \$1.7 million adaptive sports facility at Mt. Ellen at Sugarbush Resort in Spring 2019.

Friends and participants of Vermont Adaptive's programs at Sugarbush have pledged a generous challenge to match every dollar up to \$1 million for the Sugarbush facility. Sugarbush officials have donated use of the land necessary to build upon. Permitting for the project is in progress.

"People with disabilities are more likely to have other health issues like heart disease, stroke, or diabetes which is why it is so important to provide programs for people to be active and live a healthy lifestyle," said Fernandez. "This new facility allows us to grow and expand our existing programs and to serve more athletes with disabilities in the Mad River Valley and in Central Vermont, for those vacationing in Vermont, and beyond. More programs like wellness and environmental camps, plus retreats, social events, training seminars, and sport specific programs will be added to serve more people. Additional storage and maintenance spaces allow us to increase equipment capacity. The opportunities are limitless. In designing these facilities we thoughtfully consider and include features that focus on inclusion, adaptability and the participant's overall experience. It's a special and exciting time for us as we plant permanent roots in Central and Northern Vermont."

Architectural plans, renderings and permitting began in Spring 2018 for the new 4,000-sq. ft. adaptive sports facility. Plans for the Sugarbush facility were designed by Jeff Dunham Architecture.

"We are thrilled to be partnering with Vermont Adaptive in their efforts to build a new adaptive sports facility here at Mt. Ellen," said Win Smith, president of Sugarbush Resort. "We believe in the great work of Vermont Adaptive and provide full support to realize their vision."

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Fundraising is underway with a total goal of \$4 million to build, open and sustain this facility at Sugarbush, a new permanent home on the Burlington Waterfront and Bike Path, and to create a sustainability fund to support these programs and facilities into the future.

Vermont Adaptive is at maximum capacity for summer adventures in its current Burlington location and does not have the sufficient space or facilities to grow potential year-round or winter programs. A new permanent home in Burlington will similarly provide unlimited year-round adventures through access to Lake Champlain, the Burlington Waterfront and Bike Path, and access to increased adventures for populations near Vermont's largest city. Vermont Adaptive is actively working with potential partners to create this larger development.

The vision for the Burlington home is approximately 2,000-sq. ft. of indoor program space, with additional outside and shared spaces. Such a facility would meet current demand for programs and allow for expansion to year-round programming in Burlington.

The organization built and opened the Andrea Mead Lawrence Lodge at Pico Mountain in November 2013 with the Pico Ski Education Foundation, marking the completion of the first phase of the Home Sweet Home campaign. This facility houses the organization's headquarters and is the hub for year-round programming in southern Vermont and the greater Rutland/Killington region. It is one of the only year-round adaptive sports facilities in Vermont and New England.

"My son, Matthew, has been skiing with Vermont Adaptive for 12 years," said Jodi Grobman of New Jersey. "He started at 3 1/2-years-old and our first experience was in the Pico Base Lodge. It was always very crowded with people all over the place. The Andrea Mead Lawrence Lodge has been a godsend since it has been built. Matthew is 15 now, not so small anymore. The Lodge is super big, comfortable, extremely accessible, and a fantastic area that was greatly needed by such a fabulous organization. I couldn't imagine getting Matthew ready for a great day of skiing anywhere else."

Vermont Adaptive's humble beginnings began on the ski trails at Mt. Ascutney more than 30 years ago in 1987. As the organization expanded throughout the state to meet the recreational needs of those with disabilities, it also began summer programs to eventually become a nationally recognized year-round organization.

At press time, Vermont Adaptive had received multiple donations from a variety of supporters including significant seed money from individuals, businesses and families totaling approximately \$80,000.

Everyone at all levels of giving – large and small – will have an opportunity to be included, recognized and to make an impact on these very special places. Donors can designate gifts to one of the projects or to the campaign goal as a whole.

To donate or inquire about naming opportunities, contact Fernandez at 802.353.8129 or director@vermontadaptive.org; or Maggie Burke at 802.786.4991 ext. 30 or managingdirector@vermontadaptive.org. Donors can [give online at Vermont Adaptive's website](#). For more information about the permanent homes campaign, visit www.vermontadaptive.org/permanent-homes.

About Vermont Adaptive

Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports is a nationally recognized organization that empowers people of all abilities through inclusive sports and recreational programming regardless of ability to pay. In addition to sports, year-round programming options integrate environmental, holistic wellness, and competitive training philosophies for people of all ages with cognitive, developmental, physical, and emotional/behavioral disabilities. Sports and recreational opportunities include alpine skiing, snowboarding, and other winter sports; kayaking, canoeing, stand-up paddle boarding, cycling, mountain biking, sailing, rock climbing, horseback riding, Veterans programs and retreats, and more. More than 400 volunteers serve athletes from all over the world at three winter locations in Vermont - Pico Mountain at Killington; Sugarbush Resort in Warren; and Bolton Valley Resort in Bolton, as well as statewide in a variety of locations including the Burlington waterfront during the summer and warmer months. For more information, visit www.vermontadaptive.org.

About Sugarbush: In 2001, Summit Ventures, led by Win Smith, purchased Sugarbush from the American Skiing Corporation. Today, Smith serves as President of the resort, and his family remains the majority owner. The resort includes two mountain areas, multiple lodging properties, an eighteen-hole golf course, a health and recreation facility, and an array of dining venues. Year-round, the resort staffs approximately 155 employees, and in the height of the winter season employees number close to 1,000.

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