



JAKE DANNA STEVENS / STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Roll Call wheelchair dance instructor Diane Discepolo of River Vale, N.J., gives a dance demonstration with Lindsay Tuman of West Milford, N.J., in the University of Scranton's Byron Center on Sunday.

ABILITY ON WHEELS

Wheelchair basketball, dancing promotes awareness.

BY KATHLEEN BOLUS
STAFF WRITER

Mark DeLeo stood at the University of Scranton's Bryon Center, his hands covered in blisters, the result of hours of playing basketball in a wheelchair.

Mr. DeLeo was one of the participants in Sunday's Individual Abilities in Motion third annual Abilities Tip Off. The basketball tournament gives "local college students who are going into the medical profession an idea of what it's like for someone who plays the sport or uses a wheelchair," said foundation President Joseph Salva.

Although not in a wheelchair himself, Mr. DeLeo and his team of future physician assistants, the Marywood University Blue Boaters, made it to the final playoffs while seated in one. The Blue Boaters lost in the finals to the Misercordia Rolling

Thunder.

"You use different muscles," he said, adding the game is "a humbling experience."

The teams passed and took shots while also using their hands to maneuver the chairs. Referee and wheelchair basketball player, Tom Cox, quickly wheeled through and around the game calling fouls and giving advice.

It was Mr. DeLeo's Marywood University teammate Cory Crinella's first time in a wheelchair.

"It's definitely the harder version of the sport," he said.

Teams from Lackawanna College, the University of Scranton, Marywood University and Misercordia University all participated in the tip off.

Earlier in the day Roll Call Wheelchair Dance, a nonprofit group from New Jersey, performed several dance numbers. The group

interacted with audience members, including Mr. Salva, who never tried dancing before.

Sunday's event also raised funds and awareness for the local nonprofit that helps people with spinal injuries, "to live a happier, healthier life through sport and activities," said Mr. Salva, 36, Olyphant.

In existence for two years the group always accepts new members. IAM organizes events like last summer's waterskiing and kayaking for people with spinal injuries. And aside from adventure activities, Mr. Salva said the group promotes community outings like attending comedy shows.

Details on Individual Abilities in Motion are available on Facebook and at www.individualabilities.org.

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A new spin on dancing at the U of S



Roll Call wheelchair dance instructor Diane Discepolo of River Vale, N.J., gives a dance demonstration with Blake Hunt of New York City in the University of Scranton's Byron Center on Sunday. The Individual Abilities in Motion's 3rd annual Abilities Tip Off, a wheelchair basketball tournament, was also held. For the complete story, see Page A3

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