**Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission**

**Washington Metropolitan Association of Blind Athletes**

Judo “try it” Clinic

 Sunday, February 24, 2019

 From 12 noon to 4pm

**Presented in cooperation with:** Maryland NationalCapital Park and Planning Commission, College Park Community Center, College Park Judo Club, Hui-O-Judo Beltsville, USA Judo Inc and theWashington Metropolitan Area Blind Athletes Association (WMABA)

**Sanctioned by:** USA Judo Sanction # 21072

**Site:** College Park Community Center, 5051 Pierce Avenue, College Park, MD 20740

 (Located near the College Park/University of Maryland Metro stop on the Green line)

**Event Director**: Kevin Tamai, Godan, Hui-O-Judo Beltsville

**Clinician:** Lori Pierce – Para Olympic Silver medalist in Judo

**Mail entry form, signed waiver to:** Kevin Tamai, 2973 Fox Tail Court Woodbridge, VA 22192

Online registration [Judo Try It Registration](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1QE6MPfkCqeAOulPkcRQT3_-Z1EQ9Gl3-w7s-9JyA8iY/edit)

**Information:** For more information contact Kevin Tamai at 703-622-6861

If you need transportation assistance from the metro to the community center, please contact us.

**This “Try it” event is targeted at our local blind and low vision friends in the Washington Metropolitan DC area. It is part of the National Fitness challenge presented by the United States Association of Blind Athletes. Our goal is**

**Come “Try judo” with us**

We extend a personal invitation to you to come, experience, discover and enjoy the sport of judo. We encourage character development, achieving personal goals, improving fitness, developing proficiency, promoting sportsmanship and enhancing physical training. Judo is an Olympic sport founded by Dr Jigoro Kano in 1882. Judo, which is translated to “gentle way”, prescribes the principle of flexibility in the application of the techniques. This is the flexible or efficient use of balance, leverage and momentum in the performance of the techniques. Skill and timing are the essential ingredients for success in judo, rather than brute strength.

**GO MWABA**

The Metro Washington Association of Blind Athletes (MWABA) is a 501(c)(3) organization of blind athletes and their sighted peers who believe that recreational and competitive sports opportunities should be open to everyone, regardless of their ability to see. We hold programs for blind and visually impaired youth and adults from Washington, DC, Maryland and Virginia to discover new sports or practice familiar ones in an open and welcoming environment. Our mission also includes teaching blind athletes the physical techniques and body movements that they may not have had a chance to learn through physical education classes. We also share the best way to teach athletic and kinesthetic skills to the blind and visually impaired population with educators in our area. MWABA events are all about trying new things, meeting new friends, staying or becoming fit, and having fun! We support one another in achieving a fit and active lifestyle.

**Judo** is one of many activities that MWABA is a part of. Before learning to throw an opponent, or being thrown himself; the student is first taught the history, customs, and courtesies of Judo. The next lessons deal with the art of body protection (Ukemi, the art of falling without pain or injury); and the principles of balance. In addition to 40 throwing techniques, Judo includes: hold-downs, choking techniques, and armlocks… all of which can be safely used in contests of sport judo as well as self-defense. Adapting the sport to those with visual impairments simply requires participants to maintain contact while sparring.

**Other activities MWABA provides:**

Goalball is the only team sport specifically designed for the blind. It is played by men and women around the world, including in the Paralympics. MWABA launched its Goalball program in June 2015, by hosting a Goalball clinic at Trinity Washington University.

**Yoga -** Our Yoga program now meets regularly at Bluebird Sky. The studio is at 3101 12th St. NE, near the Brookland/Catholic University metro station. The instructors would like folks to sign up in advance if possible so they know how many people to expect, and you can do that by going to this link and selecting Eyes Free Yoga from the list of workshops. <http://www.bluebirdskyyoga.com/workshops-events/>

Get more flexible…develop muscular strength…take advantage of all the benefits that Yoga has to offer. Our volunteer instructors aim to provide excellent instruction for all of our visually impaired participants, and provide one-on-one help when necessary. These classes are open to everyone, but priority will be given to visually impaired participants. Please contact Karla Gilbride at karla.gilbride@gmail.com to find out when the next class will be held.

#### ****Tandem Cycling****

#### We have rides on Thursday evenings from either the Bethesda or Eastern Market Metro stations. For more information contact Karla Gilbride at karla.gilbride@gmail.com.

#### ****Running Groups****

In conjunction with the DC chapter of Achilles International, MWABA organizes weekly group runs/walks where blind athletes can partner with a guide and run, jog or walk outside for whatever distance is comfortable for them. To learn more about these group workouts, visit <https://www.facebook.com/AchillesInternationalDC/> or email irwin.e.ramirez@gmail.com.

We can be reached by phone, Monday through Friday, between 9:00am and 5:00pm.

**Karla: (202) 631-2426 or Justin: (941) 585-9503**

**Visit our website at www.gomwaba.org**

**More about Judo**

Dr. Kano felt that healthy social attitudes, as well as a sound mind and body, could be developed through the proper judo training. He stated this philosophy of Judo in the form of two maximums. The first maxim, “Maximum efficiency,” means that whatever one does, it should be with the optimal use of one’s mental and physical energy. In judo, you learn how to make the most effective use of both body and mind. The second maxim, “mutual welfare and benefit,” simply means that we should be considerate of and helpful to others. In Judo, the students quickly learn cooperate and help each other to advance in their training. This is basically the idea of give and take. This concept of cooperation can all be applied in our association with others in life. The final aim or goal of judo, as expressed by Dr. Kano, is self perfection or “the harmonious development and eventual perfection of human character.” Simply stated, the true goal of Judo is to make a person the best that they can be.”

Judo is many things to different people. It is a fun sport, an art, a discipline, a recreational or social activity, a fitness program, a means of self-defense or combat, and a way of life. It is all of these and more. Judo was introduced into the Olympic Games in 1964 and is practiced by millions of people throughout the world today. People practice Judo to excel in competition, to stay in shape, to develop self-confidence, and for many other reasons. But most of all, people do Judo just for the fun of it. As in all sports, Judo has a strict set of rules that governs competition and ensures safety. For those who want to test their skills, Judo offers the opportunity for competition at all skill levels, from club to national tournaments, to the Olympic Games. There are separate weight divisions for men and women, and boys and girls. Judo is best known for it’s spectacular throwing techniques but also involves considerable grappling on the ground utilizing specialized pins, control holds, arm locks, and Judo choking techniques. Judo emphasizes safety, and full physical activity for top conditioning. Judo is learned on special mats for comfort and safety.

Judo is unique in that all age groups, both sexes, and most disabled persons can participate together in learning and practicing the sport. Judo is an inexpensive, year-round activity, that appeals to people from all walks of life. Many people over sixty years of age enjoy the sport, as well as very young boys and girls.

Judo develops self-discipline and respect for oneself and others. Judo provides the means for learning self-confidence, concentration, and leadership skills, as well as physical coordination, power, and flexibility. As a sport that has evolved from a fighting art, it develops complete body control, fine balance, and fast reflexive action. Above all, it develops a sharp reacting mind well-coordinated with the same kind of body. Judo training gives a person an effective self-defense system if the need arises.

**Benefits of Judo for the visually impaired.** While taking part in sports or competitions is a highly recommended pastime for everyone, such activities assume particular importance in the case of persons afflicted by physical or sensory handicaps. Far and above the inherent objectives of all physical and sporting activities, it represents for them, a means of escape from a sometimes sedentary existence and from the isolation often imposed by a disability. For blind persons and those with low vision, Judo can be instrumental in (re)attaining independence of movement and in developing physical capacities which permit better adaptation to everyday life. Blindness can cause certain motor problems such as difficulty in attitude integration and body-awareness (since sight is an important factor here); balance problems; problems with motor co-ordination; posture problems; and orientation difficulties. Apart from the numerous motor and physical qualities which Judo helps to develop in people with normal health, it is perhaps, useful to mention the manner in which these are indispensable for blind people.

**Falling:** It is essential for a blind person to learn to fall in a suitable manner, since uncertainty of movement, due to blindness, often leads to painful falls. By learning secure positions, blind people can avoid accidents in everyday life.

**Balance:** This is a fundamental element of Judo and an indispensable factor for the blind. It helps to encourage the visually impaired person's integration in space.

**Exercise:** Just like sighted people, a blind child must learn to develop his or her physical capacities. He/she will then be able to know and control the body better. Improved control over the motor forces, such as strength, speed and agility, will provide a weapon to combat the consequences of blindness which can otherwise include a sedentary existence.

**Kinesthetic sensations:** It can be said without exaggeration that blindness does not constitute a serious problem for a Judoka. In practice, seeing persons do not look at their opponents during combat; they try to distribute their strength and adapt their behavior. A blind person is, therefore, not impaired in the discovery of these physical sensations or in their refinement. It is the perception of the strength and behavior of the opponent which induces the choice of the appropriate reaction. Sight does not play a preponderant part in this process.

### The psychological sector: It is sometimes necessary to reduce the impact of a visual impairment in order to obtain:

**Autonomy:** Judo teaches blind people to take the initiative without risk. Blind people learn to manage without the special assistance of other people. This encourages self-assurance in everyday life allowing them to take calculated risks. Blind people quickly learn to find their bearing (space, time) in judo training and to move around with self-assurance.

**Motivation:** Judo is attractive because it permits blind people to measure themselves on an equal basis with seeing people. Blind athletes can participate officially in the competitions organized by the International Blind Sports Association and its member countries, as well as all tournaments for the sighted. They can attain the same ranks and titles as seeing people. All these factors contribute to self-assurance in their physical capacity, which forms a counter-balance for their visual impairment.

### The social sector

**The battle against isolation:** A disability of any description often entails isolation and a sedentary existence. Membership in a sports organization provides the opportunity to get out of special schools, to meet other people and measure against them on an equal basis.

**Respect for rules and for other people:** Blind people are often suspicious of their environment and even avoid contact which could be a source of insecurity. This is why motivating, physical activity can reduce the obstacles, facilitate contact with other people and promote integration with the world of the seeing.

**Sportsmanship:** As with sighted students, visually impaired individuals learn through their participation in sports all the values of good sportsmanship. Judo in particular has a character building component that stresses the development of a strong ethical code.

## National Fitness Challenge

Since 2011, Anthem Foundation has provided $1.3 million in grant funding to U.S. Association of Blind Athletes for the National Fitness Challenge initiative and has impacted thousands of Americans with visual impairments by partnering with 40 different agencies across the country. This year, USABA is joining forces with 17 regional partners to implement the 2018-2019 Anthem Foundation/USABA National Fitness Challenge in 13 states.

The goal of the National Fitness Challenge is to raise the physical activity levels of each participant to the level recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. USABA and its regional partners provide more than 450 blind and visually impaired youth and adults with opportunities to increase their physical fitness levels and live healthier, more active lives.

**2018 National Fitness Challenge Partners**

**California**Wayfinder Family Services (Los Angeles)
Sacramento Society for the Blind
San Francisco Lighthouse for the Blind

**Colorado** - WE Fit Wellness (Colorado Springs)

**Florida** - Miami Lighthouse for the Blind

**Georgia** - Center for the Visually Impaired (Atlanta)

**Indiana** - Indy Thunder Beep Baseball Team (Indianapolis)
U.S. Men’s and Women’s Goalball Teams (Fort Wayne)

**Louisiana** - Louisiana Center for the Blind (Ruston)

**Missouri** - National Federation for the Blind – Missouri Chapter (St. Louis)

Ohio - Cincinnati Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired
Cleveland Sight Center

**Virginia** - Metro Washington Association of Blind Athletes

United States Association of Blind Athletes (USABA) was founded by Dr. Charles Buell in 1976 with the purpose of improving the lives of people who are blind and visually impaired. That year, 27 young men and women were selected to represent the United States in the first Olympiad for the Disabled in Toronto, Canada. As a result of this Olympic involvement, a group of national leaders, educators and coaches of the visually impaired met to discuss the need for an organization to structure, promote and sponsor competitions for people who are blind and visually impaired throughout the United States.

Today, USABA has evolved into a national organization that provides sports opportunities to thousands of children, youth, adults and veterans who are blind and visually impaired.  USABA programs serve athletes of all ages and abilities from local grassroots programs to the elite Paralympic level.

USABA is a Colorado-based 501(c) (3) organization that provides life-enriching sports opportunities for every individual with a visual impairment.  A member of the U.S. Olympic Committee, USABA provides athletic opportunities in various sports including, but not limited to track and field, Nordic and alpine skiing, biathlon, judo, wrestling, swimming, tandem cycling, powerlifting and goalball (a team sport for the blind and visually impaired).

Sports opportunities allow people who are blind and visually impaired to develop independence through competition, without unnecessary restrictions. Like sighted people, the blind can share in the thrill of victory and the reality of defeat.

In addition to providing people who are blind and visually impaired with athletic opportunities, the second part of USABA’s mission is to change society’s negative stereotypes concerning the abilities of blind people as well as other disabled individuals.  Combating stereotypes is achieved by both educating the public through various media avenues as well as by training athletes to enter schools and community organizations to directly address disability issue

### Mission

The United States Association of Blind Athletes empowers Americans who are blind and visually impaired to experience life-changing opportunities in sports, recreation and physical activities, thereby educating and inspiring the nation.

### Our Vision

Every American who is blind or visually impaired will lead a healthy lifestyle by actively participating in sports, recreation and physical activity.

### Our Beliefs

**Respect:** We respect and honor the inherent value and the contributions of people who are blind and visually impaired.

Integrity: We conduct our business transparently, honestly, and ethically.

**Empowerment:** We are deeply dedicated to the potential of each person who is blind or visually impaired involved with USABA to realize his or her aspirations.

**Diversity:** We are committed to welcoming individuals from various cultural backgrounds and life experiences, regardless of disability, gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and age.

**Inclusion:** We foster an environment of acceptance through education and seek ways to broaden the integration of athletes who are blind and visually impaired into community-based sports programs and competitions.

## Diversity & Inclusion

The United States Association of Blind Athletes (USABA) exists in a diverse and dynamic environment.  On a daily basis, USABA’s Board of Directors and Staff are committed to respecting and honoring the inherent value and the unique contributions of all Americans who are blind and visually impaired by conducting business in a transparent, honest and ethical basis that result in an environment of acceptance.  USABA actively seeks ways to broaden acceptance of people who are blind and visually impaired, as well as the acceptance of all people who support our mission and objectives.

**National Fitness Challenge** By Michael Kinoshita

For the past five months, Society for the Blind, along with 12 other organizations from around the country, has been involved in a nationwide fitness challenge hosted by the United States Association of Blind Athletes (USABA) and the Anthem Foundation. This event has been coined the National Fitness Challenge (NFC), and its goal is to promote fitness in the blind/low vision community. Greg DeWall (Orientation & Mobility Instructor at Society for the Blind), and I (Intern from William Jessup University) have been collaborating to organize events for the 25 National Fitness Challenge participants from Society for the Blind.

So far, events have been very popular among the participants. The NFC kicked off with a tandem bike ride at Garcia Bend Park, Sacramento, on June 3. This event involved a fully-sighted rider steering from the front seat of a two-person bike, while the blind/low vision rider pedals from the back seat. This event was popular among the participants and the volunteer pilots from the Davis Bike Club, so they scheduled another ride on July 1 at Garcia Bend Park. Judo, a form of martial arts involving grappling and throwing your opponent to the ground, then trying to pin your opponent to the ground for 20 seconds, has also been popular. The NFC participants thoroughly enjoyed working with Greg (former Paralympian) and Sensei Sophak from Capital City Judo, Sacramento, on June 24 and July 15.

Of course, there is still more to come in the National Fitness Challenge. August kicked off with an archery clinic hosted by Society for the Blind’s Board Vice President, and silver medalist at the 2007 Paralympic Archery World Championships, Janice Walth, and a third tandem riding event at Garcia Bend Park is scheduled on August 19. This is also the month where participants will begin preparing for the Urban Cow 5K. Participants in the National Fitness Challenge are required to participate in a local 5K run/walk, and Greg and I have provided them with the “Couch to 5K” program to get started.

However, there is more to the National Fitness Challenge than just trying out new sports. Greg and I have been working hard to provide the participants with many opportunities to help them get in shape, and are currently working with an organization called [BlindAlive](https://www.blindalive.com/) to provide workout material that will allow the participants access to instructional workout recordings that will allow them to do guiding workouts in their own homes. These instructional videos are highly detailed yet simple, and are a great resource for those who are blind/low vision and want to work out at home. Their free podcast also provides information about fitness and nutrition that will help improve/maintain a healthy lifestyle.

There has been a lot of improvement and dedication among individual participants. One of the participants who has stood out the most is Lenell H. He has been putting in a big effort to come to events and to get in 10,000 steps a day. He has shown up to almost every event and has steadily improved his step count over the course of the NFC. Two other participants who have gotten Greg’s attention are Regina B. and Andrea T. They have both been getting their steps in consistently and have made some improvements as well. They have also been making a very good effort to show up to events when they can, and really take the National Fitness Challenge seriously.

The National Fitness Challenge will end in November after all events have wrapped up, so there is still a lot of time for participants to continue getting in their steps and participate in events. Greg and I are hoping to continue to see participants working hard and showing up to events, and we hope that the National Fitness Challenge will have a lasting impact on participants, encouraging them to live an active and healthy lifestyle even after the NFC’s completion

## 2018-2019 Anthem Foundation/USABA National Fitness Challenge

**United States Association of Blind Athletes and Anthem Foundation Partner to Empower People with Visual Impairments to Lead More Active Lifestyles**

More than 450 people participating in USABA Fitness Challenge

The United States Association of Blind Athletes (USABA) is pleased to announce a $340,000 grant from the Anthem Foundation, the philantrhopic arm of Anthem, Inc to implement the National Fitness Challenge for the sixth consecutive year. For the next eight months, USABA will partner with 17 organizations across the United States to provide more than 450 blind and visually impaired youth and adults with opportunities to increase their physical fitness levels and live healthier, more active lives.

“The Anthem Foundation continues to empower and inspire youth and adults across the nation who are blind and visually impaired by supporting the National Fitness Challenge,” said Mark Lucas, executive director of USABA. “We are honored and excited to once again partner with the Anthem Foundation to cultivate healthier communities.”

Since 2011, Anthem Foundation has provided $1.3 million in grant funding to U.S. Assocation of Blind Athletes for the National Fitness Challenge initiative and has impacted thousands of Americans with visual impairments by partnering with 40 different agencies aross the country.

“The Anthem Foundation is committed to helping provide access to programs and serivces that help all individuals in our communities lead healthier lives,” said Stephen Friedhoff, MD, chief clinical officer at Anthem. “Through our partnership with USABA we are working to break down barriers, and leverage technology to help those with vision impairments enjoy the physical and emotional benefits of exercise and improve overall health and wellness.”

The goal of this program is to raise the physical activity levels of each participant to the level recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. This year’s program will integrate the use of technology and social media to help the participants set goals, create team environments and encourage leadership. USABA will provide each participant with a Fitbit Flex 2 wearable, which provides a universal way to measure many kinds of activities, calories burned and the number of steps taken. Participants will also have the opportunity to utilize Fitbit Coach, a personalized training app that will give participants access to adaptive video workouts and audio coaching.

Regional partners will host multiple events and sports programming through the eight-month program for NFC participants. Programming will include activities like tandem biking, beep baseball, yoga, rowing, skiing, running, goalball – a team sport specifically designed for blind and visuallyimpaired athletes – and many others.

Research has consistently shown that individuals who participate in regular physical activity to improve their health have higher energy levels, a lower risk of health-related diseases, improved psychological health, and lower rates of depression and anxiety. Unfortunately, because of the numerous barriers and misconceptions about their abilities, more than half of those who are blind and visually impaired in the United States do not participate in even a limited physical fitness routine.

The funds from the Anthem Foundation grant will provide a Fitbit Flex 2 wearable for every participant, fitness and nutrition instruction, prizes for participants who excel, and technical and financial support for everyone participating in the program. Visit [www.usaba.org/NationalFitnessChallenge](http://www.usaba.org/NationalFitnessChallenge) for a list of participating regional partners.

About the Anthem Foundation

The Anthem Foundation is the philanthropic arm of Anthem, Inc. and through charitable contributions and programs, the Foundation promotes the inherent commitment of Anthem, Inc. to enhance the health and well-being of individuals and families in communities that Anthem, Inc. and its affiliated health plans serve. The Foundation focuses its funding on strategic initiatives that address and provide innovative solutions to health care challenges, as well as promoting the Healthy Generations Program, a multi-generational initiative that targets specific disease states and medical conditions. These disease states and medical conditions include: prenatal care in the first trimester, low birth weight babies, cardiac morbidity rates, long term activities that decrease obesity and increase physical activity, diabetes prevalence in adult populations, adult pneumococcal and influenza vaccinations and smoking cessation. The Foundation also coordinates the company’s annual associate giving campaign and provides a 50 percent match of associates’ campaign pledges. To learn more about the Anthem Foundation, please visit [www.anthem.foundation.org](http://www.anthem.foundation.org/).