

DENVER April 27, 2010 – Registration begins this week for the second annual **Camp Discovery**, a Challenged Athletes Foundation ([www.challengedathletes.org](http://www.challengedathletes.org)) and Craig Hospital ([www.craighospital.org](http://www.craighospital.org)) sponsored fitness camp for women in wheelchairs, directed and founded by Denver's Trish Downing ([www.trishdowning.com](http://www.trishdowning.com)), a spokesperson for the Challenged Athletes Foundation and a competitive wheelchair triathlete.

Camp Discovery's two-and-a-half day program begins July 15, 2010 at the Curtis Hotel in downtown Denver, Colorado. Activities include swimming, handcycling, cooking, networking and building a community of support for women who have experienced life-changing disabilities.

"I wanted a group of women who could, by sharing, begin to feel stronger, bolder and braver in their lives, not just vent to each other or create a pity party. In my mind, that meant adventure and excitement; opportunities to expand and challenge," shares Downing.

After a car hit Downing while she rode her bike in Golden, Colo., paralyzing her from the chest down, she's adapted her athleticism to participate in wheelchair sports. Physical activity and competition give Downing joy; now she's sharing that with others.

Prior to her injury, Downing was a competitive cyclist who competed in individual races, as well as participating as a tandem pilot for a blind cyclist. As a result of this experience, Downing was exposed to athletes with disabilities prior to her injury.

Downing recounts, "I was fortunate in that I knew a handful of wheelchair athletes before I got hurt, so when I sustained my injury, I knew what was possible and that my life wasn't over. I would just need to learn to do things in different ways. When I got hurt, I already had a great support network and knew people who had "been there, done that" and were able to help me get started off on a healthy and positive path to healing. But, I've found in the years since my injury, that most people don't have that support—especially women."

Camp Discovery is open to women from 20-years-old and up who have been affected by an injury or disease of the spinal cord (spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis, polio, spina bifida or other diseases), requiring the use of a wheelchair. The only prerequisites are an open mind, willingness to try new activities and desire to achieve.

## **ABOUT TRISH DOWNING**

Before being injured in an accident and paralyzed from the chest down, Downing was a competitive road and track cyclist. After her accident, she used her love of athletic pursuits to rebuild her life. Downing began competing in triathlons—which consist of swimming, biking (on a handcycle) and running (in a racing chair). She competes in local, national and international races alongside able-bodied athletes. Downing shares her entire story in her upcoming book, *Cycle of Hope*, scheduled to be released May 2010.

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