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RHI SPORTS PROGRAM AWARDED GRANTS FROM CHRISTOPHER AND DANA REEVE FOUNDATION, CRAIG H. NEILSEN FOUNDATION

(Indianapolis, Ind.) – Rehabilitation Hospital of Indiana Sports Program (RHISP) today announced that it has recently been awarded grants from both the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation and the Craig H. Neilsen Foundation.

The Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation awarded RHISP with a \$16,645 Quality of Life grant. Conceived by the late Dana Reeve, Quality of Life grants go to programs or projects that improve the daily lives of people with paralysis, with some emphasis on, but not limited to, paralysis caused by spinal cord injuries. Mrs. Reeve started the Quality of Life grants program to recognize and support organizations that help disabled individuals, their families and caregivers in ways that more immediately give them increased independence, day-to-day happiness and improved access.

Thirty-seven thousand dollars (\$37,000) is also on its way to RHISP, thanks to The Craig H. Neilsen Foundation. This foundation's primary mission is to find a cure for spinal cord injury (SCI). Established in 2003, the foundation has funded programs supporting SCI research and rehabilitation, cancer research and children's charities. These programs include funding for basic scientific study, co-sponsoring the first-ever national SCI Summit and underwriting a fellowship to train physical medicine and rehabilitation doctors.

Both of these grants will help RHISP support its competitive team programs. They will be used to purchase equipment such as sport wheelchairs and specific parts needed for the wheelchairs, including tubes, tires and axles. In addition, the grants will cover travel costs for the teams, as well as uniforms, facility rental for practices, special balls and referees for tournaments. RHISP also conducts recreational clinics that feature water skiing, rock climbing, scuba diving, tennis, self defense and body building – all of which require facilities and instructors, and all of which will benefit from these foundations' generosity.

Rehabilitation Hospital of Indiana Sports Program is an independent, self-funded, 501(c)(3) non-profit organization of the Rehabilitation Hospital of Indiana Foundation. Rehabilitation Hospital of Indiana is a community collaboration between Clarian Health and St. Vincent Health.

RHISP is dedicated to providing competitive and non-competitive athletic and recreational activities to individuals with disabilities to enhance quality of life, promote physical and emotional fitness, introduce recreational and wheelchair sports and challenge participants to perform at a competitive level. Its 12 teams compete in the following sports:

- **Beep Baseball** – Developed for visually-impaired athletes, beep baseball is played using a beeping ball and buzzing bases. Batters listen for the ball to come across the strike zone, swing and hit the ball. If the batter can get to the bases before the fielders can locate the ball, a run is scored, otherwise the batter is out.
- **Golf** – The RHI Golf team, although open to all RHI athletes, has become very popular among ambulatory participants with limb injuries.
- **Power Soccer** – Power soccer was designed and developed specifically for power wheelchair users with various disabilities.
- **Quad Rugby** – First developed in Canada for quadriplegic athletes, quad rugby is commonly known as “murderball” because of its extreme physical nature.
- **Racing** – Wheelchair racing can be anything from your typical track events to 5K and 10K road races, mini marathons, marathons and triathlons.
- **Track and Field** – In track and field sports, certain adaptations are made to accommodate certain disabilities. For example, guide runners are usually attached to the visually impaired runner’s wrist, and for participants with spinal cord injuries and other lower extremity impairments, specialized racing chairs are used, along with throwing chairs for the field events.
- **Wheelchair Basketball** – Wheelchair basketball is a sport that is played by athletes with spinal cord injuries and/or a variety of other disabilities ranging from amputees to cerebral palsy.

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