FIRST DESCENTS VISIT CRESTED BUTTE

Young adults living with MS visit Adaptive Sports Center

By Kendra Walker

On a bustling Friday afternoon in Mt. Crested Butte, a group of young adults huddle together, sharing stories of the journey of living with multiple sclerosis (MS). After a day of skiing and sharing experiences with the Adaptive Sports Center (ASC), they are united by the shared theme of finding joy in everyday moments.

On the snowy slopes of the Crested Butte Mountain Resort, a group of young adults living with MS were able to ski with the support of the Adaptive Sports Center. The group, who have been diagnosed with MS, are enjoying the experience of skiing and connecting with others who also live with the disease.

“Thank you so much for giving us this opportunity to ski with you!” said participant Devlin. “This was the best day of my life! I never thought I would be able to ski again.”

For many of the participants, skiing is a way to connect with others who understand their struggles. “I have never met anyone else with MS who skis, so it’s really special to be able to share this experience with others,” said participant Reilly.

The group is part of First Descents, a national program that provides free, week-long, medically supported adventure programs for young adults living with serious and chronic illnesses. The program is designed to help participants find a sense of normalcy and reconnect with themselves and the joy of the outdoors.

“It’s incredible to see how much these young adults are limiting themselves and what they think they can or cannot do,”said Hansen, the program director for First Descents. “But coming from the hustle and bustle of D.C., she found Crested Butte to be a refreshing change.

“After a day of skiing, Cheeks rosy and glowing in the sun, the group gathers to enjoy a fresh mountain meal at Adaptive’s new Kelsey Wright Building. "I don’t think we could ask for anything better," said Hansen. "To be slopeside like this, to have all the amenities of the new lodge, to be able to come in and relax and take a break from skiing, Adaptive fits our needs perfectly."