News Release

from the largest annual wheelchair sports event in the world

National Veterans Wheelchair Games

Local Veteran Competes in National Veterans Wheelchair Games

Denver, Colo. -- July 7, 2010 -- Gabriel Diaz de Leon, a disabled Army Veteran from Fair Oaks Ranch, Texas, is competing in the 30th National Veterans Wheelchair Games, being held through July 9 in Denver, Colorado. Attracting nearly 600 athletes each year, the National Veterans Wheelchair Games are the largest annual wheelchair sports event in the world. It is a multi-event sports and rehabilitation program for military service Veterans who use wheelchairs due to spinal cord injuries, amputations, or neurological problems. Diaz de Leon, 47, has a spinal cord injury and currently receives care at the VA medical facility in San Antonio, Texas.

Diaz de Leon is competing in the following events:

bowling
shot put
javelin
quad rugby
table tennis

Athletes in the Games compete within three divisions – Masters (over age 40), Novice (first-time competitors), and Open (all others). They also compete within classes according to the level of their physical ability, with three quadriplegic-level classes (1A, 1B and 1C), and four paraplegic-level or amputee classes (2, 3, 4 and 5). Diaz de Leon competes as a Class 1B in the Open division.

The Games are presented by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Paralyzed Veterans of America, and hosted this year by the VA Eastern Colorado Health Care System (VA ECHS), and the Paralyzed Veterans of America Mountain States Chapter. Funded with help from a host of corporate sponsors, events at the National Veterans Wheelchair Games are a showcase for the benefit of sports rehabilitative programs, and the remarkable athletic abilities and personal achievements of our nation's disabled Veterans.

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Note to Editor: If you would like to interview this Veteran, contact Susan Varcie at (734) 417-6260 or (734) 845-3706 after July 10. For more information about the event, please visit the Games Web site at www.wheelchairgames.va.gov. Information above provided by the Veteran.