

A First in Adaptive Triathlon

A Triathletes of Utah Article

By Eric Newren | Published March 3rd 2022, Updated June 18th



Photo by Paul Clawson ©

USA Triathlon announced their first-ever sanctioned race for athletes with intellectual differences. This race will take place at USAT Youth & Junior Nationals, July 30-31, 2022 in West Chester, Ohio.

Utah's 1st Intellectual adaptive triathlon team.

Last year Shannon Clawson wanted to do more for the triathlon community. Through her daughter's work she found an opportunity to help others with Intellectual differences. As a certified USAT level 2, Paratriathlon and Jr. Elite Coach for Balanced Art Multisport, Shannon was in the perfect situation to take on the task of helping these individuals accomplish the goal of competing in the sport of Triathlon.

With a dozen or more athletes ready to try their hand in this sport, Shannon enlisted the help of others around her. With the help of [Intermountain Multisport](#) and [Balanced Art Multisport](#), along with volunteers and community businesses they were able to establish a program to help those athletes that had an interest in triathlon, do something new.

In the beginning it was a learning experience for both the athletes and Shannon's team. Learning how to adapt training and expectations for these athletes was a new endeavor, and didn't necessarily come easily. But through friendship, motivation, practice and patience these athletes began to shine.

All the hard work these athletes put in accumulated in the first ever Intermountain Adaptive Triathlon, held last year in May. Put on for free with the help of family, volunteers and the community, this race was held at the Wasatch aquatic center and the adjoining Wasatch High School. Athletes swam 50 or 100 yds, biked 1 or 2 miles and ran 400 or 800 meters. 12 individuals started and finished the race as first time triathletes!



Photo by Paul Clawson ©

What's new for the team in 2022?

Another round of training and racing is in the works for this year. Athletes are getting excited and starting to ramp up their training as spring approaches.

The 2nd annual Intermountain Adaptive Triathlon is already scheduled, and will take place on May 14th at 9am at the Wasatch Aquatic Center and Wasatch High School. **(UPDATE: 14 athletes took on the challenge and finished this year.)** For those interested in volunteering or helping in other ways at this event, please [contact Shannon](#).

Also as mentioned above, the big exciting news for 2022 is that USA Triathlon announced their first-ever sanctioned race for athletes with intellectual differences. This race will take place at USAT Youth & Junior Nationals, July 30-31, 2022 in West Chester, Ohio.

Shannon and her team would love to get 10 Utah athletes to this historic event and show support for the new Paralympic triathlon classification of Intellectual different athletes.

UPDATE: The team have amended their goal and are trying to get at least 4 athletes to the event. They are currently ½ way to their goal. This is the final stretch and they need your help, please consider donating to this great cause!

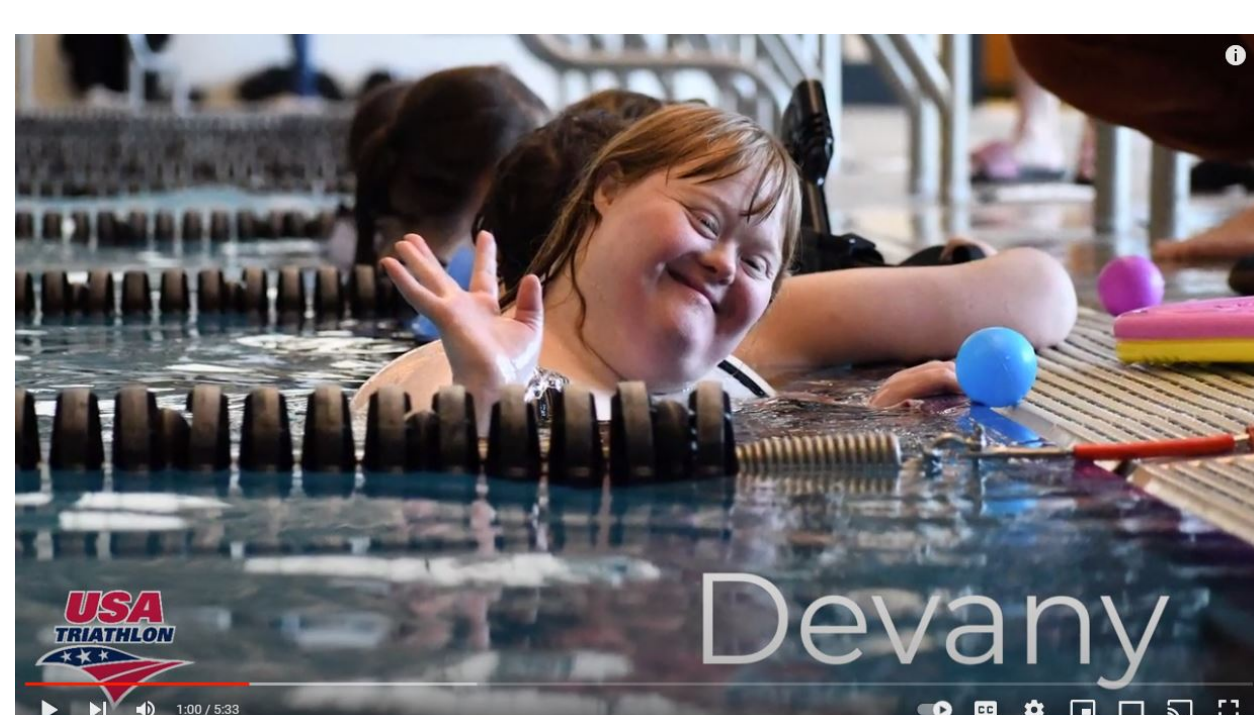
They are currently seeking donors and support at this time to help with the costs, a donation of \$3000 will help one athlete *and their handler* with travel, lodging, transportation, race entry and daily expenses for the 5-day trip. However, any donation will be greatly appreciated! All donations are tax deductible and done through [Intermountain Multisport](#) which is a charitable 501(c)3 organization.

Meet the athletes!

UPDATE: NEW video on Facebook [HERE](#)

Get a more personal and in-depth look at the amazing individuals that make up this team, what they like and how they feel about the accomplishment of doing triathlon.

WATCH the video below!



Video by Paul Clawson ©

For more information about the team, the adaptive race or donating please reach out to Shannon Clawson. Her email is scitri123@gmail.com or social channels below.

To Donate visit the Intermountain Multisport page [HERE](#).

Shannon Clawson



Pictures and video courtesy of:
Paul Clawson
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