



**CONTACT:** Della Elliott, Public Information, (619) 644-7690,  
[della.elliott@gcccd.edu](mailto:della.elliott@gcccd.edu)

Oct. 22, 2009

## Fast-paced action of wheelchair basketball part of Cuyamaca College's Disability Awareness Month

**EL CAJON** – The always inspiring wheelchair basketball game, where the sound of squeaking rubber isn't from the soles of players' shoes, but from custom-built chairs pivoting and spinning across the gym floor, is set for 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 28, at the Cuyamaca College gym as part of the college's annual commemoration of National Disability Awareness Month.

The event at 900 Rancho San Diego Parkway in Rancho San Diego is free and open to the public.

The five-on-five games feature a mix of Cuyamaca's basketball team playing alongside members of the San Diego Xpress, a National Wheelchair Basketball Association team formed in the mid-'80s. Most of the wheelchair athletes have suffered spinal cord injuries, but that hasn't stopped them from playing competitively.

The teams for Cuyamaca's game are mixed with players from both sides, as well as anyone who wants to join in, so that the wheelchair league athletes don't completely dominate the scoreboard, said Mary Asher-Fitzpatrick, a learning disabilities specialist in Cuyamaca College's Disabled Students Programs and Services office. This is the 12<sup>th</sup> year that DSP&S and Rob Wojkowski, the men's basketball coach at Cuyamaca, have been coordinating the game.

The game provides a new awareness to students and others of what wheelchair athletes can accomplish, and, more often than not, results in Cuyamaca athletes taking their share of spills from the low-to-the-ground chairs specially designed for speed and maneuverability.

"Cuyamaca College has a long history of services to, and awareness of, disability needs and challenges," said interim college president Ron Manzoni. "The college's sponsorship of this

event provides a terrific opportunity for our staff, students and the public to witness the skills of these athletes who spend a great deal of time and energy developing their skill on the basketball court. This event is another example of Cuyamaca's outreach efforts to encourage all students and to provide a variety of learning opportunities."

In keeping with the month's theme, the Cuyamaca College library has a display focusing on the accomplishments and challenges facing the disabled. In addition to picking up some tidbits about famous people who are physically challenged, visitors can also learn how the college assists its own students with disabilities. On loan for the display are some of the assistive computer technology tools and alternate media used by DSP&S.

For campus and driving maps, visit [www.cuyamaca.edu](http://www.cuyamaca.edu) or call 619-660-4236.