

# Adaptive Paddling

KELSEY GUMP: All right, well, everyone is ready. I think we'll go ahead and get started in the interest of time. So welcome to the Adaptive Paddling webinar. My name's Kelsey, and the co-presenter is

ALIDA MELSE: Alida. Hello.

KELSEY GUMP: Yeah, we'll do a little bit more of an introduction. As you can see there, it is presented by the WSU Outdoor Recreation Center. So there's another little picture of me. And just a little basic introduction, I work as a graduate assistant at the Outdoor Recreation Center on campus. That is a part of University Recreation, so you can see our little play logo in the corner.

I am certified as a touring and whitewater kayaking instructor, and then I am also endorsed for adaptive paddling skills by the American Canoe Association. So we'll talk a little bit more about who they are in just a little while.

ALIDA MELSE: Yeah, and my name is Alida. I've been working as an adventure facilitator for the Outdoor Rec Center for I think three years now. I really love kayaking, and kayaking is also a huge part of what we do with the Outdoor Rec Center, flat water and more recently, whitewater as well. So I'm really excited to be here tonight and hopefully get to share some of that with you so that everybody gets a chance to get out onto the water.

KELSEY GUMP: All right, so that's a little bit about us. What we'd like to do-- if folks have microphones connected, is to just kind of go around and have a few little introductions. So maybe just your name, pronouns, your major, your job, and then just a little bit of the other things you see on the screen there, I guess just to fill in some of the gaps there.

My name is Kelsey, again. I go by she, her, hers. And again, I'm a graduate assistant at the ORC, and I'm also a graduate student in environmental science. Really loved a Grand Canyon backpacking trip I took last fall. My expectations for this clinic is just to share more about adaptive modeling and hopefully get some stoke going.

ALIDA MELSE: I'll introduce myself again, I guess. Again, Alida. I go by she, her, and hers. I am a microbiology major in addition to working at the Outdoor Rec Center. One of my favorite trips has been on the Palouse River, so just right here in our backyard, starting at Lyons Ferry, going up to Palouse Falls.

And yeah, I'm really hoping that through this clinic, we can all help you meet all of your goals. So I'm excited to hear what those are. And feel free to just jump in popcorn style if you'd like to share, and we can get to know each other a little bit before we start.

ANDREA: My name is Andrea. I am the Coordinator of Global Connections. My pronouns are she, her, hers. My expectations of this clinic-- I'm really interested in the topic, because I don't know anything-- I don't know much about kayaking and adaptive paddling, so yeah, I'm glad to be here.

KELSEY GUMP: Awesome. Thank you.

ALIDA MELSE: Looks like folks are writing into the chat. Thank you for that.

KELSEY GUMP: Yeah, I'll pull it up here. Nice. All right, looks like we got Celeste. Social sciences major. And Katherine, a Facility Manager at the SRC, so thank you both for joining us tonight. I'll give a couple more-- we'll do like five seconds.

That's the rule for being quiet to try to give somebody else an opportunity to speak if they would like.

MATT: My name is Matt. I coordinate the outdoor programs at U Rec. He, him, his. I guess my favorite trip I've been on-- probably our Grand Canyon backpacking trip was probably one of them. But I would say as far as paddling trip, definitely the Lake Powell spring break trip that we do every year.

KELSEY GUMP: All right, very cool. And for other folks, definitely feel free to introduce yourself in the chat. We'd love to hear from you pretty much throughout the night. And if you have any questions as we're going through the presentation, definitely feel free to shoot us a message there, and we'll be able to see a little icon blinking. And we'll get to answer that as soon as possible.

So we'll go ahead and get started on some of our content.

ALIDA MELSE: All right, so just an overview of what we'll be talking about tonight. We'll start out with a background talk about why folks want to go out and paddle, as well as talk about some of the different paddle sports that are available. We're also going to talk about some considerations before you get out onto the water, whether that's access to either a pool facility or to an outdoor recreation location.

We'll also talk a little bit about EEC. That stands for Essential Eligibility Criteria, and that fits into the topic of safety, which we're going to be addressing throughout this entire presentation. And then, we're going to get into adaptive equipment. There's a lot of cool adaptive equipment that's out there, and we've got links to a lot of the websites that offer them as well as some pictures, and we're really excited to share that with you.

Also, we're expanding our Adaptive Kayaking Program with the Outdoor Recreation Center, and so we're going to talk a little bit about the gear that we have available, some of the programs that we run through the ORC, and we're also going to talk a little bit about the adaptive

climbing program that we've introduced. And we're also going to talk about U Rec, the entire university recreation, and some of the adaptive opportunities that are available to through that, as well as resources that are available in the community, not necessarily just through WSU.

KELSEY GUMP: All right, and before we start getting into some of that nitty gritty, we wanted to make sure that we front load a couple of the terms that you're going to hear a lot tonight. So you can see up there, the Intro to Adaptive Paddling, and what that really means. So these definitions are coming from an organization called NIRSA, which guides and leads collegiate recreation programs across the country, so they are pretty standard definitions.

So primarily tonight, we're to be talking about adaptive paddling, which is one form of adaptive recreation. You see that right up here. And of course, as it says there, it is a recreational activity that has been created or modified to allow someone with a disability to participate. And then similarly, adaptive equipment down here is basically the equipment that allows adaptive recreation to happen.

So maybe it was designed or modified in some way to allow an individual with a disability to participate with greater independence. So that's kind of one of the key sticking points there, is a lot of these just make it easier just for folks to kind of engage and do things on their own. So we'll talk about the gear that we have available at the ORC, some of the gear that other areas of the Rec Department have, and also maybe some DIY type adaptations for folks who want to get a little bit crafty with things.

And then finally, inclusive recreation refers to activities that allow folks of all abilities to recreate together in an equitable manner. So obviously, that's the golden standard, and that's one that we really strive to achieve. And then, before we move on, I thought we should also talk a little bit about the history of adaptive paddling with the ACA.

So first of all, the ACA is the American Canoe Association. It's pretty much the premier paddling organization in the United States. So what they do is they certify a lot of instructors, and they teach a lot of skills for basically all kinds of paddle sports, which we'll get into what that consists of in just a little bit. So they were founded in 1880.

And you can see on the screen there, they held their first ever adaptive paddling workshop in 1990. So a little bit of a gap there, but it gives me even more appreciation for Janet Zeller, who pioneered the cause in the movement by approaching the ACA board in 1989. So you can see there she was a lifelong peddler and an ACA instructor.

And she wound up having an accident in 1984, which resulted in quadriplegia. So that kind of compelled her to get things started and get the ball rolling. And the good news is, after that first adaptive paddling workshop in 1990, they have been steadily training and endorsing instructors and just anyone who's interested in adaptive paddling skills.

And then, as for Janet, she wrote and regularly edits this really cool book that you can see in the corner of the screen there called Canoeing and Kayaking for People with Disabilities, which is just a really good resource for instructors like myself but also just anybody who's interested in getting into adaptive paddling. And as you see there as well, she's still an ACA instructor to this day, and she's also the National Accessibility Program Manager for the Forest Service, which is pretty cool.

And so our next section is going to talk a little bit about why paddling versus maybe some other things that you could do. So for one, we're the Outdoor Recreation Center. And of course, we love paddling, right? But for more reason than that, I'll go ahead and turn back to a passage from that book that I just mentioned from Janet Zeller.

And in it, she says, canoeing and kayaking are activities that emphasize ability. Skill is determined by ability and attitude, whether or not the father has a disability. The freedom offered by paddling pushes aside the barriers presented by disabilities. A body that may be uncooperative on land becomes part of a sleek craft gliding through the water.

Together, paddlers with and without disabilities can share all aspects of the sport. Water is the ultimate equalizer. So that's a quote that really sticks with me, and you can see in these photos, it doesn't really matter. You can't even really pick out the differences in ability between paddlers who are out there on the water.

So and speaking of the photos, I'd also like to front load that I'll be using primarily pictures of adaptive athletes throughout the presentation, just to give you plenty of looks of what's out there, and you'll also notice the companies involved are in the corner, which I'm happy to provide a little list of after the presentation. And as we go through, I might point out little crafty adaptations that you can spot here and there if you look close.

ALIDA MELSE: Great, so let's go ahead and watch this video. This is a man named Shawn [? Wallen ?], who's going to describe water as a birth right. So it's about five minutes long. We'll go ahead and watch that.

[VIDEO PLAYBACK BEGINS]

SHAWN: Part of the water is, and my draw to it, is-- it's a birthright.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

You can transcend. You can get to a place where you're sort of free to be able to dance. To be able to be fluid. To be able to be just so in the moment, so-- to just be natural. To be your God given self, so to speak.

Just au natural. Just to be what you were meant to be. What your genetics provide for you.

[VIDEO PLAYBACK ENDS]

ALIDA MELSE: Awesome. Can everybody hear me over the video? Yes? Cool. Yeah, so I'd like to give all of you an opportunity to reflect on that video. And if you have something that you'd like to share, whether it's a single word in the chat, or if you'd like to unmute yourself, I'm just interested to hear all of your thoughts on the video. I'll give you all a second to think about something.

I thought it was really inspiring to see him get out there, totally independently in this really beautiful location out on the ocean. So I hope that as we start talking about different adaptations that everybody gets the opportunity to really discover something about themselves as they're out on the water in these really beautiful environments. Anything to say?

KELSEY GUMP: Yeah, I definitely would echo that. And I think it's really cool, too, how you see that based on his own decision, he wasn't really using any adaptive equipment. He just kind of went for it. What he was participating in is something called a surf skiing, so basically like surfing in a kayak, so it's pretty cool stuff.

And then, you see just like we talked about, right before this in that quote from Janet Zeller-- you know, maybe it was a little bit more difficult for him to get around on land. And then he gets out there, and he just really tears it up and does his thing. So that's part of why I love paddling.

ALIDA MELSE: Totally.

KELSEY GUMP: All right, let me get to the next slide here. There we go. So just a little bit more, one last note on why padding. So I'm sure many of you have heard before about the benefits of green spaces and practices like forest bathing. But there are also a lot of similar benefits for blue spaces, and there's a growing body of research that suggests a connection between heightened well-being and living near and recreating on water.

So psychological benefits seem to be pretty equivalent, like I said, to green spaces. So it tends to induce a calm, meditative state. And one of the ways that they know that is they've measured a change from active brainwaves to slower theta brainwaves, which are related to the flow of creative ideas and problem solving.

And just on a more somewhat subjective basis, but it seems to be echoed by a lot of paddlers and folks who just live around water in general-- when you experience that feeling of awe, which is a term that they'll definitely throw around in those papers a lot, just at the power and the expanse of natural water bodies, you kind of get that sense that you're a little bit smaller and that you're kind of connected to the things around yourself. Whether that's other people or just that body of water.

And it just can provide a lot of mental health benefits.

ALIDA MELSE: Great, so let's just talk a little bit about the various types of paddle sports. Probably, a lot of you have heard of or maybe even participated in kayaking or canoeing or rafting or paddle boarding. But what all of these have in common is they're essentially human powered water sports. And you can see here are a few pictures of some of the different types of paddles.

So at the top, we have the kayaking paddle, which has two blades, one on either end. In the middle, we have the stand up paddle boarding paddle, and you can see it has a longer shaft so that you're able to use it while standing up. And then below, we have an oar, which would be used for rafting or canoeing.

And so then, there's a lot of variation. It might be seated or standing, but all of these sports, they can vary from a wild river to a really serene lake or even in our own backyard on the Snake River. So a lot of different opportunities within paddle sports, all emphasizing the use of core or arm strength and really just a chance to get out and into these blue spaces that Kelsey was talking about.

KELSEY GUMP: All right, so next we're going to do a little bit of the deeper dive or a sneak peek at those types of paddle sports that we mentioned. So you'll see here, I've got a few pictures of athletes participating in that sport. So I'll start with kayaking.

And the top two pictures are at least relatively prominent spokesmen for the sport who both got their start, or progressed their skills a lot, with an organization called Team River Runner that we'll talk about a little bit later. But their main goal is getting primarily veterans with disabilities out on rivers to experience both the adrenaline they might still crave and also the healing powers of being around water.

So on the top left is the guy [AUDIO OUT] most likely to have heard about, Lonnie Bedwell. He is most famous for being part of a group of kayakers who paddled the grand canyon's over 220 mile stretch of really intense whitewater rapids. You can see he's kind of in the thick of it in that nice photo there.

Lonnie is blind, and like the other kayakers in his group, they would have a buddy boat following not too far behind that would describe the features ahead into an earpiece so that he would know what was coming and he could plan his moves. In the top right, there is a gentleman named John Fritzell, who grew up with a love of paddle sports.

But due to muscular dystrophy and neuropathy, he was unable to grip a traditional kayak paddle from age 11 until decades later, when he encountered the website for Creating Ability, which is a gear producer that we'll talk about a little bit later that creates adaptive equipment. So with Creating Abilities Wrist Adapters that you can see has hooked onto the paddle there and some training from Team River Runner, he would go on to start kayak touring all around Wisconsin and racing competitively.

And then finally, the bottom photo there is an adaptive paddling event, which just happened to be held by University of Michigan, but I thought it was a nice photo. So hopefully, we'll be able to do stuff like that here soon. You can see a few pieces of gear attached to the boat and the paddle if you look closely. So we will take a closer look at some of that gear pretty soon.

But it also shows that the nice thing about kayaking is tandem kayaking is a really good option if you want to hang out with someone specific or just have a little bit more of a team activity.

ALIDA MELSE: Awesome. So here, we have canoeing. And again, there's a few different athletes in these photos. In the top left, we have Evan [INAUDIBLE], and you can see the differences in some of the paddles. He's using a paddle that's called the One Arm Freedom Paddle.

And you can see how it attaches to the shoulder, and then he's able to paddle with just his left arm. And then, you can contrast that into the back with the typical paddle that the student is using. You see they're both out there having a great time. And then on the upper right, that's Greg Krauss. He's a veteran.

And he had his legs amputated after serving overseas. And he's really into athletics and was able to get into some sports like hand cycle or lifting and also paddle sports. And there's a quote from him that he was talking about canoeing and he says, this is where I blossomed and became the whole me again.

He's also a Paralympian, which is really awesome. And then in the bottom, we have a family that's just out for a canoe trip with the kiddo in the middle. And you can see that the canoeing can be solo, like with the case of Greg Krauss, or it can be a team effort, where everybody in the kayak is sharing the paddling responsibility.

KELSEY GUMP: All right, next up, we have rafting. So for the most part, rafting is traditionally done on white water. So it tends to be really action packed, and you can see in the photos on the top right and bottom that usually, you'll have a guide in the back of the boat. So you can see, they're the people with the big, long paddles that take most of the responsibility for steering with their two mounted paddles.

Another nice thing about it is-- you can see in the bottom photo-- there's plenty of space for cargo. And if you look closely, you can even see that there's a detachable chair back, which can make things comfortable for folks. So that'd be the guy in the red helmet there, he's got that chair.

And those are also freely available for all kinds of paddle crafts, which we'll talk about a little bit later in our DIY section. In the top right, you can also see some paddlers enjoying a nice float on a little bit more of a calm stretch of river, which can also be a really great way to hang out with folks and take in some scenery.

I did notice just being a white water paddler that they still have a helmet on, so I'm thinking there's still some rapids somewhere on that stretch for a little bit of excitement. So the good thing is, you can pick where you want to go and what level of excitement you want to experience with rafting. And then the top left, I also shows that photo, just because I thought it was pretty cool.

Looks like that paddler is most likely out for overnight rafting trip, and her guides have set up a beach mount so that it's easier for her to get around the camp in her chair

ALIDA MELSE: All right, so next up, we have paddle boating. You might have heard this referred to a stand up paddle boarding, but you can see here, it definitely doesn't have to be done standing up. So in the top left, that's actually on the Pacific Ocean. But they're on the paddle board called the Cruiser Board, and it has an adjustable folding chair attachment.

And so then, the chair that both of those men are using is actually the same piece of equipment, and it just folds up so that it can be either a chair for you to sit on, or it can be more upright and just provide some support to lean against. And then, in the top right, you might recognize Greg Krauss from the canoeing slide.

But he's out there with his paddle board, and you can sort of see it, the little blue thing on the left of that photo. That's an outrigger that will provide some extra stability for the board, and there's also attachments on the board so that he can mount his wheelchair and attach that and just provide some extra stability so that he can get out there and paddle board.

And then in the bottom, you can see a homemade chair that was attached to the board. And this man is actually using a kayak paddle, and that's totally fine. And oftentimes, you'll also see folks just sitting directly on the board without anything to stabilize their back, and that works, too. So paddle boarding is generally done on flat water.

It can be done on white water, but that's definitely a lot more rare. And it's usually a good way to just get out there and explore a calm lake, or the harbor in a cool city.

KELSEY GUMP: All right, so we talked about paddle sports in general and some of the options that are out there with different sports. So now, we want to take a look at things that you should maybe consider if you're interested in trying out adaptive paddling or paddling in general. So we'll talk about some things to keep in mind for accessible locations.

Like we mentioned before, we'll talk about essential eligibility criteria, what that is, what it's for. And then, also what factors you'd consider if you were going to look at maybe building some adaptive structures or equipment on your own boat or any boat that you were using to go out and try paddling. So we'll also make notes regarding safety when paddling, particularly for individuals who may have a mobility impairment and not be experienced with swimming, because there are definitely ways to address that and still be safe.

So first, we'll kind of take a look at access, both for outdoor locations and also for indoor locations. So for outdoor locations, one thing I like to mention is that there are actually no legal requirements for accessibility at carry down craft launching areas other than parking spots. So one thing to be aware of before you go is that you might encounter some rough terrain, whether it's sand or just areas that aren't paved in between the parking lot and the actual spot where you would be in your craft on the water.

The nice thing is, boat ramps are usually paved, because people are trying to back down a trailer into it. And most of them are OK with you launching a kayak or a hand paddled craft at them. So one thing that I would suggest is, before you're going to a new location, a good thing to do would be just to put it into Google Earth.

And the nice thing is, you can select satellite imagery, which you can see in the top right, that's what I selected for a pretty near by park called Wawawai Landing. And you can identify any potential challenges if you use a chair or crutches with getting around. So in this, you can see we've got a nice concrete boat ramp right here. But one potential challenge might be the fact that the parking lot is gravel.

So it's kind of getting into a little bit of our leave no trace principles to plan ahead and prepare. But yeah, overall I would say this is a pretty good location, as long as this is not going to be a challenge for you to get across gravel. Or you could have someone maybe drop you off down here. And just planning that sort of thing will definitely help make the process smoother.

As for indoor facilities, probably the same considerations for buildings as usual, just being aware of whether there's accessible parking and entrances. And then as well, if you're going to a pool, making sure that the locker rooms are also pretty close by and accessible to the extent they need to be. And then in addition, with pools, there are a lot of different pieces of equipment that a location may or may not have.

So we'll talk a little bit about what we have on campus. But a combination of things like hydraulic lifts, railings, and stairs or ramps can be really useful features. And you can see in that bottom photo right there, that's one of our pools on campus. And they had me demonstrate one of the pool lifts there, which is pretty cool.

Basically, that chair that I'm seated in is usually on the pool deck. And then, it pivots out above the water and gives you a controlled descent down into the pool. And the nice thing is, it would just stay down into the pool until I was ready to come out, and then I could get seated in it and lift myself back out pretty easily.

And the nice thing about U Rec, too, is all the lifeguards are trained in the usage of them. And they're definitely happy to show folks how to use them, so that way, you're able to just go in and use them whenever you want to just on your own.

ALIDA MELSE: All right, so I know Kelsey mentioned earlier a little bit about Essential Eligibility Criteria. And this is really vital for safety. They're going to be created by programs and organizations like the Outdoor Rec Center, or REI uses them for all of their programs. And essentially, it's a set of guidelines just so that everybody is on the same page that these are the actions and the general guidelines that an individual has to be able to perform in order to ensure their own safety.

So it's really important that they'll reflect the nature of the program as well as the experience and the equipment that's provided by the outfitter. So you can see, this is definitely not meant to intimidate someone. It's just to make sure that everybody is on the same page about what's required in order that everybody participating in the program with the organization can be safe.

So WSU ORC also has their Essential Eligibility Criteria, and they vary based on the program. So for example, the biking EEC is going to be different than the paddling EEC. So it looks like Kelsey's pulling up the Trips and Clinic Page. You can reach it just by typing into Google WSU ORC-- I think it's coming up here in a second.

And then, navigating over to the Trips and Clinics Page. And if we scroll down, we can see the Essential Eligibility Criteria for several of our different programs. So we have all ORC trips, which we'll take a look at right now as it opens. And yeah, you can see, it's a relatively short list that just shows what the expectations are for our trips regarding safety as well as trip behavior and then outdoor living skills.

So that's definitely something that you can find on your own on the U Rec page through the ORC. And then, we also have an EEC for water sports, so we'll pull that up real quick. And again, it's a relatively short list. But this just ensures that in the case of a capsize, which probably won't happen but could happen, just that every participant is going to get safe.

So you can see, it's pretty basic requirements that the person can breathe independently or maintain that sealed air passage while under water, just so that you're not getting into any trouble. So the idea behind the EEC is just that everybody's on the same page before the trip even starts so that everybody on the trip can be safe.

KELSEY GUMP: All right, so we've gone over a couple of the considerations before you go. The last bit of prep work that we would do before getting out on the water or going into the pool is to make sure that we had a vessel that worked for that paddler, or you would make sure that you had a vessel that worked for you. So these are considerations that you want to keep in mind if you're going to add any sort of structural adaptations to your boat, just for your comfort as well.

And if you participate in a program with the ORC, we would assist you with finding appropriate adaptations and gear to meet your abilities and just make sure that we were getting you into a boat, or a paddle board, or whatever it was and making sure that it worked well for you. So

we'll start with the principles of outfitting, just some basic ideas you want to keep in mind and things that you want to kind of run through a mental checklist.

So for your body, of course, you're going to want comfort, and you're going to want adaptations that are efficient and easy for you to use. And then just mentally, ideally, you could have a little bit of fun with the adaptations, and it definitely shouldn't impede your fun, [INAUDIBLE] not stressful. And then, as well, aesthetically.

Yeah, you could duct tape all kinds of things all over your boat, but then you might be like, ah, I look, kind of, eh, I have duct tape all over my boat. So you just want to keep in mind aesthetics and things that look smooth and that they're streamlined.

In terms of the boat and blade, so your equipment itself, again, just make sure that there's nothing that's going to make you physically unsafe, which we'll get into that next list next to this. And then, again, with emotional safety, making sure that you feel good about the aesthetics and that you're not worried about something falling apart on you, basically.

So things that will help with that physical and emotional safety, we'll go over to the three key considerations. So of course, you want it to be comfortable, because you're most likely going to be going-- if you're going to go out on the river-- for a couple hours. And you don't want things digging into you or causing you any sort of stress or discomfort.

So you want to make sure that you have an adequate amount of support, as well as cushioning so you're not just up against any sort of hard plastic in that vessel. In terms of safety, what I mean by release is if you were to flip over, basically, there are some vessels where if you were to flip over, you would kind of just fall right into the water. So you can imagine on a paddle board, you're just kind of on the surface, or even on a sit on top kayak or a canoe.

Whereas some of the kayaks like you see here-- so this is a sit on top. You just fall right out. And with this one, your legs would actually be down inside of the boat. So it might be a little bit harder to escape. And what you want to avoid is putting anything across your lap, or anything that would impede your progress if you were trying to get out.

And then, as well, one other important thing to keep in mind, particularly for folks who may have less sensation in their legs, is skin protection. So I included this photo right here just to show that there are some little bits and pieces down inside the cockpit of the boat where you sit. So potentially, that could rub up against your skin and cause some damage.

So you just want to make sure that you are putting cushioning above that or just wearing protective clothing so that it won't become an issue. And then finally, you want to make sure that anything you're adding to the boat is secure. So you want to make sure it's well-built and that it's stable, so that way if you're out there in the waves and there's some water splashing on it, it's not going to do just come undone and be no use to you anymore.

And again, that gets back to emotional safety, because if you're worried about that, you're probably not going to be able to have as good of a time out there paddling, right?

ALIDA MELSE: All right, so let's go a little bit more into the safety of a capsize event. So it's really, really important that if you were to capsize, that you've taken the appropriate precautions beforehand to ensure that something that's not so fun might turn into something that could get you into trouble. So the first step of that is just having a PFD, or a Personal Flotation Device that fits you properly.

And at the ORC, we definitely make sure that this is the case. We have a variety of PFDs available, and we go over how to fit them properly so that they would help you in the case of an emergency. And Kelsey mentioned how with a variety of different paddle crafts, like the canoes or rafts or the sit on tops, if you were to flip, you essentially come right out. And that may or may not be the case with a kayak.

And as we go through several of the different kinds of adaptive equipment, we'll definitely talk about how to make sure that it's not something that would trap you into your boat in the event of a capsize. And I know that in some of the previous photos that we showed, not everybody did have a PFD on. And as kayak instructors, we obviously will recommend that you always have a PFD on. And that's probably the most important piece of safety equipment when you're out on the water.

I also wanted to talk a little bit about if you do have a mobility impairment, knowing how to go from face down to face up. Essentially, you just turn your head and use that momentum to flip yourself upright until either you can get to shore or until somebody else can help you get to shore. But the big thing that is to practice it beforehand.

So with a lot of our trips, we'll start out in the swimming pool. And that's a really good opportunity in a warm water environment just to practice all of those motions to help keep you safe. And that's definitely something that you can do for other rescue techniques as well, just practicing in a swimming pool before you get out onto the cold water.

KELSEY GUMP: All right, we're cruising right along here. So definitely, like I mentioned, if you have any questions at all, feel free to fire away in the chat. But next, we're going to go ahead and move into our section that gets into a little bit more of the resources that are available through us, the Outdoor Recreation Center, or the ORC, as well as adaptive gear and facilities at the Rec Department in general and our facilities on campus, on the Pullman Campus, for the most part.

And then, as well, we'll talk a little bit about community organizations that are in eastern Washington and ones that you might be able to seek out in other areas. So as I mentioned, now that we've given an overview of paddle sports and we talked through some aspects of getting started in safety, we're going to get a little bit closer to home and talk about adaptive kayaking

at WSU. So it's going to focus on what we have available right now. And the Palouse in general, what sorts of organizations are out there.

So you can see here, our equipment, which we'll talk about these brands and specifics of the equipment in just a second. But Creating Ability is the one that I mentioned before with some of the adaptive kayakers that we featured. Jackson Kayak also creates really good cushioning system. So you remember that was one of our principles of outfitting.

And then, as well, we'll talk about closed cell foam outfitting kits from the American Canoe Association, which is a way for you to really tailor adaptations and do a little bit of DIY. And then, we'll get into a little bit about our facilities and programs and what's available.

ALIDA MELSE: So first, let's start with some of the seating and stability adaptations that we have at the ORC. So we've actually taken one of our touring kayaks, and we've outfitted it with a universal seat as well as stabilizing outriggers. So in the bottom right, you can see, Matt, actually, is modeling all of that put together.

So first, the seat. So you can see it's taller than a regular kayaking seat might be, just to give a little bit of extra stability. And it's also got those arms that you can see-- the upper arms on the right hand side-- that'll pivot, and you can adjust that just to make it fit the individual so that it can get the exact right amount of stability. And all of this equipment is really adjustable so that it can fit each person who would use it.

And then, you've also got the outriggers. You can see Kelsey's adjusting them in the bottom left. And essentially, there's several ways that you can move them around. You can take them off entirely if they're not necessary. And you can also move them close to the boat if you want it to be a little bit faster and more streamlined, or you can have them farther away from the boat to provide a little bit more stability.

And on that, you can adjust how high they are in the water. So if you have them just a little bit in the water, you can think of them almost as training wheels. Or you can have them deeper in the water just to provide that extra stability. And so this is all stuff that we have at the Outdoor Rec Center and are more than happy to help whenever we need to.

KELSEY GUMP: And just also to say, the nice thing about this, too, is all of this stuff is detachable. So basically, if we were to take off all the things that we added on to add more stability, we would just be left with this seat back. You could take off both sets of arms and that top back rest right there.

And then, as well, it would just be this little bar on the back of the kayak. So it's really easy to transport, too, which is nice. All right, and so you saw our specialized adaptive kayak, where we have the seat and those outriggers installed. And then, I want to get into a little bit of what I talked about with the stuff that's a little bit more of a DIY angle, using foam outfitting kits from the ACA, which you can see, anybody could buy those.

They cost \$90 for this full set right here. And the nice thing there is you can cut them down to fit any body shape and form pretty much whatever structural adaptation you want. It is, of course, very high quality foam, and it's closed cell. And basically, what that means is it's not going to absorb any water or degrade when it's in the water. So you can be assured that whatever you build out of this is going to last for quite a while.

And as it says right there, these can go in any of our paddle crafts, which usually, we attach them with duct tape, which is why you see those funny little diagrams up there. So thought I would throw a little life back in. Basically, what we're careful about doing is, when we tape this down into the boat, it's always good to add a second piece over top of the first one just to make sure that if it starts to come up, it's not going to be a problem.

So you see up here, I put a little x on this, because they are-- you can see that second piece of tape is over the first one at a 90 degree angle. And the thing about duct tape is, it's meant to rip both lengthwise and width wise. So you can see, if this one underneath started to peel, it would actually rip right across that second piece, and it wouldn't do you much good.

So what I tried to recreate in this little diagram here is a nice 45 degree angle with the duct tape. That way, if this starts to peel up, it's going to hit these at a weird angle, and it's not actually going to be able to rip that second piece. So small life hack for you that will make sure that you keep anything you put in there nice and well-built and secure, just like we talked about.

So just diving a little bit more into this briefly, the foam mount fitting kits come with three different types of foam, which is really nice, because they're good for different purposes. So the first type is Ethafoam, which is this white sheet that's in the back of both of these images. And that stuff is really tough to the point where it's kind of hard for you to bend, and if you were trying to create a curve in it, you'd actually have to cut a little bit of a notch.

And so it's great for stable structures like seat backs, because it's not going to bend around on you very much, and it's really supportive. The next type is, you get a sheet of something called EnsoLite is this black piece right here. And that's very memory foam like and soft, so it's great to have pretty much directly next to you.

And it's nice and cushy. It will make your seat or whatever you're building really comfortable. The next thing is Minicell foam wedges. So you can see, you get two big ones and four little ones. You can also see, I sort of built a little rest for my legs right here out of those. And it's kind of an in between Ethafoam and EnsoLite, where you can build some structure, but it's not going to be as hard and rigid.

So if I gave one feedback to myself with this little outfitting set right here, I'd probably put some EnsoLite under my knees, because this sharp corner might dig into me a little bit. But that's stuff that you learn as you go and start to customize. And the last thing I'll point out in this

image is that I'm wearing a wet suit there. So those are also a great investment for any time that you're paddling in cold weather, or if you just tend to get cold naturally.

It's something that I definitely like to wear whenever I'm paddling. And in addition to that, they're also great for skin protection, like we talked about. So it would protect you from any sort of metal pieces or plastic pieces in the cockpit of your boat.

ALIDA MELSE: All right, so here's a picture of some of the cushioning adaptations that we have at the Outdoor Rec Center. So this is a picture of our equipment. And the point of this is to provide some more cushioning, as well as to further protect the skin, like Kelsey mentioned. And so these pieces of equipment, the Jackson Sweet Cheeks, which is the black, and then the Jackson Happy Feet, which is the yellow, those are designed to fit into any kayak.

So the idea is that it would reduce pressure points, as well as to increase stability. So you would inflate it through those tubes that you can see. It works similar to a paddle float, which is a kind of kayak rescue equipment. So you inflate it partially, and then you'll sit on it to release the air. And that allows the foam beads inside to mold to you and to maximize comfort.

So you can see the black one is the one that you'd sit on, and then the Jackson Happy Feet is where you would rest your legs, just to provide additional stability and to further protect the skin.

KELSEY GUMP: And the fun fact about the Sweet Cheeks-- as soon as we got that in, one of our coordinators wanted to put it in his desk chair, because it's so comfortable. So that is a true fact. Looks like we also got a question in the chat, just about which water sport we enjoy doing ourselves, and which one we think is the best exercise.

So that's a great question, which feel free to disagree with me on this. Personally, I do enjoy kayaking the most, which I guess shows by what I'm certified in. So particularly white water kayaking. I really enjoy that, because it's basically like a natural roller coaster, and what's not to like?

I find paddle boarding to be really peaceful and cool, too. And I'd also say that they're probably the most exercise intensive, just being that they're individual sports, versus in canoeing or rafting, you got somebody else to help you out a little bit.

ALIDA MELSE: Yeah, I also really love kayaking. And again, I think I might be saying that just because that's the one that I've done the most. But I find that it can be a really, really good exercise to exercise some of the muscles that you might not normally exercise when you're just walking around or doing things in your daily life.

KELSEY GUMP: That was a great question. Thanks, Kimmy.

ALIDA MELSE: Yeah, thank you. And I'll put links to both the Jackson Sweet Cheeks and the Happy Feet into the chat, as well.

KELSEY GUMP: All right, next up, we're going to move away from talking about adaptations to the boat or the paddle board itself and talk about paddles a little bit. So you'll see these attachments are also from Creating Ability, and they can be fit to any paddle, although there's a little caveat that they're technically designed to work with a kayaking paddle.

I think you can still modify them so that they would work well and serve your purposes for any of those kinds of single weighted paddles, too. But the first one that you'll see on the top in this image and this moving image right here is the back of hand grip that they sell. And this is mostly for folks who can grip the paddle a little bit, to some extent, but may not be able to grip it strongly enough to manipulate it well through the water.

Or it might also be that it can increase the endurance of your ability to grip that paddle if you're good to go out for a long time. So you can see in this image right here, essentially you can move this anywhere on the length of the paddle that you need it to be, so whatever fits your wingspan. And you just tighten it down, and that way, it won't slide around on you.

You can also see a little bolt on the top. And basically, you can adjust that down with a screwdriver. And that will just create a more snug fit and lower or raise that little cushion pad that rests right on top of your hand. And that way, it'll give you a good level of hoping to pinch your hand onto the paddle without making it impossible for you to slide it out.

And you can see, if you needed to release the paddle-- so for example, if you were to capsize, or even if you just wanted to grab a drink water, all you have to do is slide your hand outwards towards the blade, and it has this nice function where it will pivot and free your hand really easily. So that is the back of hand grip.

The bottom photos are showing you this wrist slash arm grip. And this one is meant for folks who have very little to no ability to grip the paddle. And you can see how it works in this image right here. There's a cuff right there that you can adjust by pulling on that red loop. And essentially, you'd want to attach that to your wrist, or just as far down your arm as you could.

And it just kind of snugs down. It's nice and cushioned, so it shouldn't cause you much discomfort, if any. And you can see, it has a little silver bolt head sticking off that you just slide right into the track. And again, it attaches to the shaft of the paddle the same way that the back of the hand grip does. And you can see, this is now lined up in a good position.

And all you would have to do to paddle is just move your wrist inward a little bit to make sure it was secure in that little attachment. And then, you can just pivot and paddle the same as usual with no need to actually grip to the shaft. So you can see in our image down here with Matt, who is our Adaptive Equipment Model, that he is actually not gripping the paddle at all, but he is effectively moving that through the water.

And again, similar to the backhand grip, if you wanted to release your paddle for any reason, all you would have to do is move your hand or your arms outward, and it just slides right off the track. So again, these are very nice pieces of equipment that keep in mind the idea of needing to release equipment quickly.

ALIDA MELSE: All right, so here's another example of a paddle adaptation. This kind of adaptation will actually work on any craft that uses a kayak paddle, so it would not work with an oar, but it does work with a kayak paddle that has a blade on either end. So you can see that it stands up in the middle and will hold the kayak paddle for you.

So in the bottom picture, you can see that Matt has gone completely hands free. And this paddle pivot is able to hold it up for him. The bottom part, you can see in the top image how you attach it to the bottom of the watercraft. It looks really fancy, but we just use duct tape, and that will hold it there steady.

And then in terms of safety, if you were to for whatever reason capsize, this entire system is not actually attached to the boat. The only thing that's holding it in is gravity. So if you were to flip upside down, the entire thing would come loose, and then you would be able to come out of the boat really easily. So that would not be providing a safety hazard.

And then finally, it's relatively simple to use. All that you would need to do is adjust the height to the individual that is using it, snap the kayak paddle in, and then you're ready to go.

KELSEY GUMP: All right, and that last slide pretty much includes what the ORC currently has access to. But just to let you know what's out there, Creating Ability actually has a couple of other useful pieces of gear that you can potentially buy, usually sold as a set with both of them. And both of them are essentially making it easier for you to complete a transfer from a wheelchair into a kayak cockpit.

And then also to transport the kayak around once you're inside of it, assuming that you're on a beach or somewhere that might be difficult to get down. So you can see, this top set of images right here shows you the kayak chariot. And what it does is it just clips onto the cockpit, which is kind of nice, because it will automatically lift the cockpit up a bit higher. So it would be easier for you to just transfer straight out of a chair onto the deck, which is just the body of the boat, and just get into the cockpit that way.

It also dis-assembles for easy transport. And you can see once you're in there, all you have to do is get a buddy to grab the loop on the front of your boat, and then you just can truck right along. Doesn't matter what you're trucking over, because you've got these nice wide wheels. And then on the bottom, you can see this is the transfer bench.

And essentially, it's designed so that this railing right here can be pivoted outwards of that hole, or you can just take the whole thing out. And that gives you a nice surface to transfer onto from a chair. And then, all you have to do is kind of shimmy over onto this little slim transfer board

right here. You put the railing back down, and then you can just use the railings with both of your hands and lift yourself up off that board, which pulls out.

So then, you're able to just lower yourself down into the kayak really smoothly. And then, you can just remove that and get to work with your kayak chariot and get to the water. And then, just another quick plug, just because I want to recognize that the other options that we've talked about so far are really efficient, they're sturdy, they're high quality, and they're definitely worth it. But they are pretty expensive if you're just someone who's looking to get into paddling.

So there are some more cost effective options out there that maybe are not quite as good but will do the trick. So I wanted to point out that a lot of kayak outfitters sell closed cell, and many sell outfitting foam. So if you didn't want to buy that full \$90 pack, then you could definitely look for smaller packs, so just what you need.

There are also detachable seat backs available for pretty much any kind of paddle craft, which you can see that's an example there. Another cool little trick that I learned is back of hand grip supports can be fashioned from bike tubes like this and zip ties, so you just kind of cut a little length of bike tube and cut a little notches to slide the zip tie through.

And you just tighten that right down onto the shaft of the paddle and basically just slide your hand in and out. So again, it doesn't have as many of the bells and whistles and maybe not as stable as some of the more formal attachments from Creating Ability, but it'll do the trick. And same for the shower bench right there. As long as you make sure it fits over your kayak, if you wanted to use that for a little bit of extra support getting in, totally good.

It's also totally fine if you can just transfer right into the boat, whichever way you want to, really. These are just some options.

ALIDA MELSE: Yeah, so I wanted to talk a little bit about some of the adaptive programs that the ORC offers. So we have coming out next semester-- unfortunately, we're not able to offer any of the in-person clinics this semester. But next semester, we'll have a clinic at the Gib Pool in October. And the idea there is that you get a chance to use some of this adaptive equipment that we've just showcased and get a chance to get into the water with it and try it out.

We're also having an adaptive climbing webinar on Zoom here in a couple of weeks. So again, you can tune into it similar to how you did for this one, except for you don't need to register. And I think Matt might be leading that one, which would be really awesome for you to get a chance to tune into. And then again, we'll be having an in-person clinic at the SSE climbing wall here in October once we're able to open up the Rec again.

And the registration will open for that later this summer. So definitely keep an eye out for that on the U Rec website.

KELSEY GUMP: All right, so we talked about the difference between adaptive programming and inclusive programming a little bit earlier. So I just wanted to throw a plug for just our regular programs and say that, of course, for any program that we offer, if you look through that Same Trips and Clinics Page that we pulled up earlier, we are happy to provide any sort of reasonable accommodations for anything to anybody who meets those essential eligibility criteria, which once again, it's a pretty short list.

And of course, we don't want folks to feel intimidated by that. So if you aren't sure whether you meet Essential Eligibility Criteria, definitely reach out to us, and we'll be able to set up a time in advance to work out what we can do to accommodate your needs.

So one thing I did want to plug is our Sunset Paddles on the Snake River. So we actually launch out of Wawawai Landing, which is the one that I pulled up earlier. So that's a really good option for us in terms of it being accessible so we know that it would run pretty smoothly.

And so we would definitely love to have folks out for that one in the fall, I think, might be the earliest dates that we're doing that again, I think, obviously with the situation that's going on. And of course, for any programming, just reach out to us, and we will definitely communicate what the location is like and work with you on helping you get outside. That is definitely the goal here.

And then, as well, of course, the equipment we talked about tonight is what's going to be available to create those adaptations for you. And that equipment will also be available to rent from the ORC soon, is our hope. So you see Contact for Information. That's my email. And then, also, our Rental Coordinator's email, Donald Schmidt, which you can also find him online and me online.

And that would be a pretty straightforward process of just meeting with you and figuring out what equipment would be best for you to suit your needs.

ALIDA MELSE: All right, so the Outdoor Rec Center is definitely not the only URec department that's working to improve access. So there's really options in all of the program areas, so that might be hand cycles that you can see on the left for the spin classes in the fitness studios, as well as the hand paddles in the swimming pool. And they're available for rent.

And then, on the right hand side, you can see an example of some of our adaptive climbing equipment that would be used at the SRC wall. So we can go ahead and take a look at some of the web pages. I'll put these links in the chat, too, and this should also be available to you afterwards if you'd like to take a look at them.

So you can really just see that inclusivity is really, really important to us at URec, and we're definitely striving to improve access all the time just so that everybody can enjoy some of the benefits that URec provides. And I did want to point out that we do have planned projects for a wheelchair basketball and seated volleyball.

And if you have any ideas or want to reach out to us, definitely do, because we're always looking to expand access and the more demand we have and the more interest, the better we can do that. So here, you can see examples of a lot of adaptive equipment that we have at URec, so not just for the water sports or for paddling, but for all of URec's programs and facilities.

KELSEY GUMP: And again, I think it'd be useful just to show real quick. So I'll go to our homepage. And so the way that you would navigate to that is you click, Who We Are, and then you click, Inclusive Rec.

And so again, that's that first page we showed. And if you wanted to learn more about specific facilities and equipment, that's this page right here in the sidebar. And you can see there's a lot more than we have time to go through tonight, of course. And I'm aware that we're over time, so I'm going to fly through this last slide real quick.

But just to plug the a few things that are available in the community and specifically in eastern Washington. There's an organization called ParaSport Spokane, which offers athletes of all ages the chance to participate in traditional team and also outdoor sports. So they primarily work with individuals with physical disabilities, and they can subsidize costs with grants.

I also threw in Team River Runner, which we talked about a little bit before. Important to mention, they offer their services to all individuals with disabilities, not just veterans, with a little caveat that it's pretty much just as long as they have adequate volunteers at that specific chapter. And the nearest one is in Spokane that's getting started again.

So if you want more information about that, definitely reach out to me. I'd be happy to connect you with those folks. And then finally, in Spokane, there's also Team St. Luke's which is developed by St. Luke's rehabilitation center. So they work with Spokane Parks and Rec. They offer wheelchair basketball and rugby as well as a variety of outdoor events and activities like ski fest and things like hunting and fishing and downhill skiing and just try to keep a variety of options running.

And if you're not sure what community organizations to reach out to, oftentimes if you reach out to Community Center or Parks and Recreation Office, they'll be able to connect you with resources for adaptive recreation. All right, and that concludes our presentation.

So I wanted to put up a little bit of contact information here. So of course, definitely feel free to reach out to the Outdoor Recreation Center. You can find all of our contact information on URec's home page. That's our phone and our email address. We also have a Facebook.

And then, my contact information is on the bottom there. So I would be very happy to speak to anyone about this topic. It's something that I really love and that I'm passionate about. And just being that I'm going to graduate in May 2021, I decided I'd also put AmericanCanoe.org down

there as well, so you can search me on there and find my instructor page with an up to date email address.

ALIDA MELSE: It looks like there might be a question in the chat.

KELSEY GUMP: I'll pull that up. All right, yeah, I found a question there from Celeste. Thanks, everyone, for tuning in if you've got a place to run off to you. So it says, are there any locations in Washington State that you'd recommend for paddling? So kayaking, paddle boarding, et cetera, besides the Snake River.

Yeah, there's definitely a lot of bodies of water around. I definitely will kick this question in part to our other staff here, Matt and Jonathan. But one spot that I like to go for whitewater kayaking is the Spokane River. There are also some really great lakes, particularly on the west side and in North Central Washington, like Ross Lake, and if you get into Idaho, Priest Lake is a really beautiful location as well.

I'll let others jump in.

SPEAKER 5: Yeah, I'd throw out the San Juan Islands is a lovely place to get out to as well. That would be something maybe to work towards if you haven't done a lot of kayaking. That's kind of a new favorite spot of mine. And the spot that Alida mentioned earlier is lovely as well. I think it was Alida who said it-- up on the Palouse River going up towards Palouse Falls. That's a beautiful spot. Bye.

ALIDA MELSE: OK, well thank you all so much for coming. Are there any last questions to address real quick? Well, I hope you'll take a look at our website, and hopefully we'll get to see you at some of our other upcoming online virtual webinars and offerings.

So thank you all so much for coming tonight.