

International Paralympic Committee Nordic Skiing World Championships 23 January through 1 February, 2015 | Cable, Wisconsin

Cable's See My Art, Inc. Aims to Bring Art and Culture to Para-Athletes

CABLE, Wisconsin (November 11, 2014). During the 2015 International Paralympic Nordic Skiing World Championships, dubbed Cable 2015, See My Art, Inc. (SMART) will host multiple venues for athletes to engage in culturally and geographically meaningful artistic activities. SMART seeks both General SMART Volunteers to help prepare for these artistic endeavors as well as Registered Cable 2015 SMART Volunteers to help onsite at the artistic events scheduled daily 9:00 am to 8:00 pm, January 22 through February 1, 2015 at the Lakewoods Resort and Lodge in Cable, Wisconsin. The Lac Courte Oreilles Tribal Governing Board is graciously donating funding to SMART for the art activities:

1. Using native materials found in Northern Wisconsin, athletes and their support personnel will have the opportunity to create keepsakes of this beautiful area, such as Native American inspired Dream Catchers, deerskin pouches, and painted birch disks. Athletes can also choose to bring home a keepsake premade by SMART Volunteers.
2. SMART is creating a commemorative mural of doors in partnership with Drummond School students and renown stage designer Dave Thomas to be personalized by the athletes. After the World Championships, the doors will be installed in Cable, Wisconsin.
3. Coming from Santa Barbara, California, Kimberly Ford is a vocalist, public speaking coach, recording artist, and former downhill ski instructor. Kimberly will conduct a workshop for athletes.



Collecting Willow for Dream Catchers Photo
by Sara Balbin

Athletes will be welcomed with a cairn of Lake Superior rocks in their rooms along with a schedule of SMART events and descriptions of the activities.

Dream Catchers and Other Keepsakes

SMART welcomes the public to register to be an onsite Cable 2015 SMART Volunteer to come in from the cold for a few hours to immerse themselves in a cultural artistic experience. Registered Cable 2015 SMART Volunteers can enjoy one-on-one time with para-athletes creating or finishing predesigned art projects. The projects—which incorporate native materials including birch, Lake Superior rocks, polished agates, deer skin and sinew, and other items—are intended to provide para-athletes and their support personnel with keepsakes in remembrance of their time in naturally beautiful Northern Wisconsin.

Agates, Lake Superior treasures laid out on land by glaciers, flowing rivers, and time, were hand picked across Minnesota over a quarter century. These gems have many layers that are complicated and unique, each one built by nature's trials and forces, and now highly polished to catch the light. Mr. David Thomas, a naturalist, historian, and rock hound, donated the agates.

We are currently collecting other materials—rocks, skins, and willow branches—to use for this project. General SMART Volunteers are welcome to support this activity as well.

During the World Championships, workshops for Dream Catchers and other keepsakes will be held 6:00 to 8:00 pm on January 22, 24, and 31. World Championship athletes and onsite Registered Cable 2015 SMART Volunteers who attend this workshop will be treated to an Ojibwe story, told only when the ground is snow covered, about how and why the dream catcher first came to be. Members of the Lac Courte Oreilles Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe will be on hand to tell the story and share the artistry of this uniquely meaningful and finely crafted object.



In summary, SMART is seeking both General SMART Volunteers to help gather materials and pre-make items, as well as onsite Cable 2015 Registered SMART Volunteers to learn how to work with para-athletes and their support personnel to create the art projects onsite during the event. To volunteer, please contact SMART at info@seemyart.com or the Cable Area Chamber of Commerce's **2015 Cable** website for the 2015 International Paralympic Committee Nordic Skiing World Championships at <http://www.cable2015.com/volunteer>.

Dream Catcher

Photo by Kerry Myhra

See My Art, Inc. (SMART) is a not-for-profit organization that inspires, empowers, validates, and supports people with disabilities through art. Co-founded in 2012 by artist and art therapist Sara Balbin, SMART seeks to open doors and unlock minds by providing public venues on land and online for displaying art by individuals with physical, mental, emotional, and intellectual disabilities, and by educating the public about the health benefits of artistic expression. To learn more about SMART, our artists, and events, visit www.seemyart.us or follow us on Facebook.