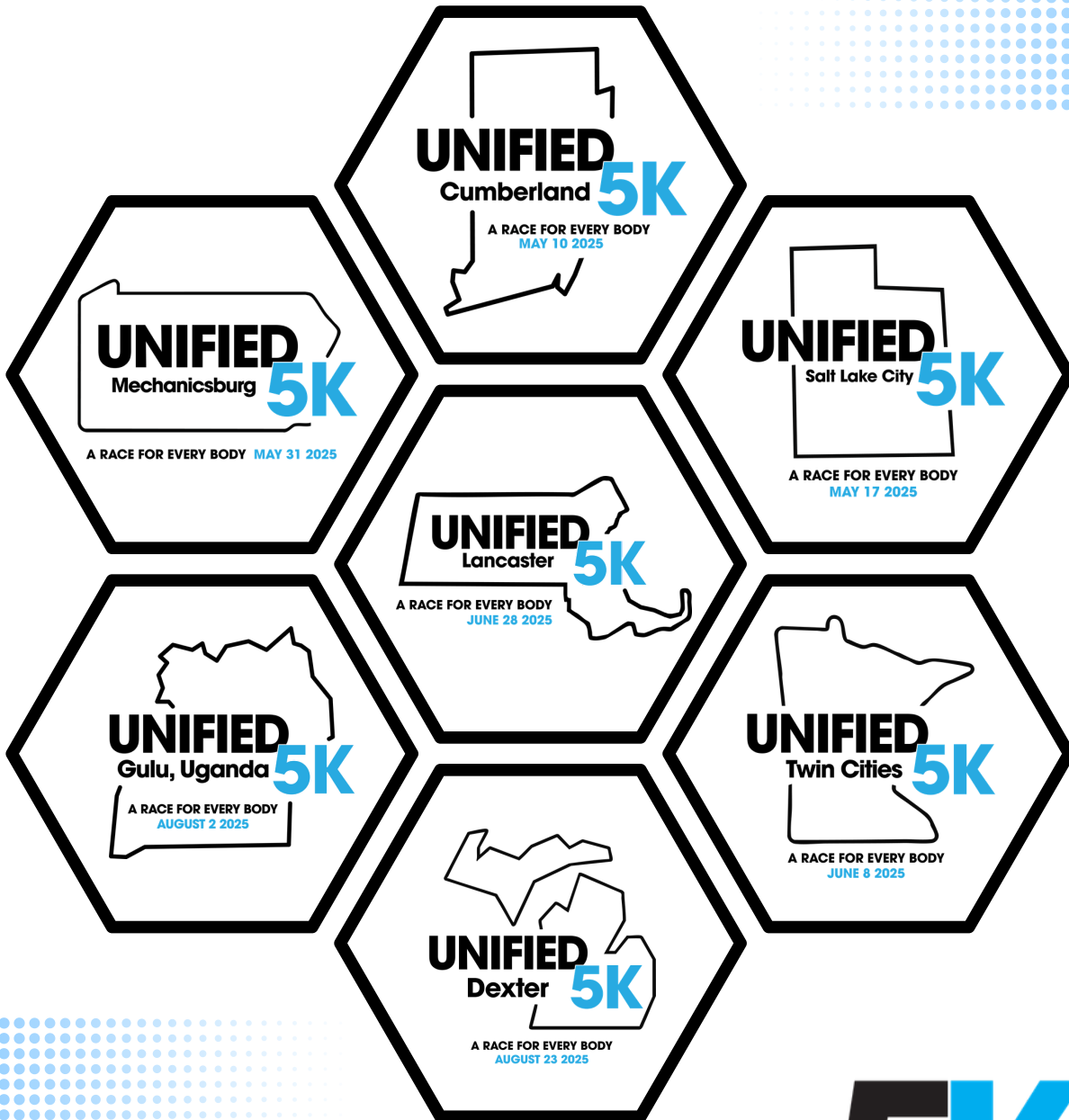


2025 Unified 5k

Impact Report



Learn more at www.unified5k.org

Origin of the Unified 5k

My introduction to Special Olympics and Best Buddies as a sophomore in high school changed my life. Through these organizations, I was introduced to hundreds of incredible people, but perhaps none more important to me than a boy named Jacob. I became his caregiver when I was 19, and in 2014, we began running together.

In our first race, I pushed Jacob in an old jogging stroller. It was a small charity 5k with only about 50 runners and twice as many walkers. With a race that size, maybe you would write it off as unsuccessful. But it was a pivotal moment in my life. At the race, we were fortunate to cross paths with a representative from Team Hoyt New England. Later that year, Jacob and I had the opportunity to run with Team Hoyt members from around the world; the start of our team's story and my pursuit to do for the fitness industry what Rick and Dick Hoyt did for the world of endurance sports.

Over the last decade, Jacob and I have run more than 100 races together – none more special than the 2024 Boston Marathon. We earned our spot after years of coming up short of the 3-hour qualifying standard, running a 2:55 marathon at the 2023 Martha's Vineyard Marathon.

My story started with a local charity road race – and now I want others to have the same life-changing experience.

My life's work has been dedicated to making fitness accessible for people with intellectual and physical disabilities. Since 2019, we have hosted a local 5k to demonstrate how to bring together an inclusive community and organize an accessible road race. It has tripled in size and 10X'd in fundraising.

Extending the experience to locations around the world in 2025 will create more opportunities for adaptive athletes and raise awareness for the importance of inclusive fitness and physical activity.

I invite you to join me and my community of advocates and allies on our continued journey to effect real and positive change in the fitness industry and beyond.

Brendan Aylward

Executive Director, AdaptX



Our Mission

AdaptX is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that addresses barriers to better health and fitness for people with intellectual and physical disabilities through education, research, advocacy, and opportunity.

We believe barriers to physical activity for people with disabilities exist, not because of the specific characteristics of their diagnosis, but due to an inaccessible, uninformed, and ableist society. At AdaptX, we create solutions and build a community of advocates and allies that will change this. We hope you will join us in this pursuit.



*AdaptX Executive Director, Brendan Aylward with
Kyle Robidoux and Boston Marathon Race Director,
Dave McGillivray*

Race Directors

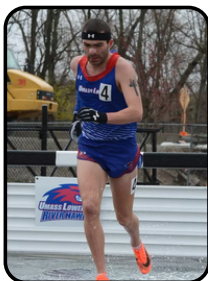
Introducing the team that made these events possible



Brendan Aylward
Director



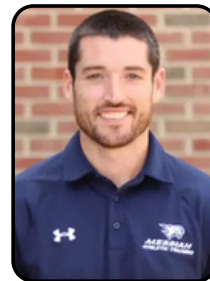
Kyle Champlin
Lancaster



Ben Drezek
Cumberland



Abby Drezek
Cumberland



Nate Nester
Mechanicsburg



Kayla Kittlitz
Mechanicsburg



Kayla Pagano
Mechanicsburg



Mckenna Hannigan
Salt Lake City



Zachary Josie
Salt Lake City



Maddie Rodriguez
Salt Lake City



Robert Carter
Twin Cities



Mary Anderson
Twin Cities



Brian Elliot
Dexter



Musema Faruk
Gulu



Maxwell Thurston
Gulu

Impact in the U.S.

Quantifying the impact of the six [2025 Unified 5k events](#) in the U.S.



160+

Number of Adaptive Athletes that have participated

** These figures don't include participants from our race in Gulu*

27

Neurodivergent

22

**Push-Rim/
Wheelchair**

35

Duos

8

**Visual
Impairment**

19

**Handcycle/
Adaptive Bike**

14

**Lower Limb
Amputees**

36

**Neuro
(CP, SCI, Stroke)**

\$4800+

**Saved for Adaptive Athletes
through Free Registration**



Unified 5k Gulu

Expanding into International Markets



Thanks to our partnership with Ability Sport Africa, we were able to bring a Unified 5k inclusive road race to Gulu, Uganda that attracted

200+
Adaptive Athletes

500+
Participants

Watch the Recap Video Below!



[View the Full Photo Gallery Here](#)

Media

Capturing the Impact with News Stories | Video | Photo | Radio



[Cumberland, RI Gallery](#)



[Salt Lake City, UT Gallery](#)



[Mechanicsburg, PA Gallery](#)



[Twin Cities, MN Gallery](#)



[Lancaster, MA Gallery](#)



[Dexter, MI Gallery](#)

Media

Capturing the Impact with News Stories | Video | Photo | Radio



[Watch our Cumberland Recap Video](#)



DAILY NEWS

Word • Business • Finance • Lifestyle • Travel • Sport • Weather

CUMBERLAND – Two of Cumberland High's top student-athletes from the mid-2010s are teaming up to help bring a road race for a deserving cause to their hometown...

[Read the Valley Breeze Article](#)

Media

Capturing the Impact with News Stories | Video | Photo | Radio



[Subscribe to our YouTube Channel](#)



Listen to our appearance on the
[105.7 WROR Podcast](#)



Volunteers



We are incredibly grateful for the dedication and support of our volunteers who played an essential role in making the Unified 5k a success. From early morning set-up to registration, water stations, and post-race clean-up, every detail of the event was powered by the generosity, energy, and commitment of our volunteer team. Their willingness to show up, rain or shine, and ensure that every participant, felt welcomed and supported helped us build an inclusive community and competition.



Collaboration

Amplifying the Work of Likeminded Organizations



80+
Vendors

Educating communities on advancements in assistive technology, adaptive sport, and fitness with the help of our **National and Regional Charity Partners**

7 National Charity Partners

Partnerships with national organizations to provide free registration to the individuals they serve



MYTEAM
TRIUMPH



THE PHOENIX™



ONE
WORLD
STRONG...



Expo Education

Educating Communities and Consumers

10 Adaptive/Para Sport Exhibits

Wheelchair
Tennis

Para
Rowing

Adaptive
Boxing

Para
Powerlifting

Amputee
Soccer

Sled Hockey

Adaptive Golf

Wheelchair
Basketball

Frame
Running

Adaptive
Cycling



Official Insurance Provider



On May 22nd, 2022, Dennis Murphy, Treasurer of Murphy Insurance Agency, suffered a severe stroke which left him unable to speak or walk. What followed was an unrelenting commitment from Dennis to return to an active lifestyle, dedicating several hours per day to his rehab.

In 2023, Dennis completed the Unified 5k, his first road race post-Stroke. This year, he completed his third in a row; alongside the largest team we had at the event, Team Dennis – a true testament to the number of people who love and support him.

After that first race, Dennis joined Unified Health and Performance, where he has trained 3x/week for more than 100 weeks in a row. We've been blessed to have a front row seat to his resilience and play a small role in his recovery.

We are grateful for Murphy Insurance Agency's sponsorship to offset the costs of insurance policies for our events.



Stories Behind the Bibs

Shining a Spotlight on our Incredible Participants

Elodie's Story



Elodie was diagnosed with Tetralogy of Fallot at 20 weeks in utero, a congenital heart defect that occurs in about 5 out of every 10,000 babies. Thankfully, we were referred immediately to Boston Children's Hospital where she had four life-saving surgeries before she turned one.

I (Elodie's Dad) had never had any desire to run, but for BCH, I ran Boston in 2018, NYC in 2019, and Boston again in 2021. Every step of every run was inspired by Elodie and for families like ours going through some pretty scary, or heartbreaking, times.



At the Unified 5k, my daughter ran her very first race where she wasn't just an image on my race shirt. My 9 year old inspiration ran every step of that 5K. She finished that 5K by leaving me in the dust with a sprint to the finish line. She is still talking about it and wants to run more races.

I attribute all that to the race Brendan brought to life. I'm not sure I'll thank him for yanking me out of retirement but I will forever be grateful for the day he gave to us. There is no better feeling in the world than to go from your child's bedside and her race to live to the finish line of her first 5K nine years later.

Michele's Story

On March 21, 2024, while skiing, I fell off a rock ledge, fracturing C3 and becoming a quadriplegic. I was med flighted to Dartmouth Hitchcock Hospital where I had emergency surgery.

I was a nurse for over 25 years. Five years ago, I went back to school and earned a master's degree as a Family Nurse Practitioner. I had a position working with The Lowell Community Health Center, providing health care to underserved populations.

Prior to my injury, I ran 19 marathons. My love of sport led me to the Lancaster Unified 5K where despite my injury I completed the race using my walker.



Michele

Running Blade Donations

Creating Opportunities for Amputees



"As a new below-knee amputee, receiving a donated running foot gave me back something I thought I had lost forever—the ability to run. Thanks to the generosity of the Unified 5k and Less Leg More Heart, I was able to participate in a charity run—my first time running in over five years. I'm deeply grateful for their support and for helping people like me rediscover movement, hope, and purpose."



Help us Support Athletes like Andrew

Five Blade Donations
Made possible through
our partnership with
Less Leg More Heart

Learn more at

www.lesslegmoreheart.com



**LESS LEG
MORE HEART**



Running Chair Donation

Powering Duo Teams to the Finish Line



Watch the TV Coverage



[‘Everyone can participate’:
Unified 5k Held in St. Paul](#)



**CBS NEWS
MINNESOTA**

[How a 5k in St. Paul gives
runners of all abilities the
chance to compete](#)

At the Unified 5k Twin Cities we were able to donate a custom Hoyt Running Chair to Mark Hulsey and Moses, a duo from My Team Triumph Minnesota. Two weeks later, the team ran 3:18 at Grandma’s Marathon to qualify for the 2026 Boston Marathon!

Fundraising

Addressing socioeconomic barriers to fitness and physical activity

\$54,000+
Funds Raised at
Unified 5k Lancaster



**Jake Manning – Top Calendar
Raffle Sales**



Lexi Prybyla – Top Fundraiser

\$7000+
from 161
Individual Donors

Thank You to our In-Kind Donors

Bolton Orchards

**Dave's
Fresh marketplace**

**RUNNING
WAREHOUSE**

**nuun
HYDRATION**

**GOLD CROSS
AMBULANCE**

Hannaford

EMT



adaptX

Sponsors

Funding Inclusion with Corporate and Community Support



What's Next?

Upcoming Events, Education, and Initiatives



The following pages highlight how AdaptX is growing its impact from:

- **Expanding** race locations
- **Supporting** athletes through grants,
 - **Educating** communities
- **Developing** the aXis mobile app
- **Advancing** research in inclusive fitness

Stay up to date as we continue building a more accessible future

Subscribe to Newsletter

2025 Grant Cycle

\$17,000+



Highlighting Zachary Josie, our first Brand Ambassador

"I was born with a rare type of disproportionate dwarfism called Ellis Van Creveld Syndrome. Needless to say I never imagined I'd be a successful athlete of any kind.

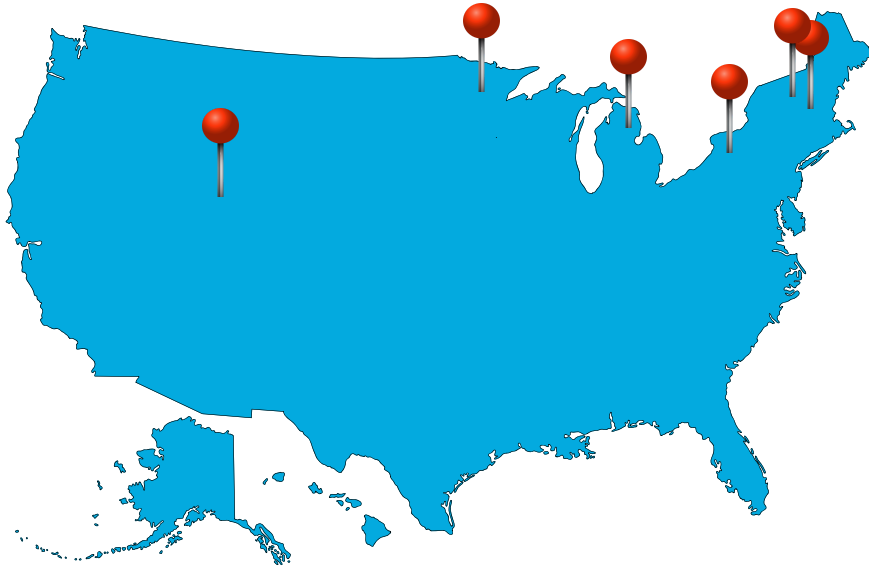
However, when I entered my 20s I decided to take a cycling spin class for some college credit which eventually led to running as well. Today, I am a mid/long distance triathlete, 15x 70.3 finisher, 3-time Ironman and have crossed the finish line of many other endurance events. Endurance sport came into my life at a very crucial time. My self-confidence and belief in my body/physical capabilities were at an all-time low. However, participating and even being competitive in some of the hardest single day endurance events has drastically changed the way I feel about myself and treat myself.

Endurance sports have made me proud of the body I am in and has shown me how privileged I am to be able to push it to its fullest potential. Now I'm honored to give back to AdaptX by bringing the Unified 5k to Salt Lake City so more athletes like me can realize what they're capable of"

Help us Support Athletes like Zach

Upcoming Races

Scaling our Impact to Communities Across the Country



Interested in bringing a Unified 5k to your community?

Join our Info Session on
Monday, September 22nd at 5pm EST

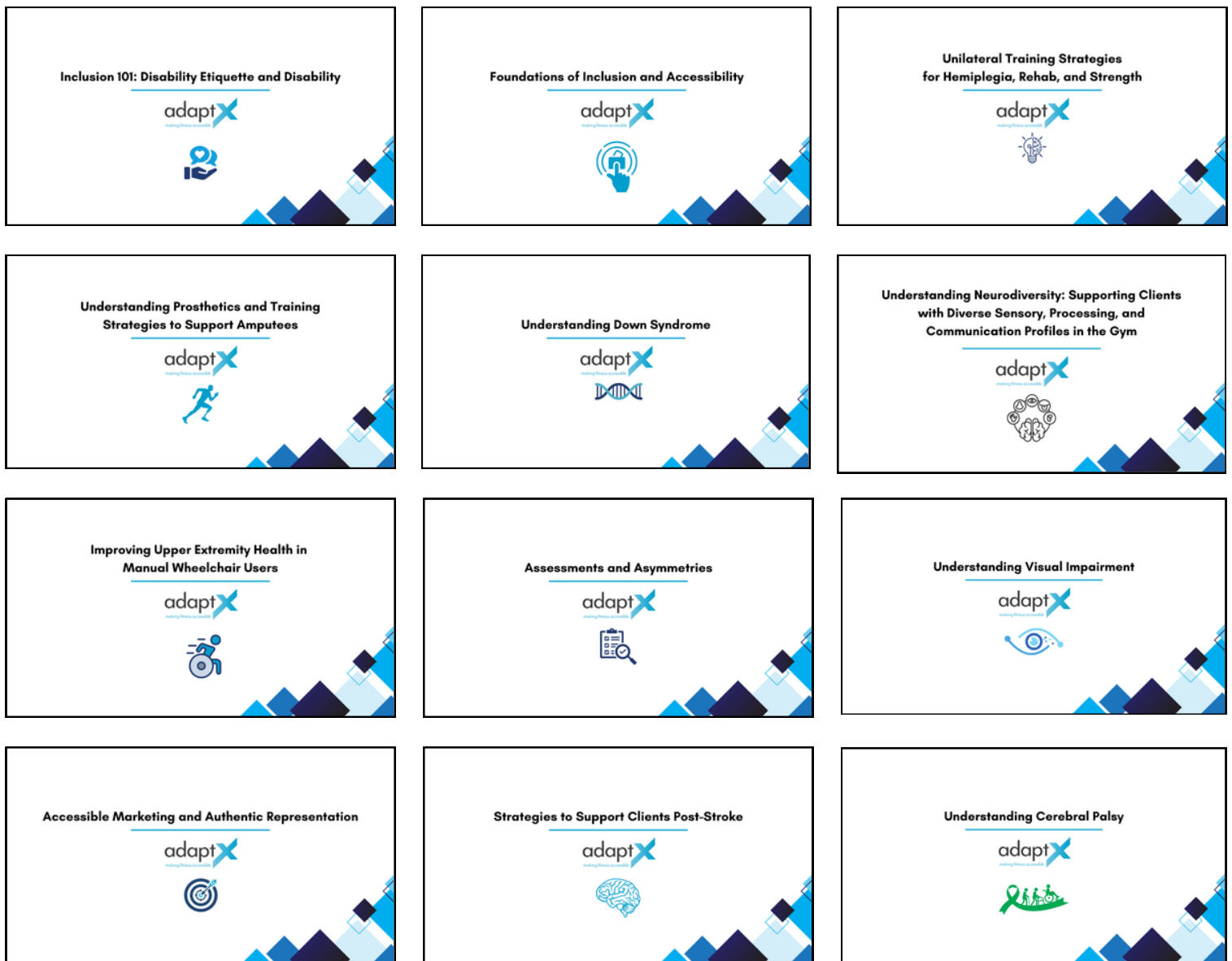


AdaptX Education



Launching an updated eLearning Platform this Fall

Using the feedback of 300+ fitness professionals who took our original course, our team of more than 30 diverse and distinguished educators updated and re-designed all of our AdaptX Educational material. Our new eLearning platform is currently in Beta testing and will be released in November of 2025.



and more!

aXis Press Release



Enhancing Access to Fitness and Physical Activity through aXis

AdaptX named an Inaugural Winner of the Inclusive App Accelerator

PITTSBURGH, PENNSYLVANIA – May 30, 2025 – The Inclusive App Accelerator, a pioneering initiative from the Accessible SmartTech Research Group at the University of Pittsburgh dedicated to fostering the development of mobile applications that empower persons with disabilities, today announced AdaptX as a winner of its inaugural AppXcelerate program, designed to identify and support groundbreaking mobile app solutions.

AdaptX's innovative app concept, **aXis**, was selected for its potential to significantly enhance fitness opportunities and address critical barriers faced by individuals with disabilities. The call for proposals attracted numerous strong submissions focused on improving independence and quality of life for the disability community. AdaptX's winning submission stood out for its direct approach to tackling the pervasive issue of limited access to physical activity for people with disabilities.

The aXis app aims to be a comprehensive mapping platform connecting individuals with disabilities to inclusive fitness professionals, adaptive sport organizations, and support athletes (individuals without disabilities who can accompany adaptive athletes during sessions). This solution directly addresses the documented barriers to fitness for individuals with intellectual and physical disabilities.

Dr. Dan Ding, Director of the Accessible SmartTech Research Group and PI on the Inclusive App Accelerator Grant, commented,

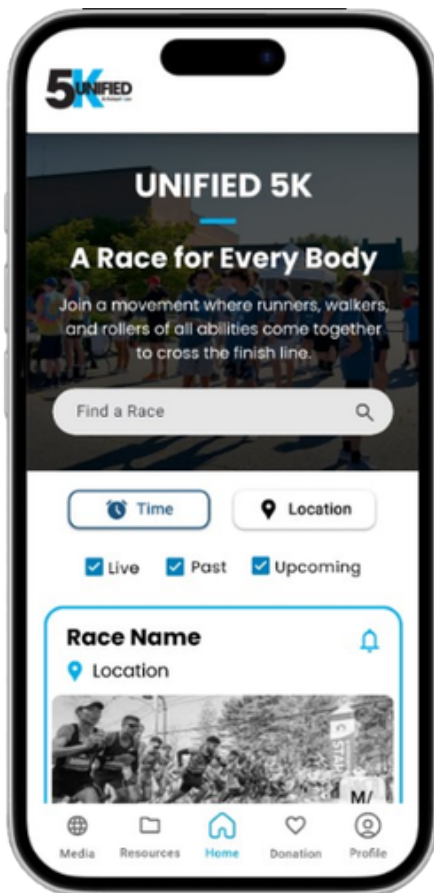
"We are thrilled to support AdaptX and help them to develop their visionary aXis app. Their deep understanding of the barriers to inclusive fitness and their commitment to creating a practical, connective solution truly embodies the mission of the Inclusive App Accelerator. This partnership represents a significant step towards creating more accessible and engaging opportunities for physical activity within the disability community."

Brendan Aylward, CEO of AdaptX, stated,

"Being selected as an AppXcelerate winner is a tremendous honor and validates our long-standing work. The Inclusive App Accelerator's support will be instrumental in bringing the aXis app to fruition, allowing us to leverage technology to break down barriers and empower individuals with disabilities to pursue their fitness goals and experience the profound social and emotional benefits of physical activity"

Unified 5k Mobile App

Creating a Mobile Option for the Unified 5k Race Series



Thanks to the Yawkey Non-Profit Internship Program, this Summer, we have a team of 9 technical interns from Boston University building: a mobile application for the Unified 5k and a new website for AdaptX

**BOSTON
UNIVERSITY**

CCD FUNDED INTERNSHIPS
THE YAWKEY NONPROFIT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM



Research

Investigating the Biomechanics and Bioenergetics of Duo Running



Collaborating with the sports science team from New Balance in Boston, we have begun to refine a protocol to assess how biomechanics and energy cost differs when running with and without the wheelchair. They presented their proprietary findings to our team last month from our initial session and we'll be conducting a larger scale research project with a greater sample size in 2025.



Click the image above to check out a video highlighting the project

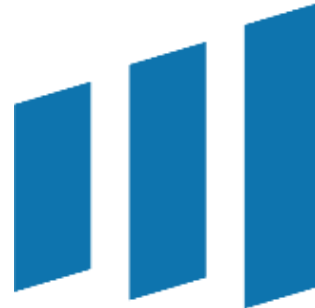


Protecting our IP and Image

Thank you to Wolf, Greenfield, and Sacks, P.C. for their pro-bono legal work to get our taglines and names trademarked and protected:

"Making Fitness Accessible"
"A Race for Every Body"
Unified 5k

Wolf, Greenfield & Sacks, P.C.
BOSTON | NEW YORK | WASHINGTON DC



Compliance Information

Our organization is a registered 501(c)(3) charitable organization, as recognized by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS). This designation affirms our commitment to operating exclusively for charitable, educational, or scientific purposes, as defined under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. We adhere strictly to all applicable federal, state, and local laws governing nonprofit organizations, ensuring transparency and accountability in our operations.

Contributions made to our organization are tax-deductible to the fullest extent allowed by law. As a donor, you may deduct your contributions on your federal income tax return, subject to the IRS guidelines and limitations applicable to your individual circumstances. We provide receipts for all donations upon request, including the necessary information to assist you in claiming these deductions. Please consult your tax advisor for specific guidance on how this may apply to your situation.

We are deeply grateful for the generosity of our supporters, whose contributions enable us to advance our mission and create a meaningful impact in the communities we serve. If you have questions regarding our tax-exempt status or need additional documentation to support your donation, please do not hesitate to contact us. **Thank you for your support and trust in our work.**

Additional Ways to Support

- Contribute an appreciated stock position that you've held for more than one year to our investment portfolio for a tax advantage
- Leave a [Google Review for AdaptX by clicking here](#)
- Follow the [Facebook Page](#) and [Instagram](#)
- Search "AdaptX Podcast" on Spotify or Apple Podcasts and leave a rating and review. Tell a friend about the show!
- Subscribe to the [AdaptX Newsletter by clicking here](#)
- Join us as a participant or volunteer for one of our upcoming Unified 5k events



brendan@adaptx.org



www.adaptx.org



417 Bolton Rd, Lancaster, MA 01523