



NVWG: Where Heroes Make History

Each year more than 500 novice and experienced athletes meet for a week of archery, swimming, weightlifting, basketball, quad rugby, and more. It's the National Veterans Wheelchair Games (NVWG), the largest annual wheelchair sports competition of its kind in the world. The 34th National Veterans Wheelchair Games were held in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, August 12-17, 2014. This year's theme was "Where Heroes Make History."



McGowan Institute for Regenerative Medicine affiliated faculty member [Rory Cooper, PhD](#), FISA/PVA Endowed Chair and a Distinguished Professor of the Department of Rehabilitation Science and Technology, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, University of Pittsburgh (with secondary appointments in the Departments of Orthopaedic Surgery and of Mechanical Engineering and Bioengineering), the Center Director at the Center of Excellence for Wheelchair and Related Technology, VA Rehabilitation Research & Development Center, a Senior Research Career Scientist at the VA Rehabilitation Research and Development Service, U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, and a Professor in the Robotics Institute, School of Computer Science, Carnegie Mellon University, is a regular participant in the Games. This year he won gold in the 100-m and 200-m wheelchair race, slalom (obstacle course), table-tennis, and in the 75-m medley swim and 50-m breast-stroke swim. He earned silver in the 10-k hand-cycle race (see photo) and in the 50-m backstroke, 50-m freestyle, and 100-m freestyle—all swimming.

Also during the Games, the University of Pittsburgh [Human Engineering Research Laboratories \(HERL\)](#) research went very well, too. The researchers received very helpful feedback on the three new technologies that we were having the participants evaluate.

Throughout the week, veterans realize their abilities and potential while enjoying the spirit of healthy activity and fellowship. The Department of Veterans Affairs and Paralyzed Veterans of America have co-presented the Games since 1985 with additional support from numerous corporate and community sponsors. Next year's Games will be held in Dallas, Texas, June 21-26, 2015.

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[Back to Home Page](#)